



NCLEA Program Guide

North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation

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Program Guide

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North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission
North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission

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CHAPTER 1: PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

The North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation (NCLEA) program is a voluntary opportunity for local police and sheriff's agencies in North Carolina to demonstrate their compliance with North Carolina law enforcement's current best practices and standards. North Carolina law enforcement experts carefully developed these standards to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service and protection of individual rights. The NCLEA operates under authority granted by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission and the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission.

The NCLEA program was developed to assist North Carolina law enforcement agencies in meeting their professional obligations to the citizens of North Carolina. The NCLEA Accreditation Committee, which is comprised of chief executive officers, law enforcement professionals, and other critical partners identified by the two Commissions, developed the NCLEA program and identified the standards for North Carolina law enforcement agencies. The NCLEA Accreditation Committee conducts reviews of the accreditation standards, an agency's efforts towards achieving accreditation, and the accreditation process, with assistance from the Accreditation Advisory Group.

Being accredited means the agency meets or exceeds all the identified standards for North Carolina law enforcement agencies. These standards cover essential aspects of law enforcement operations, including use of force, personnel, training, property and evidence management, and patrol and investigative operations. While being accredited does not guarantee employees will not avoid mistakes it does ensure that the candidate agency has carefully considered critical issues and developed policies and procedures to address these issues. Participating agencies have also established systems to identify and correct deficiencies.

Accreditation is beneficial to law enforcement agencies, the officers within those agencies, and the communities they serve. Sworn officers are the front-line representatives of Police Departments and Sheriff's Offices throughout the state of North Carolina and serve as ambassadors for keeping and maintaining the public trust. The training, policies, and procedures associated with accreditation are critical to ensure officers understand the current best practices adopted by their agencies, and to ensure proper adherence to these standards.

NCLEA assures local governments and the community that their law enforcement agencies are operating in a manner that reflects the current best practices of law enforcement. It can help to reassure citizens, improve community relationships, reduce agency risk, and lead to improved agency performance.

The Accreditation Process

After an application and acceptance to the program for accreditation, an agency must undertake a careful internal review of all its policies and procedures, equipment, facilities, and operations to prepare for compliance with NCLEA standards. Each agency is expected to complete this process within 24 months once their application is approved. The agency must then request an on-site inspection to confirm the agency's compliance with the standards. The on-site inspection consists of two steps. First, NCLEA assigned assessors conduct an electronic review of files, policies, and proofs of compliance. Second, the assessors are sent to the agency to observe the operations, tour the facilities, and interview staff. A final agency report outlining the findings of the on-site visit is forwarded to the NCLEA Accreditation Committee. The committee reviews the results, and if the agency meets all the standards, votes to recommend accredited status to the appropriate Commission.

Once approved by the appropriate Commission, accredited status is awarded for three years. During which the agency must submit an annual report documenting continued compliance with all applicable NCLEA standards. If the agency fails to maintain compliance, the agency could have its accreditation status rescinded.

Agencies Accredited by Other Accrediting Bodies

While NCLEA is a stand-alone state-accrediting body, there are other recognized bodies that provide accreditation such as the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) and the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA). Agencies in North Carolina that are accredited by one of these entities are highly encouraged to participate in the NCLEA Accreditation program. Accredited agencies desiring to participate in NCLEA must submit proof of their current CALEA or IACLEA accreditation by forwarding a copy of its most recent annual review report. The agency must submit proof of compliance for any NCLEA standard identified by the NCLEA Committee as substantially different from a CALEA or IACLEA standard. Additionally, the agency must be in good standing with the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission or the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission. The agency would then complete the NCLEA Agency Agreement and forward it to the NCLEA Program Manager.

Once the Program Manager contacts the agency and their agreement is approved, the agency will need to provide the most current full compliance review from the original accrediting body. The agency would also need to provide any annual compliance reviews that have been completed since the last full compliance review.

If an agency was approved for the NCLEA program based on certification from another accrediting body, and then elects to discontinue/terminate the original accreditation, the agency will be placed in suspended status with the NCLEA program. If the agency wants to retain its NCLEA accreditation, it must build files for NCLEA to show proof of compliance with all applicable accreditation standards, successfully complete a file review, and an on-site assessment. An agency should coordinate with the NCLEA Program Manager to ensure an efficient transition.

