

SYSTEM PLAN

Seventh Edition

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November 2010

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SYSTEM PLAN

Seventh Edition

Mission

To assure that all of the State's criminal justice officers are both competent and ethical in the conduct of their duties.

Our Vision

The system of selection, training, and retention of criminal justice officers will support the continued professional development and growth of all officers and the most effective and ethical provision of protection to all citizens.

Core Values

The North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission is dedicated to meeting the multitude of needs of the criminal justice system in everything it does. The Commission strives to provide quality justice services to all the citizens of North Carolina. To this end the following Core Values will guide the Commission in all its deliberations and decision making:

- Make no decision unless it is thoroughly researched, explained, and evaluated by Commission members, those they represent, and other constituencies.
- Put the concerns of the Criminal Justice System first. The Commission will help the system members, and ultimately all the citizens of North Carolina, achieve their goals. We shall seek their input in all that we can do.
- All persons appearing before the Commission will be courteously received and be allowed to present their point of view in accordance with Commission procedures and the laws of North Carolina.
- Strive to be innovative and responsive in addressing the current and future needs of the Criminal Justice System by a coordinated planning and goal-setting process.
- Be receptive and open to new ideas and concepts and alert to change, which if implemented, will improve the Criminal Justice System in North Carolina.
- Promote a system where only the very best can be selected, employed, and retained by establishing reasonable, yet exacting standards and require that training and other developmental activities improve the competence and ethical behavior of professional criminal justice officers and staff.

Seventh Edition System Plan

2011 - 2016

North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission

The North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission, through N.C.G.S. Chapter 17C, is given the responsibility to establish minimum employment, training, and retention standards for the State's criminal justice officers. The Commission and its predecessors have found it necessary to plan for the effective implementation of innovations in the State's system of criminal justice employment, training, and education. The Commission has always operated under the guidance of a "System Plan." This document is the Seventh System Plan since the original was adopted by the Commission's predecessor in 1979.

Since its initial meeting on January 18, 1980, the Commission has conducted its business through three Standing Committees and an Executive Committee. In 2004, the Standards Committee became the Probable Cause Committee, and standards responsibilities were transferred to the Planning Committee, making it the Standing Committee on Planning and Standards. This Committee is responsible for developing and presenting a System Plan to the full Commission for discussion and approval. The System Plan, once adopted by the Commission, provides direction for the full Commission and its staff.

The Seventh Edition System Plan continues the policy set forth in the preceding plan of setting a legislative agenda and funding strategy for each goal. The Seventh Edition System Plan continues to focus the Commission's resources and energy on a few important goals rather than diluting its efforts by trying to achieve many goals of potentially lesser priority.

The Commission seeks to accomplish its Mission in this System Plan through five (5) Goals, each with set Objectives. The Goals were derived from discussions with the stakeholders of the criminal justice community in four Regional Meetings held across the State in the Spring of 2010. The Planning and Standards Committee also received input from meetings of professional organizations and the Commission itself.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Commission's Standing Committee on Planning and Standards recommends the following goals, with their underlying objectives, for adoption in the Seventh Edition of the System Plan. The Committee conducted public meetings across the state and received input from the criminal justice system and the general public.

While all the goals are important to the system, they are listed in order of priority, based on polling of Commissioners in the Winter of 2010.

Timelines for working on the goals should be established by the committees with responsibility for each goal. Some committees must coordinate working on several goals.

Each goal contains an objective about legislative and funding strategies. That objective is the responsibility of the Commission as the whole and its Executive Committee.

The Commission should recognize that committees will work on some goals without ever completing them and that some goals may never be reached, given budgetary constraints on the Commission and its staff. Even so, we recommend these goals with the conviction that they will promote the mission and vision of the Commission.

Review the professional standards requirements for criminal justice officers to ensure that high quality officers are being hired and retained.

Objectives

- A. Review and revise the Report of Separation Form [F-5B(LE)] to require agency heads to provide more specific information concerning the reason(s) an officer has left the agency, particularly relating to criminal or internal affairs investigations.
- B. Assess the feasibility of the development of recommended policy guidelines or rules concerning past drug use of applicants.
- C. Assess the need for the creation of a central repository for all Personal History Statements (Form F-3) of applicants so that if an applicant applies to more than one agency, a comparison of the forms can be made to ascertain the truthfulness of the applicant.
- D. Investigate the options available to obtain access to the criminal history of prospective BLET students that can be provided to School Directors.
- E. Implement a plan to require lateral transfers to submit a complete application package including the completion of necessary Commission forms.
- F. Synchronize and update questions on all Commission forms so they are asking for the same information (ex., under drug use, asking if the applicant has ever used illegal drugs vs. language that would clarify and include experimentation).
- G. Develop means to enforce more accurate and complete application packages (to address material misrepresentation issues).
- H. Require, as part of the background investigation, consultation with the Criminal Justice Standards Division to view prior certification records.
- I. Work towards implementing the requirement that all forms be electronically submitted to the Criminal Justice Standards Division.
- J. Devise legislative and funding strategies to achieve this goal, specifically additional staff positions, physical storage space for additional forms or computer hardware and software to support electronic submission and storage of forms, linked to existing database structure.

Background

Commissioners and agency heads are concerned about officers with disciplinary and/or criminal issues who are employed with a series of agencies, taking their problems with them to each agency. Many agency heads related incidents where they had difficulty obtaining accurate information about an officer from the former agency, making a hiring decision difficult.

