



NCLEA Program Manual

North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation

North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation (NCLEA)

Program Manual

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North Carolina Department of Justice Law Enforcement Training & Standards Division

North Carolina Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards
North Carolina Sheriffs' Education Training & Standards

Email: NCLEA@NCDOJ.gov

Program Director Phone: 919-661-5980

P.O. Drawer 149 | Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Website: <https://ncdoj.gov/north-carolina-law-enforcement-accreditation/>

CHAPTER 1

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

The North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation (NCLEA) program is a voluntary process where police and sheriff agencies in North Carolina prove their compliance with North Carolina law enforcement's current best practices or standards. North Carolina law enforcement professionals carefully developed these standards to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service and protection of individual rights.

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 Executive Committee, which is comprised of chief executive officers, law enforcement professionals, and other critical partners identified by the Standards Division, developed the NCLEA program and identified the standards for North Carolina law enforcement agencies. The NCLEA Executive Committee now conducts reviews of the accreditation standards, agencies' efforts towards achieving accreditation, and the accreditation process, with assistance from the Accreditation Advisory Committee.

Being "Accredited" means, the agency meets or exceeds all of the identified standards for North Carolina law enforcement agencies. These standards cover all 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 against mistakes, it does ensure that the candidate agency has carefully considered critical issues; and developed policies and procedures to address these issues, as well as established systems to identify and correct problems.

"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, though they often operate while out in the field. These officers have the authority to detain, question and arrest suspects; and they must do so exercising good judgement and decision making every day. 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 serves to assure both local governments and citizens of a community that their law enforcement agency is operating in a manner that reflects the current best practices of law enforcement. It reduces agency risks. It can reassure citizens and improve community relationships – and can also lead to improved performance of the agency.

The Accreditation Process

An agency that has been awarded "Accredited" status has undertaken a careful internal review of all its policies and procedures, equipment, facilities, and operations; and has then requested an outside agency on-site visit to confirm the agency's compliance with the standards. After an independent review of the agency's written policies and proof of

compliance, a team of assessors is sent to the agency to observe the operations, tour the facilities, and interview staff. A Final Agency Report outlining the findings of the assessors will be forwarded to the NCLEA Executive Committee. The committee reviews the results and, if the agency meets all the standards, votes to award "Accredited" status.

The "Accredited" status is awarded for three years. During the three-year period, the agency must submit an annual report documenting continued compliance with all the agency's applicable NCLEA standards. If compliance is not maintained, the agency could have its accreditation status rescinded.

Agencies Accredited by the Commission of Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) and Other Accrediting Bodies

While NCLEA is a stand-alone accrediting body, CALEA agencies in North Carolina are highly encouraged to participate in the NCLEA Accreditation program. CALEA agencies desiring to participate in NCLEA must submit proof of their current CALEA accreditation. The agency would forward a copy of its most recent CALEA annual file review report. The agency would be required to submit proof of compliance for any NCLEA standard identified by the NCLEA Committee as substantially different from CALEA standard. The agency must be in good standing with the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Commission or the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education & Training Standards Commission.

The agency would first complete the NCLEA Agency Agreement and forward it to the Program Manager.

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

An assessment team would be assigned and provided the copies of the reports to review 4 weeks prior to the date of their scheduled on-site review. If any issues with standards are noted in the report, the assessors will make notes and review that process during the on-site review.

After the report review is completed, 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 on-site review date scheduled.

The lead assessor will complete the final report to be submitted to the NCLEA Executive Committee for approval.

If the agency for some reason chooses not to provide documentation from other accrediting bodies, they would be required to build all the NCLEA accreditation files.

CHAPTER 2

PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

The following definitions may be used in the program manual or standards manual:

Accreditation Cycle: The accreditation cycle is calculated from the most recent assessment date to the next assessment date, for reaccreditation.

Accreditation Manager (AM): The person designated by the CEO of an agency to administer and oversee the Accreditation program for the Candidate Agency. This may be a sworn or non-sworn member of the agency or a retired agency volunteer. In some agencies, the Accreditation Manager may be the CEO.

Administrative Review: A complete list that indicates whether policy, training, equipment, or disciplinary issues should be addressed. This document is prepared by or for the CEO or designee.

Agency Jurisdiction: The limits or territory within which an agency's authority may be exercised.

Appeal: To resort to a higher authority or greater power, as for sanction, corroboration, or a decision that could reverse a decision.

Assessment: When a Candidate Agency has determined it has completed compliance with all of the applicable standards, the NCLEA Program Manager is advised and a team of assessors are assigned to conduct an assessment of the proofs of compliance. The number of assessors and the length of time needed to conduct the assessment will be determined by the NCLEA Program Manager.