For all candidate agencies, an assessment team will be assigned to complete an off-site file review for a minimum of four weeks prior to a scheduled on-site review date. If any issues with standards are noted during off-site file review, the assessors will make notes and review that process during the on-site review.

The assessment team will conduct an on-site review on dates agreed upon by the agency and the assessment team. The assessment team will work with the agency's Accreditation Manager (AM) to create the outline of interviews with agency staff and the agency tour for the scheduled on-site review. The assigned team leader is responsible for completion of a final report, which shall be submitted to the NCLEA Program Manager for review within ten (10) calendar days following the site visit. If edits are needed, the NCLEA Program Manager will assist. Following the approval of any edits, the final report will be submitted to the agency's CEO and to the NCLEA Accreditation Committee for review.

CHAPTER 2: APPLICATION PROCESS

Agency Preparation

The agency should thoroughly review all NCLEA standards to ensure they will be able to meet the requirements and consider any budgetary costs that may be incurred during the accreditation process. The current standards manual is provided to all North Carolina agencies at no charge on the NCDOJ website.

The CEO of an agency pursuing accreditation is required to complete an Accreditation for Leadership Orientation offered periodically through the North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation Network (NCLEAN) or available through the NCLEA program manager. NCLEAN is the accreditation support network in North Carolina, and membership is encouraged to provide networking, policy sharing, and technical assistance to the agency's Accreditation Manager and CEO. This program is intended to ensure the CEO is fully aware of the program requirements.

Initially, the CEO should designate an Accreditation Manager (AM). The Accreditation Manager can be a sworn or non-sworn member of the agency. Ideally, the Accreditation Manager is a member of the agency with a deep understanding of the agency's operations. The CEO should ensure the AM possesses the following qualities:

- Has an interest in accreditation,
- Is computer literate,
- Is organized and efficient,
- Is capable of writing clearly and concisely,
- Is capable of formulating drafts of agency policy statements,
- Can deal effectively with all levels of agency management.

The CEO and Accreditation Manager must complete the NCLEA Agency Agreement and Agency Profile and submit it to the NCLEA program manager. The submission of these documents, once approved, will allow the agency to begin self-assessment.

In addition to the CEO completing the Accreditation for Leadership Orientation described above, the accreditation manager must complete both the Accreditation for Leadership and the Accreditation Manager Training information sessions. It is recommended that the CEO also attend these sessions; however, it is not required unless the CEO is the Accreditation Manager.

Accreditation Manager Training is provided at conferences sponsored by the NCLEAN and occasional regional training programs around the state. Listings of upcoming meetings, training programs, previous training PowerPoints, and support contacts are maintained on

the NCLEAN website at www.NCLEAN.info. This orientation and information sessions are also available through the NCLEA program manager.

CHAPTER 3: INTERNAL REVIEW AND ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Agency Initial Meeting

Because some standards may require specific facility improvements and/or equipment to demonstrate compliance, an initial meeting is recommended to ensure the agency is aware of the requirements in these areas. Facility and equipment issues can be costly, and agencies should know in advance if any standard requirements will require additional budgeting efforts. An experienced Accreditation Manager, the NCLEA program manager or a qualified assessor will conduct the initial visit to ensure the agency is aware of the process and to conduct a facility inspection.

Self-Assessment

Once an agency has been accepted into the program, it will begin reviewing and developing policies, and collecting documentation as proof of compliance for each standard. An agency may begin developing policies and procedures that meet the standards before their official application, or acceptance into the program. Doing so will allow the overall review process to be completed quicker once an agency is accepted into the program. Agencies accepted into the program are expected to complete their internal review and have their on-site inspection within two years (24 months) of their acceptance date.

File Requirements

NCLEA uses PowerDMS to maintain electronic files. Current NCLEA Standards are available to client agencies in PowerDMS. Candidate agencies are encouraged to develop electronic files using PowerDMS, however the use of PowerDMS is not mandatory. Proofs of compliance for each standard should be maintained in electronic files and labeled with the title and date each year. The details of the file construction and maintenance process are covered in Chapter 5 of this manual.

An agency may request that a particular standard be viewed on-site if the documentation is voluminous, or part of the proof cannot be submitted electronically. The agency must maintain electronic documents for all submissions even if the files have been reviewed and accepted electronically. The use of paper files is prohibited.

