



## California Commission on Peace Officer Standards & Training

### *Information presented to the Little Hoover Commission*

- **Briefly outline for Commissioners the role and structure of the POST Commission and staff in developing and overseeing both in-service and basic training for California law enforcement officials. Please also discuss how new subject matter is introduced into POST-certified training.**

Pursuant to [Penal Code section 13500](#) the POST Commission consists of 18 members from varying backgrounds such as city and county administrators, law enforcement professionals, educators, and public members.

POST is comprised of 135 staff members who serve the needs of the State by enforcing hiring standards and regulations, delivering training, and conducting audits of 41 police academies and 611 law enforcement agencies which voluntarily participate in the POST program. There are approximately 84,300 full time peace officers and 8,100 public safety dispatchers that currently fall under the POST program.

The POST Commission establishes and approves all POST Regulations. Any legislative mandates chaptered by the Legislature are then approved by the POST Commission and established into regulation.

POST Staff is responsible for creating the details of regulations and legislative mandates and what ultimately is produced to the field. POST staff in turn presents the details to the POST Commission for approval. Only after final approval from the Commission and any other necessary outlets is new training and regulations provided to the field.

POST Staff can assist with creating and updating training based on the needs or demands of the field, but only with Commission approval.

All POST training is created or updated with groups of subject matter experts from the field and communities they serve.

- **For both basic training and in-service training, how much emphasis is on cultivating soft skills, like emotional intelligence, decision-making, or interpersonal communication, as opposed to more specific, tactical skills like driving or weapons training?**

### **Basic & Field Training**

Entry level training for California peace officers is called the "Regular Basic Course," or "RBC," and is required to attend prior to appointment as a peace officer. The *minimum* training hours for the RBC, as established by the POST Commission, is 664 hours delivered in a series of 43 Learning Domains. The student workbooks and the Training and Testing Specifications for each of the Learning Domains can be found on our public website. The Learning Domains cover such topics as Leadership, Professionalism, and Ethics (LD 1); Crimes Against Persons (LD 7); Vehicle Operations (LD 19). POST conducts regular updates of all the Learning Domains as necessary. All of these Learning Domains include an emphasis on soft skills and have scenarios added to ensure the skills are understood and met.

Academies have the ability to include additional training hours to the curriculum, above the mandated POST minimum of 664 hours. The current average for basic academy training is approximately 850 hours and several academies operate at over 1,200 hours of basic academy instruction. Any academy can add instruction on topics they feel are necessary (with POST approval) as long as minimum requirements are met.

Successful completion of the basic academy is not the completion of entry-level peace officer training. Successful completion of the basic academy means that the individual is sufficiently prepared to enter field training, which is the second critical piece of entry-level training. All new probationary officers are required by POST regulation to complete the POST Field Training Program, which consists of a *minimum* of 400 hours/10 weeks of one-on-one training and mentoring. The standardized POST Field Training Program aligns academy instructional methods into an on-the job training process. Again, the minimum requirement of 400 hours, the current average Field Training Program in California is 640-720 hours or 16-18 weeks. Thus, entry-level training for all new peace officers is a minimum of 1,064 hours, made up of 664 hours in the basic academy + 400 hours in field training. Nonetheless, most departments exceed total training time of 1,500 training hours of combined basic academy instruction and field training, and some departments approach 2,000 hours.

The Field Training Program is of critical importance, because as mentioned, it provides one-on-one training and mentoring with a Field Training Officer. POST requires a total of 18 core competencies be addressed and successfully completed during field training, including such things as Ethics (3), Traffic (16), and Report Writing (11), just to name a few. It also allows departments to incorporate local policy discussion into the training curriculum. Field training, in a sense can be characterized as localized training. Pursuant to regulation, all Field Training Programs, the corresponding training manual, and all updates and modifications, must be approved in advance by POST.

The academy and local agencies also provide training to entry-level officers to ensure integration with the communities they serve. By way of some examples to demonstrate how this is accomplished, in

the basic academy, Learning Domain 3 - Policing in the Community covers six overarching topics: Community Policing; Community Partnerships; Problem Solving; Principled Policing; Historical and Current Events; and Implicit Bias. In Learning Domain 30 - Crime Scenes, Evidence, and Forensics, trainees must complete a learning activity on how a peace officer may collaborate with the community to solve a crime and identify underlying conditions that contribute to the crime problem. In Learning Domain 42 - Cultural Diversity, the trainees must complete a learning activity on the impact racial profiling may have had on them as individuals or their community; as well as, law enforcement's obligation to various cultures within the community; and what law enforcement must do to increase trust with the community.

In regard to the Field Training Program, competency number 6 in the Field Training Program is titled Community Relations, wherein the trainee receives tailored local department instruction on Community Relations and Service; Professional Demeanor and Communications; Cultural Diversity; Racial Profiling; Crime Prevention; and Community Oriented Policing. For example, in Community Oriented Policing, in subsection 6.6.03 - Working with the Community to Solve Problems, the trainee officer must describe the advantages of working with the community to find solutions to problems related to community safety and quality of life issues. In subsection 6.6.05 - Problem Solving Model, the trainee officer must explain the department's problem-solving model, including how to: Develop plans with citizens to address crime and disorder problems; and Work with citizens to assess the results of their efforts.