Assessors: Current (or former Accreditation Managers) and Sworn or Non-Sworn Law Enforcement Professionals with at least 5 years accreditation experience who have been trained specifically in the NCLEA assessment process and have been carefully selected by the NCLEA Program Manager to conduct assessments of candidate agencies.

Audit: A comprehensive examination of records to ensure compliance with established standards, policies, and operational procedures, and to recommend any indicated changes.

Available Workforce: All individuals eligible and qualified to perform specific duties and responsibilities.

Biased Policing: The inappropriate consideration of specified characteristics while enforcing the law or providing police services. Specified characteristics includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnic background, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, age, disability, political status, or any other legally protected characteristics.

Bolawrap: Also known as "remote handcuffs", it is a remote restraining device that discharges a kevlar tether to restrain a subject's legs or arms.

Candidate Agency: A North Carolina law enforcement agency that has contracted with the NCLEA to conduct an assessment of their compliance with the NCLEA program.

Capital Assets: Property of any kind related to and owned by an agency, this includes moveable or immovable property.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO): The duly authorized top administrator of the law enforcement agency whom is the highest-ranking executive for the law enforcement agency and possesses ultimate command authority for the operation of the agency. Examples would include Chiefs, Sheriffs, Colonels, and Directors.

Chain of Command: An organization's hierarchy with formal lines of communication through each level of command.

Chokeholds: "A physical maneuver that restricts an individual's ability to breathe for the purposes of incapacitation..." Executive Order 13929

Civil Arrest: A civil arrest is made pursuant to a written order by a judge of a competent jurisdiction in a civil action or proceeding. Such written orders may be given by a supreme court, the family court, county court, district court, surrogate's court, or magistrate's court, depending upon the area of the country.

Compliance Files: Files created for each Standard which contains the Candidate Agency's Proofs of Compliance with that standard.

Confidential Informants: An individual who cooperates with a law enforcement agency confidentially for protection of the person, the agency's intelligence gathering or investigative efforts and:

1. The individual seeks to avoid arrest or prosecution for a crime, or mitigate punishment for a crime for which a sentence will be or has been imposed; and
2. Is able, by reason of his or her familiarity or close association with suspected criminals, to:
 - a. Make a controlled buy or controlled sale of contraband, controlled substances, or other items that are material to a criminal investigation;
 - b. Supply regular or constant information about suspected or actual criminal activities to a law enforcement agency; or
 - c. Otherwise provide information important to ongoing criminal intelligence gathering or criminal investigative efforts.

Consular: An individual of diplomatic status.

Contract: An agreement between a Candidate Agency and the NCLEA that provides initial and ongoing evaluation of a candidate agency's compliance with each Standard and grants "Accredited" status.

Deadly Force: The use of force that, when enforced, could cause death or great bodily harm and includes, but is not limited to: the firing of a firearm in the direction of the person to be

arrested and the firing of a firearm at a vehicle in which the person to be arrested is riding. The terms “deadly force” and “lethal force” are synonymous and may be used interchangeably to meet the standards in this manual.

De-escalation: An attempt to stabilize a situation where possible force would be used by communicating, verbally or non-verbally, in order to reduce threat so that more resources can be used to resolve the situation and reduce force necessary.

Disabled Detainee: A person who has been arrested or is in the custody of the agency who has any physical or mental condition that limits movement, senses, or activities.

Discrimination: The unjust/prejudicial treatment of individuals. Specified characteristics includes, but are not limited to, race, ethnic background, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, age, disability, political status, or any other legally protected characteristics.

Document Submission Form (DSF): A form designed to facilitate and document submission of proofs of compliance and explain the content of the proofs submitted.

Duty to Intervene: An officer's responsibility to prevent or stop the use of excessive force by another officer when it is objectively reasonable to do so.

Electronic Submission Process: The method of submitting required proofs of compliance via creating scanned files and having those proofs reviewed and accepted prior to the Final Compliance Review.

Emergency Response: An actual or potential situation that has an immediate threat to life or property.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): The program designated to assist in concerns or problems (personal or job related), that could affect an employee's personal or professional well-being. The program may be done in house, including Human Resources, or may be outsourced to a private or public entity.

Equal Employment Opportunity: The offer of employment and conditions of employment regardless of race, creed, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, or physical impairment.

Ethics: Moral principles that govern an individual or an agency's conduct.

Extra-duty Employment: Any secondary employment where the actual or potential use of law enforcement authority is a condition of employment.

Eyewitness: A person having information or evidence relevant to a crime.

Field Training: A program that trains newly hired personnel in application of skills and knowledge previously learned in the academy, or previous experience that relates to their current employment

Field Training Officer: An experienced or senior officer with specialized training who is responsible for the training and evaluation of newly hired line personnel.

Follow-up Investigation: An extension of the preliminary investigation intended to close the case, make an arrest, and/or recover stolen property.