Compile Supportive Documentation

There are several ways to prove compliance with most standards. If a standard requires a written directive or policy, the agency's written directive or policy must cover all aspects or requirements of the standard. Proofs of compliance with the written directive or policy are items that *prove* the agency is complying with its own written directive or policy and must be

included to show full compliance with the standard. Supportive documentation may include the following:

Written Directives - A policy or general order issued by the CEO or a policy from the agency's operating manual. It can also be local ordinances, state laws, civil service rules, city/county policy or personnel rules, or other written material that require employee compliance. An agency's Written Directive cannot be used as proof of compliance.

Proofs of Compliance - Any written or visual evidence which proves the agency is complying with the Standard(s). This can be written documentation, copies of reports, logs, and internal memorandums, interviews with agency employees, photographs, visual observation of activities, operations, facilities, equipment, or any other evidence, which tends to prove the agency complies with the standards.

Written Documentation - Examples of written documents include, but are not limited to, lesson plans, memos, logbooks, emails, state law sections, or judicial policies and law. Agency policy is usually considered a written directive and will most often be the first item the AM has available to prove compliance.

Other Documentation - May include photographs, logs, agency forms, training rosters, evidence bags, or other items tending to prove compliance.

Interviews - Interviews may be conducted by the assessment team during the on-site review. For example, the director of personnel for the jurisdiction may be listed as a potential interviewee to prove compliance with specific personnel standards. The lead telecommunicator may be listed as the best source of information on telecommunicator's responsibilities during high-speed pursuits. Listing the names of individuals does not ensure that the assessment team will interview that specific person. However, providing the information makes the assessment team's job more manageable and will ensure a faster assessment if they choose to interview the person.

Observation – This type of proof is achieved during the on-site where the assessor just needs to see the facility or situation. There are several standards where observation can prove compliance such as security around the telecommunications infrastructure or the existence of a backup generator.

Electronic Submission of Proofs of Compliance

Each proof of compliance must be uploaded into PowerDMS (or other approved electronic format) or saved as a PDF in a file labeled for the standard. Should an agency choose not to use PowerDMS, additional steps will be required to facilitate the review which must be approved by the NCLEA program manager in advance.

If a standard has multiple sections or requirements, the candidate agency must show compliance with each part of the standard. The proofs of compliance must be labeled consistently throughout the assessment files. Each proof should be labeled item 1, 2, 3, etc., within the attachments within the PowerDMS assessment module (or other approved electronic format) or saved as a PDF in electronic files for the standard. The naming of the

proof should also include the year of the proof (annual date of 2023 or 2024). Proofs of compliance for some standards will be clear and obvious; however, should an agency have any questions concerning the documentation or the level of proof required, they should seek guidance from the program manager. Participation in the North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation Network (NCLEAN) can also assist accreditation managers in understanding what is required for proof of compliance.

If the assessment team believes the documentation submitted is insufficient to prove compliance, the team shall contact the accreditation manager and discuss the issue. The assessment team may suggest other documentation or other adjustments that would demonstrate compliance. Problematic standard(s) may be reviewed during the on-site review, if necessary. If compliance cannot be determined, the team leader will document the finding in the final report.

Extensions

If the candidate agency requires additional time to prepare for their on-site review, they must contact the NCLEA Program Manager to request an extension. The NCLEA program may allow an extension of up to six (6) months following the two-year deadline for the initial on-site inspection. A maximum of two extensions may be granted.

Assessment

Once the agency completes its internal review, builds its accreditation files, and believes it has all on-site review requirements completed, it should contact the NCLEA program manager to schedule the review. Assessments consist of off-site file reviews and an on-site visit by the assessment team. This contact should be no later than four (4) months prior to the proposed on-site date.

The NCLEA program manager will select at least two (2) assessment team members. The program manager will designate one member of the team as the team leader. If the on-site assessment will be the agency's first for NCLEA accreditation, the agency should use NCLEAN resources to conduct a mock review in preparation for the on-site. A mock review is strongly recommended for first-time agencies and beneficial for every subsequent assessment. Should the agency elect not to conduct a mock review they must notify the NCLEA program manager prior to the scheduling of their on-site assessment.

The team leader will direct the timing for the off-site file review and will ensure proper notice to the agency. The two assessors shall electronically review all possible files in advance of the on-site visit, typically 30 days in advance. The NCLEA program manager will schedule the on-site visit in consultation with the assessment team and candidate agency.

