



Massachusetts POST Commission

84 State Street, Suite 200, Boston, MA 02109

July 12, 2024

By E-mail

Re: Law Enforcement Agency Certification Standards

Greetings:

As you may know, the Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission (the “Commission”) is developing a law enforcement agency (“LEA”) certification program.

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 6E, § 5(b), the Commission is tasked with certifying “all law enforcement agencies.”

“Law enforcement agencies” are defined as:

(i) a state, county, municipal or district law enforcement agency, including, but not limited to: a city, town or district police department, the office of environmental law enforcement, the University of Massachusetts police department, the department of the state police, the Massachusetts Port Authority police department, also known as the Port of Boston Authority police department, and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority police department; (ii) a sheriff’s department in its performance of police duties and functions; (iii) a public or private college, university or other educational institution or hospital police department; or (iv) a humane society police department in section 57 of chapter 22C.

M.G.L. c. 6E, § 1.

The General Laws further instruct the Commission to certify LEAs in accordance with minimum certification standards, developed by the Commission in consultation with the Municipal Police Training Committee, in at least the following eight areas:

(i) use of force and reporting of use of force; (ii) officer code of conduct; (iii) officer response procedures; (iv) criminal investigation procedures; (v) juvenile operations; (vi) internal affairs and officer complaint investigation procedures; (vii) detainee transportation; and (viii) collection and preservation of evidence.

M.G.L. c. 6E, § 5(b).

At its June 20, 2024 meeting, the Commission discussed whether it would require LEAs to meet any standards in addition to the eight statutorily mandated standards.¹ The Commission indicated it may consider setting additional standards in the categories of administration, personnel and training, and operations. More specific topics include law enforcement officer wellness, recruitment and hiring, instruction requirements, and bias-free policing.² The Commission, however, stated that it would first benefit by hearing from stakeholders before setting any additional standards. Based on your interest in and engagement with criminal justice and policing reform, we determined that the Commission would benefit from your insight and expertise.

The Commission therefore invites you and other interested parties to submit comments on LEA certification.³ Specifically, the Commission invites comments on what additional standards in the categories of administration, personnel and training, and operations the Commission should require LEAs to meet as a prerequisite to certification.

The Commission will accept written comments by e-mail to POSTC-comments@mass.gov with a subject line stating, “LEA Certification Standards” or by mail to Counsel Annie E. Lee, Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission, 84 State Street, Suite 200, Boston, MA 02109. The Commission encourages comments to be submitted by August 9, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your contributions.

Sincerely,

Annie E. Lee

Counsel
Annie.Lee@mass.gov

cc: Enrique A. Zuniga, Executive Director
Randall E. Ravitz, General Counsel

¹ A recording of the Commission’s discussion is available at the following link, starting at 1:06:57: <https://youtu.be/1W0rWcYZhh0?si=-G87socAexkK2Jh&t=4017>.

² Further information concerning LEA certification may be found on the Commission’s website, at <https://www.mass.gov/news/post-commission-introduces-framework-for-law-enforcement-agency-certification>.

³ This notice and the invitation to comment contained therein are neither confidential nor exclusive to you. You are welcome to distribute this notice and invitation to comment to others who may be affected by or interested in LEA certification.