General Order: Written Directives concerned with policy, rules, and procedures of an agency's organizational components.

Gender Identity/Expression: One's personal image of themselves as female (she/hers), male (he/his) or neither (they/theirs). This can be presented by personality and/or appearance.

Harassment: Any form of intimidation.

Hazardous Materials (Potentially Infectious Material): Any human body fluid, tissue, or organ other than intact skin. Any biologic agent or other disease-causing agent which upon exposure, ingestion, inhalation, or assimilation into any person, will or may reasonably be anticipated to cause disease or death.

Holding Facility: Any locked area, space, or enclosure where a prisoner/detainee is placed to prohibit freedom of movement.

Incident Command System (ICS): Organization and coordination of members and agencies to stabilize an incident while protecting life, property and the environment. There are five major components: command, planning, operations, logistics, and finance/administration.

Initial Meeting: An optional meeting between the Candidate Agency and the NCLEA Program Manager as the agency is beginning the Self-Assessment Review Process. The NCLEA Program Manager will conduct an inspection of the agency facility to identify any physical or equipment issues which would pose a problem in gaining recognized status.

In-service Training: Specified formal/informal training that enhances personnel's knowledge, skills and/or abilities. This can be in the form of formal retraining, specialized, promotional, advanced training or less formal types of instruction.

Interrogation: The act of formally questioning individuals.

Inventory of Property/Evidence: A list of all goods or materials in the facility for cataloging and accountability purposes.

Lateral Entry: The hiring of a new employee at an advanced rank or salary because of prior experience elsewhere and/or other job credentials.

Less-Lethal Force: The use of force that is not likely to cause death or great bodily harm. The terms "non-deadly force", "less-than-lethal force" and "less-lethal force" are synonymous and may be used interchangeably to meet the standards in this manual.

Line of Duty: All who are authorized, required or associated with a particular role or position.

Mental Illness: Any condition characterized by impairment of an individual's normal cognitive, emotional, or behavioral functioning, and caused by social, psychological, biochemical, genetic, or other factors, such as infection or head trauma.

Mock Review: An on-site evaluation conducted by individuals involved in accreditation to assist an agency in preparation for an assessment. This informal review is voluntary for an agency and is completely controlled by the Candidate Agency.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): A system for incident management that provides a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, local and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

NCLEA Executive Committee: A Committee of CEOs or other personnel associated with the criminal justice profession who are identified by the Director for the North Carolina Criminal Justice Standards Division, whom make the decisions regarding the NCLEA program process, modifications and additions to standards, and vote to award "Accredited" status to agencies which have proven compliance with standards.

NCLEA Program Manager: An individual with overall management oversight of the program staffed by the North Carolina Criminal Justice Standards Division and the Accreditation Committee.

No Knock Warrants: A warrant authorized by a judge the permits officers to search a location without immediate notification to the residents.

Non-sworn: An employee of an agency that supports the agency but has limited or no legal powers and is not required to take an oath.

North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation Network (NCLEAN): A public safety accreditation support network in North Carolina, which supports agencies with law enforcement accreditation.

North Carolina Law Enforcement Training and Standards: The North Carolina Sheriffs' Education & Training Standards Division and the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Division. These divisions of the North Carolina Department of Justice are assigned to regulate law enforcement certification, accreditation, and training.

Off-duty Employment: Any secondary employment that does not use actual or potential law enforcement authority as a condition of employment.

Off-Site Electronic File Review: An offsite evaluation by the assigned assessment team not associated with the Candidate Agency. This Off-Site Review will ensure the agency's compliance with any required written directives and proofs of compliance for each standard.

On-Site Review: An on-site evaluation by the assigned assessment team not associated with the Candidate Agency. This On-Site Review will ensure compliance with standards which requires visual confirmation of compliance. The Team Leader will prepare a report of their findings from the off-site and on-site reviews. The final report will be submitted to the NCLEA Accreditation Committee for action.

Performance Evaluation: An assessment of an individual's day-to-day conduct that addresses any issues pertaining to the individuals work.

Personal Equipment: Equipment approved by an agency for the use of employees. This can be, but is not limited to: badge, belts, cartridge carrier, departmental and rank insignia, flashlight, handcuffs and case, notebook, reflective clothing, side arm and holster, tear gas canister, and whistle.

Personnel Early Warning System: An early identification system for personnel who may need corrective action and/or intervention. There is a procedure for implementation of corrective action.

Policy: A statement that encompasses the agency's philosophical basis for the agency's procedures.

Procedure: A set of established methods and actions that are required for conducting affairs of the agency.

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, visual observation of activities, operations, facilities, equipment, or any other evidence, which tends to prove the agency is in compliance with the standards.