The NCLEA program manager shall select assessors who have no personal connection with the candidate agency. The assessment team will travel to the agency and conduct the on-site review by touring the agency, interviewing the CEO and other agency staff, and visually confirming compliance with any standards in which prior documentation was an issue. The assessment team may reconfirm compliance with standards where documentation has

previously been submitted. The team leader will be the contact person for the team and shall moderate all discussions regarding compliance issues. The AM will be expected to be available to answer questions and discuss concerns with the assigned assessment team. When necessary, the program manager will be contacted to provide overall guidance and ensure program consistency.

The agency shall provide the assessment team with a location to conduct their work. The work area shall have internet access, power, and easy access to the AM. Members of the assessment team may want to attend shift change, ride along with officers, and/or interview members of the agency not scheduled for an interview. This means the entire agency needs to be prepared for these possibilities. All agency members will be briefed about the upcoming on-site review, and what to expect. The agency's CEO and AM may not restrict the assessment team's access to agency facilities, personnel (to the extent allowed by law), and should not be limited to the means recommended by the agency to determine compliance.

The team shall conduct an exit interview prior to departure from the agency. The CEO, AM, and any agency leadership the CEO wishes to include should attend. At this meeting, the team will be prepared to discuss the overall findings but will not disclose the final recommendation to the Accreditation Committee.

If the agency failed to meet any standards, the Accreditation Committee may grant up to a ninety (90) day extension. If there are disputed compliance issues, the agency has the option of presenting its case directly to the Accreditation Committee for consideration.

Committee Review and Award

After review and approval by the NCLEA program manager, the final report will be forwarded to the NCLEA Accreditation Committee Chair and the agency CEO. Once final in all respects, the report will be forwarded to the entire Accreditation Committee for action at their next meeting.

The NCLEA program manager will advise the candidate agency of the date the agency will be required to appear at the hearing before the Accreditation Committee. The CEO and AM shall attend the hearing. All agencies are required to attend the NCLEA Accreditation Committee hearing regardless of their status with any other accrediting body.

The NCLEA Accreditation Committee may have questions for the candidate agency and the Committee will vote after the hearing to determine if the agency meets accreditation status. The Accreditation Committee shall vote to recommend that the appropriate full Commission grant or deny accreditation to the applying agency. At the conclusion of the Accreditation Committee's meeting, all recommendations for accreditation will be forwarded to Division Staff to be included on the agenda for the next scheduled Commission Meeting. At the next regular full meeting of the appropriate Commission, the Accreditation Committee will present the NCLEA recommendation, and the full Commission will vote to grant or deny the agency accreditation status.

Now What?

Congratulations! After the vote and determination of a successful first assessment, agencies should share the news with their governing body and citizens. The agency CEO should also communicate to all agency members that accreditation is an ongoing process and that policy revisions and proofs of compliance will be ongoing throughout the term of accreditation.

Accreditation Term

Accredited status is awarded for a three (3) year term. Requirements for maintaining accredited status are provided in Chapter 6.

Official Accreditation

The agency will be identified and introduced as an accredited agency at the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Commission quarterly meeting. The agency will also be listed on the North Carolina Department of Justice's website as a NCLEA-accredited agency.

Certificate Presentation

The agency will receive one framed NCLEA Certificate of Accreditation. If additional certifications are needed, they can be purchased by the agency.

If desired by the NCLEA accredited agency, a member of the NCLEA Accreditation Committee or the appropriate Standards Director can attend a formal awards ceremony at a city or county meeting or other official agency meeting/function.

Accredited Agency Logo

The NCLEA program manager will provide the agency with camera-ready copies of the official "NCLEA" logo. This logo may be displayed on agency letterhead, web pages, or any other official agency material, as long as the awarded agency remains in good standing with NCLEA.

Participation Recommendation

The NCLEA program recommends the agency CEO be a member of the North Carolina Chiefs of Police Association or the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association. Membership provides numerous benefits, including legal updates, legislative representation on law enforcement issues, training, and access to CEOs around the state to assist in solving problems and developing policy.

Agency CEOs are encouraged to support membership of their staff in other professional law enforcement groups in the state, such as the North Carolina Police Executives Association (NCPEA) and the North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation Network (NCLEAN). All of these activities will build relationships and focus on shared information leading to better

policies and compliance with standards.

