

National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement

Building Public Trust Through Law Enforcement Accountability and Transparency



Recommended Training for Board and Commission Members

RECOMMENDED ORIENTATION AND TRAINING: Board, Committee, and Commission Members

The National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) is committed to establishment, development, education and technical assistance for local civilian oversight agencies. NACOLE is also committed to supporting the training of appointed Board, Committee, and Commission Members so that they may acquire the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary to perform responsibly in their assignment in civilian oversight in law enforcement.

Providing new members with the information they need to perform effectively is a critical step in the development of a strong board or commission. The responsibilities for developing and implementing an effective program of board orientation are shared between oversight practitioners and the board itself. There must be a commitment to developing a well-informed board, one with the knowledge needed to lead an effective organization.

Civilian oversight boards are comprised of individuals with a variety of backgrounds. They have differing life, cultural, professional and educational backgrounds and varying degrees of exposure to law enforcement and corrections professionals, municipal government operation, the criminal justice system, and the full and diverse range of communities served by local law enforcement agencies.

The types and depth of relevant training depend on the role, duties and authority of the board or commission. Some boards and commissions review all documents, statements and evidence discovered in investigations while others render decisions based on summaries or presentations by agency investigators or law enforcement managers. Others deal solely with broader policy issues. Each agency must critically assess the tasks and functions its members will perform and determine the skills, expertise or training they need to acquire in order to perform their duties. As such,

NACOLE has not mandated minimum structured training programs or hourly classroom requirements in connection with member appointments.

1. ORIENTATION

1. Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement

1. Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement
2. Models of Civilian Oversight

2. Local Oversight Agency

1. Historical Account Leading to establishment of the oversight agency
2. Charter, Ordinance, Municipal Code establishing oversight agency
3. Community Expectations of Oversight Agency
4. Local Government Expectations of Oversight Agency

3. Legal Considerations

1. Public records and public meeting laws
2. Confidentiality requirements
3. State / Local Laws relating to peace officers' personnel actions, rights and privacy
4. Case law concerning stops & detentions, search, seizure and arrest, rights of arrested persons
5. Steps in the criminal justice process: arrest, booking, arraignment, bail, hearings, trial

4. Local Law Enforcement Agency

1. Organization, history, and cultural evolution of the law enforcement agency
 1. Role and responsibilities of patrol, custodial and specialized units
 2. Chain of command and supervisory responsibilities
 3. Written communication system and training procedures
2. Patrol practices and procedures
 1. Duties of patrol officers, sergeants and managers
3. Rules of conduct for officers
4. Agency procedures re: detentions and searches of persons and vehicles
5. Booking, custody and prisoner transport procedures
 1. Medical screening
 2. Handling and processing of prisoner property
6. Juvenile procedures
7. Traffic stop procedures

8. Use of force guidelines and procedures (lethal and non-lethal). For example,
 1. Defensive tactics
 2. Takedown and pain compliance holds and maneuvers
 3. Handcuffing techniques
 4. Baton use
 5. Use electronic control devices, OC spray, and restraint devices
 6. Firearms
9. Investigation and review of shootings and in-custody deaths
10. First amendment activities
11. Training, resources and procedures for dealing with mentally disturbed individuals and individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol
12. Community and cultural awareness
 1. Understanding the history, culture, and concerns of communities served by the law enforcement agency
13. Community relations and outreach
14. Biased based policing / racial profiling
15. The complaint, investigative and disciplinary processes
16. Mediation of complaints
17. Evaluating credibility and reaching findings
18. Procedures and practices for misconduct investigations, including interviewing and report writing, collection and preservation of evidence, sources of information, and due diligence standards.

5. Board Procedures

1. Intake Procedures
2. Investigative Procedures and Practices
3. Hearings / Meetings
4. Case Review, Presentation, Findings
5. Communications
6. Policy Recommendations

6. Ridealongs

2. POTENTIAL SOURCES FOR TRAINING

SAMPLE RESOURCES
 Merrick Bobb, "Civilian Oversight of the Police in the United States," Saint Louis University Public Law Review, Volume 22, Number 1, 2003.
 Merrick Bobb, "Internal and External Oversight in the U.S.," PARC issues paper, October 2005.

1. Civil Rights / Community / Public Interest Organizations
 1. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
 2. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

3. Homeless Advocacy Organizations
4. Urban League
5. Mediation Centers
2. Government Organization Resources
 1. Mayor / City Manager / County Supervisor / County Administrative Executive
 2. US Attorney / State Attorney General / County Counsel / City Attorney
 3. Public Defender's Office
 4. FBI (Color of Law Abuses by public officials)
 5. Risk Management Department
 6. Presiding Judges
3. Law Enforcement Academy
 1. Recruit Training
 2. Menu Training
 3. In-Service Refresher Training
4. Visits to Law Enforcement Facilities
 1. Headquarters and Division Stations
 2. Communications / Dispatch / 911 Facilities
 3. Jail Detention Facilities
 4. Juvenile Detention Facilities
 5. Crime Laboratories
 6. Medical Examiner Facilities
5. Ridealongs
 1. Patrol
 2. Special Units
 1. K-9
 2. Homeless Outreach
 3. Special Events (Sporting Events, Conventions, Conferences)
 4. Vice Squad
 5. Gang Suppression

3. Peter Finn, "Citizen Review of Police: Approaches and Implementation," National Institute of Justice, March 2001. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/184430.pdf>

Douglas W. Perez, *Common Sense About Police Review*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 1994.

Police Assessment Resource Center, "Review of National Police Oversight Models for the Eugene Police Commission," February 2005.

Debra Livingston, "The Unfulfilled Promise of Citizen Review," *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law*, 2004, Volume 1, No. 2: 653-669.

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "Revisiting 'Who is Guarding the Guardians?'" November 2000. <http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/pubsndx.htm>

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Who is Guarding the Guardians? A Report on Police Practices, 1981.

Vera Institute of Justice, "Building Public Confidence in Police through Civilian Oversight, September 2002. http://www.vera.org/publication_pdf/177_336.pdf

Samuel Walker, The New World of Police Accountability, Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, 2005.

Samuel Walker, Police Accountability: The Role of Citizen Oversight, Belmont: Wadsworth Professionalism in Policing Series, 2001.

Samuel Walker, Carol Archbold, and Leigh Herbst, Mediating Citizen Complaints Against Police Officers: A Guide for Police and Community Leaders, by the COPS office.[<http://www.usdoj.gov/cops/>]

4. RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONAL / AGENCY LINKS
Canadian Organization for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement
National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement

National Association for Civilian
Oversight of Law Enforcement
P.O. Box 20851
Indianapolis, IN 46220-0851
1-317-721-8133

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