Property and Evidence Custodian: The person who holds authority for the day-to-day supervision and operation of the property and evidence function.

Reasonable Belief (Objectively Reasonable): An officer's evaluation of their current situation in totality and their determination of the necessity of force needed. A reasonable level of force is that which a reasonably prudent officer would use if under the same circumstances.

Recruitment Activities: Any activities or events designed to scout potentially qualified employees or personnel for applicable positions.

Recruitment Plan: A written plan describing methods to be utilized for recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified possible personnel.

Reserve Officer Program: An unlicensed civilian volunteer, paid or unpaid, sworn as a Reserve Officer, whose function is to augment the police officers of the department in the performance of their duties. Reserve Officers have no police authority and may only take enforcement action when they are working in conjunction with and are under the direct on-site supervision of an officer of a given agency.

Review: To examine or study; less formal than an analysis.

Rolling Roadblocks: Authorized vehicles leading traffic in order to slow movement for reasons such as a funeral, construction, etc.

Search and Rescue: The coordination of agencies and individuals to locate missing or injured individuals in the wilderness, bodies of water, or elsewhere.

Search and Seizure Warrants: A warrant authorized by a judge that allows officers to take possession of specified property believed to be associated with a crime

Selection Criteria: The rules, standards, or requirements needed to adequately fill a specific position.

Selection Process: Both required criteria and procedures utilized to determine which candidate will fill a position.

Self-Assessment Review Process: The process wherein a Candidate Agency reviews its policies, procedures, and operations to ensure it meets the standards. Proofs of Compliance are collected and placed in Compliance Files. Many of the Proofs may be submitted electronically to the NCLEA Program Manager for acceptance.

Serious Physical Injury: A bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, constitute sexual harassment when:

- (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
- (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Special Purpose Vehicle: A specified vehicle utilized due to weather, terrain, or special operational needs, etc. Includes SWAT trucks, bomb disposal vehicles, mobile command posts, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), personal watercraft, boats, aircraft, prisoner transport vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles, and animals.

Specialized Assignment: A duty related to a higher level of responsibility and specialized training. This position may have higher pay or benefits.

Specialized Training: Specific training that enhances skills and knowledge taught in either recurrent or other in-service programs. Specialized training may address supervisory, management, and/or executive development training, or it may include technical and job specific subjects, e.g., homicide investigation, fingerprint examination, juvenile investigation.

Standards: A compilation of law enforcement practices and requirements determined by the NCLEA Executive Committee to be the most appropriate for North Carolina Law Enforcement agencies.

Standard Operating Procedure: A written directive which specifies how agency activities are carried out.

Stationary Roadblocks: An unmoving roadblock intended to prohibit motorist from evading arrest.

Strip Search/Body Cavity Search: Visual or manual internal inspection of an individual's body to make sure there is no illegal/prohibited materials. This search must be done in private and by an officer or official of the same identifying sex.

Stop Sticks/Road Spikes: Device utilized to impede or stop the movement of an individual in a wheeled vehicle by puncturing the tires.

Sworn Officer: An employee who is certified by the NCDOJ Standards Commission who possesses full law enforcement and arrest powers and is employed either full-time or part-time by a law enforcement agency. This individual may or may not be compensated.

Tactical Team: A specific group of personnel who are specially trained and equipped to handle high-risk and unique situations, e.g., snipers, barricaded persons, hostage takers. This does not include units whose primary purpose is to handle HazMat, Hurricane/Disaster response or WMD incidents.

Task Force: The coordination of resources to attend to a specific operational need. These groups must have communication and a leader.

Temporary Detention: The portion of detention that begins once an individual is secured yet unattended in a secure area with restraining devices. An individual in temporary detention should be held for no longer that necessary and is to be monitored closely.

Terrorism: Use of violence against persons or property with intent to intimidate or coerce a specific government or population to fulfil a personal objective.

Transport Vehicle: Any vehicle used to transport a prisoner. This does not include any buses, trains or airplanes that may be used for transport.

Transporting Officer: The officer responsible for the safety and transportation of a prisoner.

Unity of Command: For an organization, there is one immediate supervisor.

Unlawful Harassment: Conduct that is intimidating, hostile or offensive and interferes with an individual's or group's work performance.

Vascular Neck Restriction: A technique that is used to incapacitate individuals by restricting the flow of blood to their brain.

Warning Shots: Firing a firearm with no intention of harm but only to intimidate individual(s) into compliance. This is considered an act of deadly force.

Written Directives: Policy/procedure, plan, rule, general/special order, state law or local ordinance, etc. that applies to an agency.