CHAPTER 4: STANDARDS PROOF AND COMPLIANCE

Standards

The standards are compiled in a separate electronic document for ease of review and study. NCLEA standards are reviewed annually and updated as necessary. New or revised standards must comply with Chapter 8 of this manual.

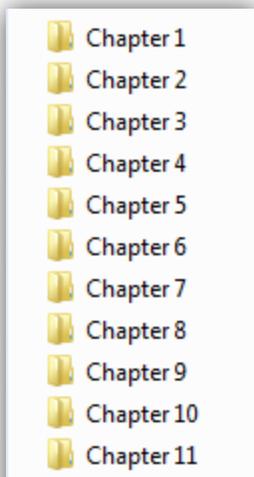
File Development (Electronic Filing System)

As indicated earlier, the agency must develop an electronic filing system for each standard and maintain proof of compliance with each standard in the respective file. Copies of files must be maintained by the agency as long as the agency remains in the program.

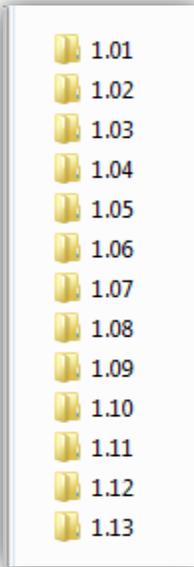
PowerDMS is the preferred option for all agencies to maintain these files and provides a consistent and organized system for building the agency's accreditation files. PowerDMS allows the agency to put all documentation in each file, highlight the documents loaded, and provide easy remote access from assessors to review the agency files.

If the agency chooses NOT to utilize PowerDMS, then its electronic files shall be organized as follows:

Each electronic folder will be labeled as Chapter 1, Chapter 2, etc.



Within each Chapter folder, the Standard will be listed as 1.01, 1.02, etc.



The agency must create a file folder and a Standard Submission Form for each standard number and save it within each standard folder. All written directives and proofs of compliance for each standard will be listed numerically on separate Standard Submission Forms for each standard.

File Development (PowerDMS)

If the agency elects to utilize PowerDMS, file construction training is provided during PowerDMS training. Labeling should be consistent throughout.

Numbering System

Standards are numbered according to their placement within the chapter and section to which they apply. For example, in the standard number 1.02, the "1" refers to Chapter 1, "ADMINISTRATION / ORGANIZATION / PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS," and the ".02" refers to the standard within this chapter, Organization.

Components of the Standards

Standard Statement - Each standard is identified by a specific number, such as 1.02. The standard statement then presents the requirements of each individual standard. Individual standards may contain several separate requirements. Each of the separate requirements must be addressed in the agency's written directive if required, and proofs of compliance must be provided for each requirement.

Standards Containing the Word "If"

Some standards are conditional, or "if" standards. For instance, if the law enforcement

agency does not have a Special Response Team, then the agency is not required to develop a detailed policy regarding the selection of members. The agency must create a file folder and a Standard Submission Form under the appropriate standard number, indicating that the agency does not have a Special Response Team.

Critical Agency Functions performed for the Agency by Other Entities Must Still Meet Standards

For example, if field training officer functions are performed by other agencies for the candidate agency, the agency performing those functions must meet the applicable standards. Having the outside agency conform to the standard is required, as these functions provide critical services to both the candidate agency's officers and the citizens of the community. The candidate agency must provide the appropriate evidence of compliance by the outside agency, and the assessment team may need to interview an officer from the assisting agencies during the on-site assessment.

However, if the services are provided by an agency where the candidate agency cannot impact their behavior, these situations will be discussed with the program manager for consistency of application.

If a candidate agency does not have a holding facility where prisoners are booked and kept without constant supervision and instead uses another agency's facility, they may show those standards in Chapter 9 as "Not Applicable". If the holding facility used is subject to the North Carolina Law Enforcement and Confinement Facilities Statutes (Chapter 153A, Article 10 of the N.C. General Statutes), several standards within Chapter 9 will still apply to the agency.

Waiver from Standard Compliance

The Accreditation Committee may not grant waivers of standards. The standards were designed to be minimum requirements for agencies in North Carolina. Agencies should review the standards manual carefully and resolve any questions before completing the NCLEA Agency Agreement.