School directors expressed concern about the requirement to obtain criminal history reports for BLET students. Items of concern include:

- The requirement to obtain a copy of the criminal history record and maintain the copy in the student's file even if the student is sponsored and/or employed by a law enforcement agency that has already conducted a records check.
- Law enforcement agencies are not allowed to share the results of criminal record checks with school directors.
- School directors and law enforcement agencies are not authorized to run a record check on a student.

Committee

Planning & Standards
Executive Committee (Objective J)

Continue examination of professional development, retention, and recruitment of criminal justice officers, with the goal of improving the profession.

Objectives

- A. Continue to study recruitment and retention of the criminal justice officer through examination of salary, benefits, and recognition.
- B. Lead in identifying best practices in these areas of study.
- C. Share information with local government and state officials about recruitment, retention, and professional development challenges faced by the criminal justice community.
- D. Research the feasibility of raising the required educational level of criminal justice officers and its impact on reading and writing level/skills.
- E. Continue to assess the newly implemented reading comprehension level standard for BLET students.
- F. Evaluate the need for establishing a minimum standard in writing for entrance into BLET.
- G. Seek legislative support to maintain the waiver of tuition and registration fees for jobrelated training at community colleges for certified personnel.
- H. Devise legislative and funding strategies to achieve this goal, which may include additional staff positions or software/equipment necessary for conducting the above mentioned research.

Background

Recruitment and retention of professional criminal justice officers is a continuing challenge for criminal justice agencies. (The Commission published a White Paper: Hiring and Retention Practices in North Carolina Criminal Justice Agencies, and distributed it to all criminal justice agencies in North Carolina in 2009-2010.)

The Commission must continue to research and evaluate options for improving the appeal of working in the criminal justice system. Study and recommendations should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Improvement of salaries and general compensation;
- Incentives in the certification process that encourage criminal justice officers to stay with their employer and in the profession;
- New ways for the Commission to recognize professional advancement; and
- Progressive retirement options.

Committee

Planning & Standards Committee
Education & Training Committee with Planning & Standards Committee (Objective E)
Executive Committee (Objective G & H)

Continue to develop a program of activities designed to assist all criminal justice officers in addressing the ever-changing societal issues within the state.

Review Commission training for possible improvements in delivery methods and facilities.

Objectives

- A. Survey agencies and criminal justice community to determine current and future training needs, being responsive to the ever-changing societal issues within the state.
- B Research and review technological advances in training methods. Consider greater use of online learning, computerized instruction, and video training, among other methods.
- C. Consider alternate methods of delivery of new lesson plans to school directors. Currently, updated lesson plans are reproduced in full even though the change may only have been to one paragraph.
- D. Assess current training for attention to adult education principles.
- E. Review existing facilities to determine current and future space needs.
- F. Review existing rules to determine if amendments are needed to facilitate implementation of alternative training delivery methods.
- G. Implement a system of regional testing for Commission-certified programs.
- H. Devise legislative and funding strategies to achieve this goal, to include the sustainability of the Justice Academy, support for additional resources (e.g., driving tracks), additional staff support for the Criminal Justice Standards Division.

Background

Input from the criminal justice community in 2010 indicated that there is a strong interest in distance and online learning, computerized testing, and video training. A need was also expressed for more training facilities for specialized topics such as driver training. There were also requests for refresher training for officers who have been away from patrol, either due to reassignment or military leave.

Committee

Education and Training Committee Executive Committee (Objective H)

Review and evaluate the Specialized Instructor Training program to determine its effectiveness in meeting the needs of the criminal justice profession.

Objectives

- A. Study the feasibility of requiring periodic recertification in specific skills for specialized instructors.
- B. Explore ways to increase availability of specialized instructor courses at the East and West campuses of the Justice Academy.
- C. Devise means to encourage instructor evaluators to complete instructor evaluations objectively in order to maintain integrity of the program.
- D. Devise legislative and funding strategies to achieve this goal, to include the sustainability of the Justice Academy.

Background

The criminal justice community expressed concern that specialized instructors are not periodically required to demonstrate skills proficiency in their areas of specialization. Such skills include, but are not limited to:

- Firearms qualification for Firearms Instructors;
- Driving qualification for Driver Instructors;
- Ability to pass POPAT for Physical Fitness Instructors; and
- Successful performance/demonstration of defensive techniques for SCAT Instructors.

Committee

Education & Training
Executive Committee (Objective C)

Evaluate the need for standards in particular areas of criminal justice specialization, including crime scene investigation, Spanish interpretation, K-9 handlers, field training, TASER, OC Spray, PR-24 Baton and ASP.

Objectives

- A. Survey agencies for current and future needs for standards in the identified areas of study.
- B. Assess need for voluntary or recommended standards in each of the identified areas of study.
- C. Devise legislative and funding strategies to achieve this goal based on outcome of the research.

Background

The criminal justice community expressed considerable interest in developing standards for specialized areas within the criminal justice profession, such as crime scene investigation, Spanish interpretation, K-9 handler and field training. Agency heads indicated that state or national certifications in specialized areas enhance officers' credibility in court and help protect agencies from civil and criminal liability.

Committee

Education and Training Committee
Planning & Standards Committee (for questions regarding standards issues)
Executive Committee (Objective C)