CHAPTER 3

APPLICATION PROCESS

Agency Preparation

The CEO of an agency pursuing accreditation is required to complete an Accreditation for Leadership orientation offered periodically through NCLEAN or available through the NCLEA Program Manager. 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 any sworn or non-sworn member of the agency. It is beneficial to choose an Accreditation Manager who has a good understanding of the agency's operations. The CEO should ensure the AM they choose possesses the following qualities:

- Has an interest in doing the job,
- Is computer literate,
- Is organized and efficient,
- Is capable of writing clearly and concisely,
- Is capable of formulating drafts of agency policy statements,
- Is capable of dealing effectively with all levels of agency management,
- In some cases, such as smaller agencies, the CEO may be the Accreditation Manager.

The CEO and Accreditation Manager will complete the NCLEA Agency Agreement and submit it to the NCLEA Program Manager. The submission of this agreement will begin the initial approval process to begin the agency's internal review process on their journey towards accreditation.

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 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 the conferences sponsored by the North Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation Network (NCLEAN) and occasional regional training programs around the state. 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. 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.

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

CHAPTER 4

INTERNAL REVIEW AND ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Agency Initial Meeting

Because some of the standards require specific facility and equipment standards to be met, an initial meeting is recommended to ensure the agency is aware of their needs in these areas. Facility and equipment issues can be costly, and agencies should know well in advance if any standard requirements will require additional budgeting efforts. An experienced Accreditation Manager (AM) will conduct the initial visit to ensure the agency is aware of the documentation process and conduct a facility inspection. The tour will help the agency identify any changes that need to be made within the building or procedures.

Internal Review Process

Once an agency has been accepted into the program, they will begin reviewing and developing policies and collecting documentation as proof of compliance. There is no reason an agency cannot begin developing policies and procedures that meet the standards before their official application or acceptance into the program. Doing so will allow the review to be completed more quickly once an agency is accepted into the program, and the overall review process shortened significantly. Agencies accepted into the program are expected to complete their internal review and have their on-site within two years (24 months) of their acceptance date.

File Requirements

The NCLEA Standards are available to agencies in PowerDMS and electronically. Candidate agencies are encouraged to develop electronic files using PowerDMS. Proofs of Compliance for each standard should be maintained in the respective files and labeled with 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. Electronic file copies of all submissions are maintained by the agency even if reviewed and accepted electronically.

The self-assessment will typically begin as an exercise in comparison. The Accreditation Manager will start by comparing current agency policy to the accreditation standards. Many AM's will quickly conclude that the agency is closer to compliance than initially thought. Law enforcement typically adapts to legislative changes, and most agencies quickly adopt a policy consistent with the law. As the AM compares what must be covered in the policy for the accreditation purposes, they will probably find that some adjustments are necessary.

Compile Supportive Documentation

There are several ways to prove compliance on most standards. If a standard requires a written directive or policy, the agency's written directive must cover all aspects or requirements of the standard. Proofs of compliance with the written directive are items that prove the agency is complying with their own directive and must be included to show full compliance with the standard. Supportive documentation may come in the following forms:

Written Directives - A policy or general order of the department issued by the CEO or a policy from the agency's operating manual. It can also be local ordinances, state laws, civil service rules, collective bargaining agreements, city/county policy or personnel rules, or other written material that requires employee 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, visual observation of activities, operations, facilities, equipment, or any other evidence, which tends to prove the agency is in compliance 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, log sheets, agency forms, training rosters, evidence bags, or any number of other items.

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 interview to prove compliance with specific personnel standards. The lead dispatcher may be listed as the best source of information on dispatch responsibilities during high-speed pursuits. Listing the names of individuals does not ensure that the assessment team will interview the person. However, if the Assessment Team does choose to interview the suggested person; the AM has already supplied them with the name (and proper spelling) of the person to be interviewed. This makes the Assessor's job more manageable, and that makes the assessment go faster.

Observation - This type of proof is the easiest for the Assessor and probably the least utilized. There are several standards where observing the action or a piece of equipment is proof that the agency is in compliance with the standard. AM's should be aware that assessors are not required to settle for a single proof of compliance unless it is overwhelming. The wise AM will list proofs in at least two categories, and in some cases, all four categories. The more ways an AM can show the agency is genuinely doing what they say they are doing, the better. The Assessors will be looking to find compliance with the first few items they look at in the electronic folder. Having additional proofs will never hurt, but not having enough is a common shortcoming.

Electronic Submission of Proofs of Compliance

An agency may request an electronic submission standard be reviewed on-site due to the amount of proof required to show compliance. Each proof of compliance will be uploaded into PowerDMS or saved as a PDF chronologically in a file labeled for the standard.