### **In-Service Training**

POST regulation requires peace officers obtain 24 hours of POST- Certified Continuing Professional Training, or CPT, during every two-year POST training cycle. 14 of the 24 hours must be in four areas: Arrest and Control; Firearms; Driving; and Strategic Communications. Although the CPT requirements are only 24 training hours every two years, peace officers and public safety dispatchers averaged approximately 44 hours per year of POST-certified training during the last two-year training cycle.

In-service peace officers have additional training requirements mandated by both the POST Commission and the Legislature:

- All new Sergeants complete the 80-hour POST Supervisory Course within one-year of appointment.
- New Lieutenants and Commanders must complete the 120-hour POST Management Course within one-year of appointment.
- Field Training Officers, or FTOs, are required to attend the 40-hour POST FTO Course.
  - They must refresh the training every three years by attending the 24-hour POST FTO Update Course.
- The Penal Code requires school district and community college police officers to attend the 40-hour POST Campus Law Enforcement Course within two years of appointment.
- The Penal Code requires peace officers participate in yearly pursuit driving training, as well as racial profiling training every five years.

These are just a few examples of mandated training above and beyond the standard CPT requirements.

- **What is the process to review existing training to ensure it is up-to-date and relevant/applicable to how officers' jobs in the field? Please discuss POST's efforts to tie training to outcomes and otherwise measure the success/effectiveness of curricula for officers once out in the field.**

POST currently has 4,600 POST-certified training courses in the course catalog. Approximately 100 of these training courses are POST-developed training courses, with the majority of the training courses developed by law enforcement agencies, community colleges, and private presenters. All 4,600 of these courses must adhere to POST certification standards, and must go through at least two levels of review by POST staff. The POST Commission requires each POST-certified training course be placed into modification every two years, which requires the presenter to conduct a thorough review and to resubmit the training for re-certification. This is done to ensure the training is current and contemporary. Training courses in modification cannot be presented until they are re-certified.

During the course certification process POST reviews the training outline to make sure it is contemporary and consistent with the law; there is a proper student to instructor ratio; and a proper safety plan is in place for certain training; and review and scrutinize the qualifications of each of the instructors. POST reviews surveys and questionnaires prepared by students, and employ a robust Quality Assessment Program, or QAP.

POST has its own learning management system, or Learning Portal, which houses various POST-developed self-paced and video-based training courses. This type of training includes De-escalation, Hate Crimes, Gun Violence Restraining Orders, Bias and Racial Profiling, Wellness, Human Trafficking, Mental Health: Responding to Individuals in Crisis, and the Initial Response to Natural Disasters, all courses which were released in 2020. This type of training is meant to obtain in both an individual or group setting and as a mean to get information out to the field quickly.

- **Similarly, what is the process to certify, and then review trainers to ensure the individuals who are teaching officers are up-to-date on current practices and laws?**

### **Basic Academy Instructors**

All persons who serve as basic academy instructors must complete the 40-hour Academy Instructor Certification Course (AICC) within the first year of employment or assignment at a police academy ([Regulation 1009 - Academy Instructor Certificate Program](#)). The training is a one-time course and does not require repeating.

Upon successful completion of AICC, basic academy directors must complete a comprehensive review of the instructor in order to issue the person an “Academy Instructor Certificate” ([Regulation 1009 - Academy Instructor Certification Program](#)). The review is based on criteria such as, but not limited to, academy instruction experience; demonstrated curriculum delivery; classroom peer review; and completion of self-study program on “adult learning and the Basic Course instructional system.”

### **Basic Academy Recruit Training Officers**

Every Recruit Training Officer (RTO) must complete the 1-hour RTO Orientation Program and the 24-hour POST-certified RTO Course prior to performing the duties of an RTO ([Regulation 1071 – Minimum Training Standards for Regular Basic Course Academy Directors, Coordinators, Recruit Training Officers, and Scenario Manager and Evaluator](#)). The training is a one-time course and does not require repeating.

### **Field Training Officers**

Every Field Training Officer (FTOs) and Field Training Officer Supervisor/Administrator/Coordinator (FTO SAC) must meet minimum eligibility requirements ([Regulation 1004 - Field Training Program](#)).

FTOs must complete the 40-hour POST-certified FTO Course prior training new officers ([Regulation 1004 - Field Training Program](#)). FTOs must complete 8-hours of crisis intervention behavioral health training (CIT) within 180 days of assignment as an FTO ([Penal Code section 13515.28](#)). FTOs must complete the 24-hour POST-Certified FTO Update Course every three years ([Regulation 1004 - Field Training Program](#)).