Minimization of Documentation

While an agency must prove each part of a standard individually and completely, the minimum number of documents should be submitted to accomplish that purpose. If submitting a portion of a document, the agency should submit a copy of at least one complete page and not cut and paste only the portions of the page which apply. This allows the reviewers to see that it is part of a larger document and the context. If a standard requires proof of training, a sample of two or three certificates or an agency sign-in sheet showing training may be submitted as acceptable proof. The agency should be prepared to provide the assessment team proof that the entire agency has attended training if required for a specific standard.

"Highlighting-Annotation" Matching Proof within a Policy, Directive, Memo, etc.

PowerDMS allows for all documents to be highlighted and for each highlight to be labeled. Microsoft Word and Adobe allow for yellow highlighting of any text. Agencies are expected to highlight a document's specific sections (sentences, paragraphs, pages) that prove compliance with a standard. This allows the assessors to see exactly where the document meets the standard with minimal time wasted looking in a document for the required information. On the rare occasion that an entire document is needed to prove compliance, highlighting is unnecessary.

CHAPTER 5: ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Web Based Electronic Submission and Review of Proofs of Compliance

The agency's accreditation program must maintain a web-based or electronic system for submitting and reviewing proofs of compliance. NCLEA utilizes PowerDMS to maintain the approved state standards, however the use of PowerDMS is not mandatory for NCLEA participation. If the agency chooses to use PowerDMS, it will receive access information after contracting with PowerDMS. PowerDMS allows the agency to review all submitted proofs of compliance, track assessor comments regarding written directives and proofs of compliance, as well as stay current on any updates to the NCLEA standards manual. Regardless of whether the agency elects to contract with PowerDMS or not, the use of an approved web-based or electronic system is required. Paper files will not be accepted.

While most proofs of compliance are submitted and accepted electronically, the on-site proofs and some proofs already accepted electronically may still require physical examination to confirm compliance. Agencies must maintain electronic files on all standards while participating in the program. These files must be maintained and updated throughout the three-year period to maintain current accreditation and facilitate reaccreditation.

Electronic Submission Procedures

Before agencies submit proofs electronically, they must first ensure their documents are in electronic format and have the appropriate areas highlighted. A Standard Submission Form must be included in each individual standard file and updated with all contents of the specified electronic file. Each requirement of a standard must be clearly met, and a different document showing proof of compliance may be necessary for each section of the standard. PDF files or photographs submitted as proofs can be submitted as an additional attachment when submitting the file online.

Viewing the Proofs Submitted

During an assessment using PowerDMS, there is an "Assessment" tab, that the accreditation manager can review and run reports on the proofs of compliance previously submitted by clicking on "status." The status of each proof indicates whether it has been "Accepted", "Rejected," or "Request more information."

CHAPTER 6: MAINTAINING ACCREDITED STATUS

Annual Report and Review of Selected Standards

Accredited status is awarded for a three-year period. During this period, the agency must maintain compliance with all applicable standards and keep each file updated with a current proof for each year of the program. Agencies must keep up with file construction and maintain current written directives and proofs of compliance throughout the award period.

The agency is required to submit an NCLEA Annual Report. The NCLEA Annual Report Form is available for download on the NCLEA website. This form requires the agency to note any changes in agency policy or operation that impact individual standards. If the agency made policy changes impacting critical standards, copies of those policy changes must also be submitted with the NCLEA Annual Report.

The agency's CEO must sign the annual report indicating that the agency continues to meet or exceed all standards. If the agency does not meet all standards, the agency must indicate what it is doing to correct the deficiency and come back into compliance.

Should an agency fail to submit these reports in a timely manner, the NCLEA program manager will contact the agency. Evidence that an agency is not complying with NCLEA standards, including but not limited to a failure to promptly submit required reports and proofs, will result in the NCLEA program manager notifying the members of the NCLEA Accreditation Committee of the deficiency. The NCLEA Accreditation Committee may recommend action to the full Commission up to possible revocation of the agency's accredited status.

Renewing Accredited Status

If the agency CEO wishes to renew its agency's accredited status, then during the last twelve months of the three-year accreditation period the agency's Accreditation Manager must provide documentation and proofs of compliance for all standards just as they did during the initial accreditation process.

Since all re-accredited agencies will have been through the process at least once, the agency should be familiar with the file requirements and proofs of compliance. The agency must apply for a reaccreditation assessment at least seven months prior to their anniversary date using the form found on the NCLEA website. The NCLEA program manager is the primary contact for the agency during this reaccreditation renewal process. An assessment and NCLEA Accreditation Committee review will be conducted in the same manner as in the initial process.