If a standard has multiple parts 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 or saved as a PDF in electronic files for the standard. The naming of the proof should also include the date of the proof. Proofs of Compliance for some standards will be clear and obvious. However, if the agency has any questions concerning the documentation or the level of proof required, they should review the "Clarifying Comment" section of the standard for clarification. The NCLEA Program Manager may also be contacted for clarification of what might be required. 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 documentation submitted is believed to be insufficient in proving compliance, the Assessment Team shall contact the Accreditation Manager and discuss the issue. The Assessment Team may suggest other documentation or other adjustments that would demonstrate compliance. This standard could be reviewed during the on-site, if needed, for compliance. If compliance cannot be determined, the Team Leader will document the finding in the Final Report.

Extensions

If the Candidate Agency should need additional time to finish preparing for their on-site, they must contact the NCLEA Program Manager to request an extension. The NCLEA program may allow an extension of six (6) months following the two-year deadline. A maximum of two extensions may be granted.

Assessment

As the agency is completing their internal review, building their accreditation files, and believes it has all On-Site Review requirements completed, they should contact the NCLEA Program Manager to schedule their on-site assessment. 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. A Team Leader will be identified and determine the assignments for the members. The off-site file review will begin 30 days prior to the on-site visit. The NCLEA Program Manager will schedule the on-site review with the team members and the Candidate Agency.

The NCLEA Program Manager will try to select Assessors from an area in North Carolina that has 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 where

documentation was an issue. The Assessment Team may be required to 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 anytime the team is working.

Once the agency has electronically submitted all standards for file review, the On-site Review should require two assessors for one day. The Assessment Team will meet the agency CEO and AM upon arrival to discuss plans for the day. The Assessment Team will tour the agency and participate in an interview of agency staff. The Assessment Team will conclude their visit with an exit interview with the agency CEO, AM, and any department leadership the CEO wishes to include. The Assessment Team will then travel back to their respective agencies.

The Assessment Team will need a room or office to conduct their work. The work area will need internet access, power, and easy access to the AM. Members of the 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. The AM should arrange to attend shift briefings before the on-site and brief all agency members about the upcoming On-site Review, and what to expect.

Accreditation Managers should be aware that the On-site Team may not be restricted in their access to department facilities or personnel, nor are they required to use only the means recommended by the agency to determine compliance.

The Team will conduct an exit interview prior to departure. The CEO of the agency will determine who should attend this exit interview. At this meeting, the agency will be advised of the final recommendation the team will make to the Accreditation Executive Committee.

If the agency failed to meet standards, the committee can grant up to a ninety (90) day extension. If there are disputed compliance issues, the agency has the option of presenting their case to the committee.

The Team Leader assigned to the assessment will prepare a Final Report to the NCLEA Program Manager within ten (10) business days of the On-Site Review visit.

Committee Review and Award

Upon receipt of the Final Report from the Team Leader, the NCLEA Program Manager will provide the report of the agency's Final Report to the NCLEA Executive Committee for review. The NCLEA Program Manager will electronically forward the Final Report to the NCLEA Executive Committee Chair, the CEO of the Candidate Agency, and the Candidate Agency's AM.

The candidate agency will be advised by the NCLEA Program Manager of the date the agency will be required to appear at the hearing before the Accreditation Executive Committee. The CEO and Accreditation Manager are expected to attend the hearing. The NCLEA Executive Committee may have questions for the Candidate Agency to answer and

then committee will vote after the hearing to determine the accreditation status for the agency. Agencies which are accredited with CALEA will be required to attend a hearing.

NOW WHAT?

You have done it — congratulations! Now enjoy the benefits and continue to maintain proofs of compliance for each file.

Accreditation Term

Accredited status is awarded for a three (3) year term. Requirements for maintaining accredited status is provided in Chapter 7.

Official Accreditation

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

Certificate Presentation

The agency will receive one framed Certificate of Accreditation. If you need an additional copy, speak with the Program Manager and that can be discussed.

Local award ceremonies can be made within the agency's city at either a city council meeting or dinner, if requested. Local awards may be presented by a member of the Accreditation Executive Committee, depending upon scheduling.

Accredited Agency Logo

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

CHAPTER 5

STANDARDS PROOF AND COMPLIANCE

Standards

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

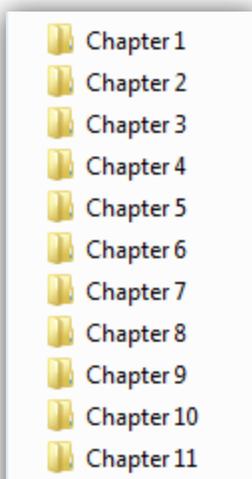
File Development (Electronic Filing system)

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

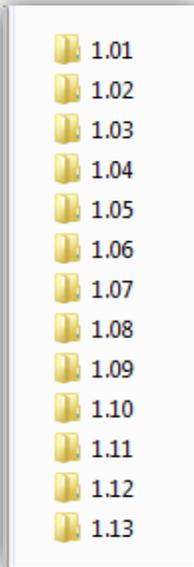
PowerDMS is the preferred option for all agencies and provides a consistent and organized system for building the agency's accreditation files. PowerDMS allows the agency to put all documentation in each file, highlight the documents loaded, and provides easy remote access from assessors to review the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

If the agency chooses NOT to utilize PowerDMS, then its electronic files should be organized as follows: (An electronic file structure has been created and is available for download for the NC DOJ website).