### **Specialized Training Instructors**

Instructors of specialized subjects listed in Regulation 1070(b) must complete corresponding POST-certified training prior to providing instruction ([Regulation 1070 - Minimum Training Standards for Instructors of POST-Certified Specialized Training](#)). The training for each subject must only be completed once and does not require repeating. The distinct specialized topics are as follows:

- Arrest and Control Techniques
- Baton/Impact Weapons
- Chemical Agents
- Defensive Tactics
- Diversionsary Devices
- Driver Training (low speed maneuvers)

Driver Training (performance driving, code 3, pursuit)  
Driver Training-Simulator  
Electronic Weapons  
Firearms (*all firearms types*)  
First Aid/CPR  
Force Options Simulator  
Hazardous Materials  
Institute of Criminal Investigation  
Less Lethal Weapons  
Motorcycle Training  
Physical Training (Basic Course)  
Supervisory Course  
Supervisory Leadership Institute  
Racial Profiling  
Terrorism & Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Awareness

### **Course Certification/Instructor Resume Review**

Pursuant to internal POST policy, all POST-certified training courses must undergo a thorough review by at least one POST Law Enforcement Consultant and one Bureau Chief. The course submission and review is documented in the POST online platform known as the “Electronic Data Interchange.” The certification process includes a review of each instructor resume. Each course instructor must meet all minimum instructor training mandates, as well as have the requisite experience or credentials to teach the topic subject.

Every POST-certified course is placed into pending inactive status for follow-up review every two years ([Regulation 1056 - Course Recertification](#)). The purpose of this review is to ensure the course content delivers current law and contemporary best practices, and that instructors continue to be compliant with existing training mandates. Similar to the initial certification process, each recertification requires a thorough review and re-submission by the presenter, as well as a review by at least one POST Law Enforcement Consultant and one Bureau Chief.

### **Quality Assessment Program**

The POST Quality Assessment Program (QAP) utilizes tenured law enforcement professionals with experience ranging from the level of line-staff to executive as QAP facilitation coaches. The coaches are graduates of the POST Instructor Development Institute, Master Instructor Certification Course, and many have advanced degrees. The coaches conduct in-person audits of training courses and reviews of individual instructors utilizing a standardized rating rubric. The final reports, rubric, training handouts, etc. are uploaded to a POST portal for review by POST staff ([QAP Portal - Submission](#)). POST dedicates \$750,00 to the program and in a regular year (excluding COVID) attempts to review approximately 200 training courses and their corresponding instructors. In 2020, POST prioritized the

following training topics: use of force; legislative mandates; de-escalation/tactical communications; principled policing; mental health; and leadership/supervision.

POST prioritizes QAP reviews for new training courses and new presenters. POST also employs QAP reviews when significant credible complaints have been received regarding course content, delivery, or conduct of the instructor(s). POST provides written feedback and guidance for each course and instructor reviewed.

- **Please describe POST's efforts to incorporate community members, researchers, and other non-law enforcement professionals into the design of curriculum.**

POST routinely utilizes non-law enforcement persons to create training curriculum, student workbooks, and guidelines. Below are two recent examples of this collaboration:

**2020 Bias and Racial Profiling Training Course (2-Hour Online/Video)**

American Civil Liberties Union – San Diego  
Anti-Defamation League  
Council on American Islamic Relations  
LGBTQ Advocacy  
L.O.V.E is the Answer  
Museum of Tolerance  
Racial Identity and Profiling Act Board

**2020 Use of Force Guidelines**

Racial Identity and Profiling Act Board  
American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California  
League of United Latin American Citizens of Southern California  
Chabot College  
Private Attorneys

- **If you could build a training and educational program for California law enforcement from the ground up, what elements would you redesign? For example, would you make changes to who is conducting the lessons or how they are delivered? Would you regionalize or otherwise further standardize training? Would you introduce new courses or emphasize topics differently, restructure coursework based on an officer's experience, or make other changes?**

The basic academy is the foundational training for all California peace officers. There are currently 41 basic academies across the state. POST is responsible for the training curriculum, safety standards, testing, workbooks, audits, training of academy personnel, training of instructors, and routine physical inspections and audits. Balancing all of these requirements is very important for POST.

Training mandates or specialized topics have at times been inserted into the basic academy curriculum, when, in reality, delivery at the two-year or five-year mark might be more impactful. Basic academy cadets are commonly drinking from the proverbial fire hose. Requiring cadets to learn skills they will not use for several years may end up being lost. Some topic areas and skills could be more effectively taught later in their early law enforcement career.

In an ideal world, POST would have the ability to conduct an in-depth analysis of basic academy instruction to determine what could be removed from the basic academy, and instead instituted into an "advanced" or "master" academy training program. This is complicated by the fact that 41 academies need to continue to operate and POST basic academy obligations must be met. Laws and existing regulations will still need to be adhered to, even in a pilot program. Requiring new peace officers to return to "advanced" or "master" academy training at the 2-year or 5-year mark would be costly, challenging to administer, and disruptive for law enforcement agencies.