Agency Re-Accreditation Process

Agencies should continually maintain and review each file and update proofs in the files once the initial on-site assessment and award are completed. It is incumbent upon the agency's Accreditation Manager to ensure this occurs. The following steps should be taken to ensure a complete review and compliance with the standards:

- Review the most current NCLEA Standards Manual and compare the standard and proof of compliance requirements with those already in the file. Take note if there have been changes to the standards, such as if the number of standards has changed, new standards have been added, or if minimum requirements for acceptance have been modified since the agency's last review. If the agency is using PowerDMS, PowerDMS will notify the agency of standard updates for their assessment files.
- Ensure written directives comply with current standards. Collect any new proofs of compliance needed for the years subject to review. Make sure the proofs required for showing compliance are present and are within the assessment period prior to the anticipated on-site.
- Schedule a mock assessment using NCLEA resources prior to the off-site file review and on-site assessment by NCLEA assessors.

Accreditation managers should note that some files may already contain the required proof for this and subsequent reviews. For instance, a Charter provision designating the creation of the agency may already be present in the file. However, where training or periodic activity is required, the agency must show that these activities have occurred within the previous 12-month period. (New employees trained in required policies or provided copies, etc.)

Agencies wishing to renew their accredited status must have their on-site assessment scheduled a minimum of 90 days prior to the expiration date of their accredited status. All proofs of compliance for this review must be dated within the assessment period, which runs from the date of the last on-site assessment to the current on-site assessment.

Reapplication for Accredited Status after Failure to Complete Review Process or After Revocation

Agencies that fail to complete the initial review process within the timeframe allowed, or who have lost their accredited status due to any other action of the NCLEA Accreditation Committee and full Commission can reapply after six months from the date of the action. The Committee will again act upon the application without prejudice as in any other application.

CHAPTER 7: NEW OR REVISED STANDARDS

Law enforcement is an ever-changing field. As such, it is anticipated that modifications and additions will be made to the standards over time. The NCLEA Advisory Group is responsible for keeping the standards up to date and consistent with current law enforcement best practices and legal mandates. The NCLEA Advisory Committee may consider at their periodic meetings any change, modification, or additions to the standards. Any CEO, assessor, NCLEA program manager, or accredited agency may recommend modifications or additions. The NCLEA Advisory Group will submit to the NCLEA Accreditation Committee all suggested standard revisions. The NCLEA Accreditation Committee is responsible for recommending any changes to the NCLEA standards and then submitting the final version to the two full Commissions for final approval.

When additions or modifications to the standards are made, the NCLEA Accreditation Committee shall implement an effective date for the addition or modification. The NCLEA Accreditation Committee will also determine if the currently accredited agencies must meet the new or modified standards. If currently accredited agencies are required to meet the new or modified standard, the committee will establish a timeframe for compliance. The program manager will notify the agencies. Otherwise, agencies already in accredited status must comply with the revision or modification at their next accreditation renewal.

Interpretation of Standards and Appeal

The NCLEA program manager is charged with the interpretation of standards and the determination of sufficient proof of compliance. If an agency requests, the NCLEA program manager will seek an interpretation of a standard or proof of compliance from the NCLEA Accreditation Committee. If the agency disagrees with the interpretation of the standard by the NCLEA Accreditation Committee, the agency can request from the proper Commission revisions and clarifications regarding the standard.

CHAPTER 8: FEES AND EXPENSES

There are no fees required to participate in the NCLEA Program. There may be a cost associated with the purchase of software to maintain the agency's files electronically.

CHAPTER 9: NCLEA ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Membership

The NCLEA Accreditation Committee manages the overall operation of the NCLEA Program and recommends awards to the appropriate Commission for qualifying agencies. The Accreditation Committee establishes and recommends approval of the standard for North Carolina law enforcement, develops, and manages a system for accepting applications for accreditation, develops and manages a system for evaluating a candidate agency's compliance with the established standards, and recommends accredited status for agencies that have adequately proven compliance with the established standards.