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 chronologically on separate Standard Submission Forms for each standard. The NCLEA Quick Guide will be available for labeling guidelines to any agency choosing to build their own electronic files.

File Development (PowerDMS)

File construction will be taught during PowerDMS training. Labeling should be consistent and agencies will use the NCLEA Quick Guide for labeling guidelines.

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.

Examples on how to label a Standard Proof of Compliance within the agency’s electronic filing system are provided in the NCLEA Quick Guide.

Components of the Standards

Standards Statement - The standards are identified by its specific number, such as 1.02. The standards statement then presents the requirements of the standard. The standard may contain a number of separate requirements. Each of the separate requirements must be addressed in the agency's written directive, if required, and proofs of compliance are

needed 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

If field training officer functions are performed by agencies other than the candidate agency, the agency performing those functions must meet the standards for those functions. Because these functions provide critical services to both the officers of the candidate agency and the citizens of the community, these standards must still be met. The candidate agency must provide the appropriate evidence of compliance and the Assessment Team may need to interview an officer from the assisting agencies during the on-site review.

If a candidate agency does not have a holding facility, where prisoners are booked in and kept without constant supervision, and instead uses another agency 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 NC General Statutes), several standards within Chapter 9 will still apply to the agency.

Waiver from Standard Compliance

Waivers of Standards are not granted by the Accreditation Executive Committee. The standards were designed to be minimum requirements for agencies in North Carolina. Agencies should carefully review the standards manual and resolve any questions before completing the NCLEA Agency Agreement.

Minimization of Documentation

While each part of a standard must be proven individually and completely, the minimum number of documents should be submitted to accomplish that purpose. If submitting a part of a document such as a policy, the agency should submit a copy of at least one complete page and not cut and paste only the two sentences which apply. This allows the reviewers to see that it is part of a larger policy and the context for the statements. If a standard requires proof of training, a sample of two or three certificates or a departmental sign-in sheet showing training may be submitted as acceptable proof. The agency should be prepared to provide the Assessment Team proof of the entire agency is training for a specific standard during the on-site.

“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 allows for yellow highlighting to be used on any text. Agencies are expected to highlight the specific sections (sentences, paragraphs, pages) of a document which specifically proves compliance with a standard. The assessors want to see exactly where the document meets the standard and not have to spend time reviewing entire documents looking for a specific statement. On the rare occasion that an entire document is needed to prove compliance, highlighting is unnecessary.

CHAPTER 6

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Web Based Electronic Submission and Review of Proofs of Compliance

The Agency's accreditation program maintains a web-based or electronic system of submitting and reviewing most proofs of compliance, one recommended method of PowerDMS. Training on the use of the system is provided in the Accreditation Manager Training. The agency receives access information when it contracts with PowerDMS, if chosen. Proofs are submitted using the software package which has been customized to allow submitting agencies to review all the proofs they have submitted, to determine if they have been accepted, and to review information posted about the program.

The PowerDMS is a web-based system designed for ease of administration. PowerDMS helps to reduce the amount of time necessary to observe compliance because files may be reviewed offsite. While most proofs of compliance are submitted and accepted electronically, the on-site proofs (and possibly 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 need to be maintained and updated throughout the three-year period in order to facilitate reaccreditation.

Electronic Submission Procedures

Agencies submit proofs electronically by first ensuring their documents showing compliance (such as a general order or policy) 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 on-line.

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". If the Agency chooses to develop their own files, they will not be able to follow the progress of the file review electronically. The Accreditation Manager will have to contact the Assessment Team if there are questions.

CHAPTER 7

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 continue to comply with the standards and must update files with proofs each year.

Some program files will not need any updating during the three-year period; however, agencies are required to keep up with the activities and proofs required by the program and by their own policies. In other words, if the agency created a policy to conduct quarterly inspections of specialized equipment, then the agency must follow through with those inspections. The Agency is required to submit an NCLEA Annual Report. The NCLEA Annual Report Form is available for download on the NCLEA website and asks about any changes in agency policy or operation. If policy changes were made impacting critical standards, copies of those policy changes should also be submitted with the NCLEA Annual Report

The Agency CEO must also sign the report indicating that the agency continues to meet or exceed all standards; or if it does not, what the agency is doing to correct 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. Failure to promptly submit the required reports, proofs, or other issues which provide proof that an agency is not complying with standards will result in the NCLEA Program Manager notifying the members of the NCLEA Executive Committee. The NCLEA Executive Committee may take action, including revocation of the Agency's accredited status.

