

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

ENROLLED

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 4799

BY DELEGATES PINSON, BROOKS, FLANIGAN, MARPLE,

AND MASTERS

[Passed March 13, 2026; in effect 90 days from
passage (June 11, 2026)]

1 AN ACT to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,
2 designated §15-10-8, relating to the establishment of the cold case task force within the
3 West Virginia State Police; establishing the executive board; clarifying that meetings of
4 the board are not subject to open meetings laws; requiring the executive board to provide
5 recommendations on procedures; creating the Task Force Director; providing the State
6 Superintendent the power to select the Task Force Director and other officers on the task
7 force, including retired police officer; establishing duties of the Task Force Director;
8 authorizing interagency cooperation; establishing the Cold Case Task Force Fund;
9 specifying uses of the fund; and requiring data sharing from the fusion center.

10 *PREAMBLE: THIS LAW IS DESIGNATED AND MAY BE REFERRED TO AS THE LEAH*
11 *HICKMAN MEMORIAL ACT.*

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 10. COOPERATION BETWEEN LAW-ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

§15-10-8. Statewide cold case task force.

1 (a) This section establishes a statewide multi-jurisdictional cold case task force within the
2 State Police. The executive board of the cold case task force shall consist of the Superintendent
3 of the State Police, the President of the West Virginia Chiefs of Police Association, and the
4 President of the West Virginia Sheriffs' Association. Meetings of the executive board are not
5 subject to the provisions of §6-9A-1 *et seq.* of this code.

6 (b) The purpose of the cold case task force is the investigation and prosecution of
7 offenders in cold cases, as that term is defined in §15A-12-9 of this code: *Provided*, That nothing
8 in this section shall be construed as authorizing the cold case task force to supersede the ongoing
9 investigations of any other law-enforcement agency.

10 (c) The executive board shall provide recommendations on procedures to effectuate the
11 purposes of this section, including, but not limited to, the number of law-enforcement officers
12 assigned to the cold case task force.

13 (d) Subject to available funds, the Task Force Director shall be the head of the cold case
14 task force and shall be selected by the Superintendent of the State of Police from the membership
15 of the State Police. The remaining membership of the cold case task force shall be designated by
16 the Superintendent of the State Police, subject to available funds, and may include retired state
17 police as volunteers or part-time employees, subject to available funds.

18 (e) The Task Force Director shall:

19 (1) Supervise the members of the State Police assigned to the cold case task force;

20 (2) Request assistance and cooperation of any West Virginia law-enforcement agency
21 pursuant to the provisions of §15-10-4 of this code to assist the cold case task force's
22 establishment or operation if necessary: *Provided*, That the Task Force Director may provide the
23 opportunity to participate in the cold case task force to any law-enforcement officer from the
24 agency originally investigating the cold case, as directed by the administrator from the agency
25 originally investigating the cold case;

26 (3) Coordinate and cooperate with any other federal or state law-enforcement agencies;

27 (4) Establish policies and procedures for the operation of the cold case task force and
28 ensure compliance;

29 (5) Manage and coordinate the day-to-day operations of the cold case task force
30 established under the provisions of this section; and

31 (6) Perform other duties as may be required to effectuate the purposes of this section.

32 (f) The Cold Case Task Force Fund is created within the Treasury. The fund shall be
33 administered by the Superintendent of the State Police and shall consist of all moneys made
34 available for the operations of the cold case task force from any source, including, but not limited
35 to, all fees, gifts, grants, bequests, or transfers from any source, any moneys that may be
36 appropriated and designated for the cold case task force by the Legislature and all interest or
37 other return earned from investment of the fund. Expenditures from the fund shall be for the
38 operations of the cold case task force and are not authorized from collections but are to be made

39 only in accordance with appropriation by the Legislature and in accordance with the provisions of
40 §12-3-1 *et seq.* of this code and upon the fulfillment of the provisions set forth in §11B-2-1 *et seq.*
41 of this code: *Provided*, That for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, expenditures are authorized
42 from collections rather than pursuant to an explicit appropriation by the Legislature.

43 (g) The Director of the West Virginia Fusion Center shall cooperate with the executive
44 board to the fullest extent practicable to provide information necessary to accomplish the mission
45 of the cold case task force and shall make available any information contained in the cold case
46 database established in §15A-12-9 of this code.

The Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate hereby certify that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

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Clerk of the House of Delegates

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Clerk of the Senate

Originated in the House of Delegates.

In effect 90 days from passage.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates

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President of the Senate

The within is this the.....
Day of, 2026.

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Governor