

Achieving Certification with the State-Wide Law Enforcement Standards

In December 2014, Gov. John Kasich signed executive order 2014-06K announcing the Ohio Task Force on Community-Police Relations. The Task Force's mission was to improve the relationship between communities and police agencies. After a series of public forums, the Task Force delivered its final report to the Governor, who in turn signed Executive Order 2015-04K establishing the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board (Ohio Collaborative) to oversee implementation of recommendations from the Task Force.

The Ohio Collaborative established state standards – for the first time in Ohio's history - for use of force including use of deadly force, and agency employee recruitment and hiring practices. These new standards are designed to raise the professionalism of all policing agencies and to instill greater confidence with the public. A report will be published by March 31, 2017, listing which agencies have adopted and fully implemented the new state minimum standards. It is expected that more standards will be developed in the future.

As Ohio is breaking new ground with the development of State-Wide Standards, many agencies are concerned about meeting these voluntary guidelines. There are four key steps to successfully complying with the standards—remember the four P's!

POLICY-The first step is a written directive. Written directives can take many forms including:

- Policy or procedures
- Rules and regulations
- City code or Ohio Revised Code
- Memorandums
- General or Special Orders
- Training Materials

Once the policy is in place, publication is the next step.

PUBLICATON - Think of publication as the way sworn officer are made aware of the policy and then acknowledge receiving a copy. The read and sign process can be done electronically or in paper form. What is important is to have the documentation of the read and sign.

PROFICIENCY - This represents the third step. Proficiency is simply testing—showing that the sworn officers are quizzed on the policy. There is no standard test. There is not a minimum or maximum amount of questions---and you don't need to show the scores or grades.

The final step in meeting the certification process is proof.

PROOF - Proof involves showing the compliance documentation. This may include:

- Investigative reports
- Inner agency memos
- Checklists
- Read and Sign reports
- Testing results
- Knowledge test examples

Unlike a High School term paper, more is not always best. The Collaborative is looking for quality versus quantity.

Although the certification process can first seem huge, remember to follow the guidelines of the 4 P's to make the process easier.

Disclaimer: This document is a synopsis of the Ohio Collaborative Law Enforcement Agency steps for certification. This documents is not intended to take the place of reviewing the actual and detailed documents which are available at: www.ohio.gov/ohiocollaborative