Renewing Accredited Status

During the last twelve months of the three-year cycle, if the agency wishes to renew their accredited status, the agency is required to provide documentation and Proofs of Compliance for all standards as they did during initial accreditation.

Since all re-accredited agencies have been through the process at least once already, they should be familiar with the file requirements and proofs of compliance. The agency must apply for re-accreditation assessment using the form found on the NCLEA Website. The NCLEA Program Manager is the primary contact for the agency during this re-accreditation renewal process. An assessment and NCLEA Executive 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 starting after their initial on-site and award is completed. The following steps should be taken to ensure a complete review and compliance with the standards:

- Review the most current NCLEA Standards and compare the standard and proof of compliance requirements with those already in the file. Be aware if the number of standards has changed, new standards have been added, and minimum requirements for acceptance may have been modified since the last time the agency was reviewed. If the agency is using PowerDMS, PowerDMS will notify the agency of standard updates for their assessment files.
- Collect any new proofs of compliance needed. Make sure the proofs required for showing compliance are present and are within the assessment period prior to the anticipated on-site.
- Agencies are encouraged to conduct a mock assessment with other area Accreditation Managers prior to the on-site review.

Accreditation Managers should note that some files may already contain proofs that will be required 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 schedule their assessment at least 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.

CHAPTER 8

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 Accreditation Advisory Committee is charged with the responsibility of keeping the standards up to date and consistent with best law enforcement practices. The NCLEA Accreditation Advisory may consider at their periodic meetings, any change, modification, or additions to the standards. Any CEO, Assessor, NCLEA Program Manager, or accredited agency may suggest or recommend modifications or additions. The NCLEA Accreditation Advisory Committee will submit to the NCLEA Executive Committee all suggested standard revisions. The NCLEA Executive Committee is responsible for voting and any of the NCLEA standards.

When additions or modifications to the standards are made, the NCLEA Executive Committee will decide on an effective date for the addition or modification. The NCLEA Executive 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 time-frame for compliance and the agencies will be notified. Otherwise, agencies already in accredited status must comply with the revision or modification at their next accreditation renewal.

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

Agencies which fail to complete the initial review process within the 24 months allowed, or who have lost their accredited status due to any other action of the NCLEA Executive Committee 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 action.

Interpretation of Standards and Appeal

The NCLEA Program Manager is charged with the interpretation of standards and the determination of sufficient proof of compliance. From time to time, different interpretations may be raised by candidate agencies. The final authority on the interpretation of standards and proofs of compliance is the NCLEA Executive Committee. If an agency requests, the NCLEA Program Manager will request an interpretation of a standard or proof of compliance from the NCLEA Executive Committee.

CHAPTER 9

FEES AND EXPENSES

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 CEO's are encouraged to support membership of their staff in other professional law enforcement groups in the state, such as North Carolina Police Executives Association.

CHAPTER 10

NCLEA ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Membership

The NCLEA Executive Committee manages the overall operation of the NCLEA Program and presents awards to qualifying agencies. The committee establishes and approves standards of best business practices 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 awards accredited status to agencies that have adequately proven compliance with the established standards of best business practices. The Accreditation Advisory Committee provides support and research for the NCLEA Executive Committee.

Organization

The NCLEA Executive Committee is composed of a body of members appointed by the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission. Committee members consists of 12 members, one of whom shall serve as the Chair and another as Vice Chair. The breakdown of member appointments to the NCLEA Executive Committee are as follows:

- (2) NC Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Commission
- (2) NC Sheriffs' Education & Training Standards Commission
- (2) NC Association of Chiefs of Police
- (2) NC Sheriffs' Association
- (1) NC Police Executive Association (State Agency)
- (1) Historically Black College or University
- (1) Criminal Justice Minority / Minority Association (Appointment by Chair of NCLEA)
- (1) Citizen (Appointment by Chair of NCLEA)

Non-voting members of the committee shall include the Director of the North Carolina

Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Division, the Director of the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education & Training Standards Division, and the NCLEA Program Manager. Recording duties are performed by the NCLEA Program Manager. The Chair, Vice Chair and members are appointed every three years by the Board.

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 Education & Training Standards Division, the Director of the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education & Training Standards Division, and the NCLEA Program Manager. Recording duties are performed by the NCLEA Program Manager. The Chair, Vice-Chair and members are appointed every three years by the group.

Meetings

The NCLEA Executive Committee and the NCLEA Advisory Group will meet as needed to consider the business related to the Program. The NCLEA Executive Committee and the NCLEA Advisory Group may meet and take action 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 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. If a member cannot vote for any reason, the tie is broken by the Director of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Standards Division.