Organization

The Accreditation Committee is composed of members appointed as follows:

NC Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission*	2
NC Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission*	2
NC Association of Chiefs of Police*	2
NC Sheriffs' Association*	2
NC Police Executives Association*	1
Historically Black College or University **	1
Criminal Justice Minority / Minority Association **	1
Citizen **	1

* Appointed by the governing body of the entity listed

**Appointed jointly by the Chair of the Criminal Justice Commission and Chair of Sheriffs' Commission

Non-voting members of the committee include the Director of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Standards Division, the Director of the North Carolina Sheriffs' Standards Division, and the NCLEA program manager. Recording duties are

performed by the NCLEA program manager or designee.

Vacancies will be filled immediately, and terms shall rotate to ensure historical knowledge on the committee.

Meetings

The NCLEA Accreditation Committee and the NCLEA Advisory Group will meet as needed to consider the business related to the program. The NCLEA Accreditation Committee and the NCLEA Advisory Group may meet and act virtually or electronically if approved by the Chair.

Voting

A quorum exists when a majority of voting members of the committee are present. Decisions are made based on a simple majority of those present and voting.

When issues are submitted to the committee members for an electronic vote, the Chair shall establish a time limit, and a majority of those voting within the time limit shall decide the issue. A minimum of five committee members voting within the time period is required for a quorum and decision.

Committee members who have a personal relationship with the candidate agency or the candidate agency CEO will abstain from voting on accreditation for that agency. If a tie vote occurs, the decision is postponed until all committee members can vote.

The NCLEA Advisory Group is made up of subject matter experts in the fields of accreditation and law enforcement. Non-voting members of the advisory group shall include the Director of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Standards Division, the Director of the North Carolina Sheriffs' Standards Division, and the NCLEA program manager. Recording duties are performed by the NCLEA program manager or designee. The Chair, Vice-Chair and members are appointed jointly by the Criminal Justice and Sheriffs Standards Directors.

The NCLEA Advisory Group provides support and research for the NCLEA Accreditation Committee. Membership will be managed by the Divisions and will maintain a balance of police and sheriff representation. Generally, appointees will have subject matter expertise in accreditation matters.

CHAPTER 10: AWARDING COMMISSIONS

The NCLEA Program is jointly managed by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission and the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission. While there is overlap in some areas, the individual Commissions retain approval authority for individual programs as indicated in this chapter.

The jointly appointed Accreditation Committee will meet and review all final reports for agencies under consideration for accredited status. The Accreditation Committee will vote on each agency and make recommendations to the appropriate Commission on awarding accredited status. The Chair of the Accreditation Committee, or the Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair, shall present the agency to the Commission as soon as feasible to do so following a recommendation from the Accreditation Committee on accreditation status. Each Commission is responsible for reviewing and awarding accredited status as follows:

Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation Program:

- The Sheriff's Commission reviews and grants accredited status to Sheriff's Offices.
- The CJ Commission reviews and grants accredited status to police departments.

Public Safety Communications Accreditation Program:

- The Sheriff's Commission is responsible for reviewing and awarding accredited status to all Sheriff's Office Communications Centers
- The CJ Commission is responsible for reviewing and awarding accredited status to Police Department Communication Centers and all county-based or regional Communications Centers not operated by the Sheriff's Office.

Detention Facility Accreditation Program:

- The Sheriff's Commission is responsible for the review and awarding of accredited status to all detention facilities.

CHAPTER 11: ESSENTIAL STANDARDS PROGRAM (ESP)

The NCLEA Essential Standards Program (ESP) is a voluntary opportunity for local police and sheriff's agencies in North Carolina to demonstrate their commitment with North Carolina law enforcement's current best practices and standards. The NCLEA ESP operates under authority granted by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission and the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission. The ESP is considered to be a "gateway to accreditation" and is a Professional Certificate program.

The NCLEA ESP was developed to assist North Carolina law enforcement agencies in meeting their professional obligations to the citizens of North Carolina. The NCLEA ESP is comprised of twenty (20) standards, ensuring that small and rural agencies that do not have the resources to enroll in the full accreditation program, can demonstrate compliance with a minimal number of essential standards that help to ensure transparency, promote public trust, and foster accountability. Standards may be added as deemed necessary by the Commissions.

Like approved accreditation programs, agencies enrolled in the ESP will establish electronic files and be audited by outside Assessors to ensure their compliance with approved standards. The NCLEA Accreditation Committee conducts reviews of the agencies that complete the ESP and makes a recommendation to the appropriate Commission to award a professional certificate of completion. The certificate is for three (3) years, similar to the accreditation program.