

HOUSE No. 2471

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Tami L. Gouveia

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act requiring critical incident debriefing plans in law enforcement.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Tami L. Gouveia</i>	<i>14th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/19/2021</i>
<i>Kathleen R. LaNatra</i>	<i>12th Plymouth</i>	<i>7/6/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 2471

By Ms. Gouveia of Acton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2471) of Tami L. Gouveia relative to requiring critical incident debriefing plans in law enforcement. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act requiring critical incident debriefing plans in law enforcement.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. For the purpose of this act, the term “critical incident” shall mean the
2 following: “any event that has a stressful impact sufficient to overwhelm the usually effective
3 coping skills of an individual and their ability to handle everyday stress. A critical incident is
4 powerful in that it falls outside the range of ordinary human experiences that can have a strong
5 emotional impact, even on the most experienced officer or law enforcement personnel.”

6 Critical incidents include, but are not limited to, the following: officer-involved shooting,
7 hostage standoff, suicide, homicide, mass suicide, crimes against children, drowning, school
8 shooting, rape or sexual assault, natural disaster, and automobile accident resulting in severe
9 injury or death.

10 SECTION 2. Local police departments, sheriff’s offices, and the department of state
11 police shall develop a critical incident debriefing plan. Critical incident debriefing plans shall
12 include steps departmental leadership will take to: (a) provide officers and other law enforcement

13 personnel involved in a critical incident time to complete psychological decompression and
14 engage in immediate stress management techniques; (b) identify the instances in which a
15 comprehensive mental health assessment is to be provided by a mental health professional; (c)
16 identify supportive mental health and other services that will be provided by a mental health
17 provider to assist officers and other incident-involved personnel in managing their symptoms of
18 psychological and mental stress; (d) identify the mental health services, pastoral care, and other
19 psychological crisis intervention strategies available to support officers and other personnel in a
20 safe return to duty.

21 SECTION 3. Debriefing shall include all officers and other personnel who were involved
22 in responding to the critical incident.

23 SECTION 4. Within one year from the effective date of this act, the executive office of
24 public safety and security shall develop and make readily available a resource guide to assist
25 local police departments, sheriff's offices, and the department of state police in devising their
26 critical incident debriefing plans.

27 SECTION 5. Sections 1 through 3 shall go into effect within two years from the effective
28 date of this act.