

Standards Updates for 2026

New Standards

- 2.10.1 – License Plate Reader (LPR) (*New Standard – Court cases pending throughout the United States and a topic amongst various civil rights groups, etc.*)

A written directive requiring that if the agency uses a License Plate Reader (LPR) system(s), the following are addressed:

- a. Authorized LPR system(s)
- b. Authorized users
- c. Initial training, in a manner determined by the agency
- d. Authorized uses

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- 3.4.2 – Artificial Intelligence (AI) (*New Standard – Requested by PLEAC members*)

A written directive governing artificial intelligence (AI) that includes, at minimum, the following:

- a. That use is prohibited entirely or is restricted to CJIS certified systems with access restricted to law enforcement personnel when entering any criminal justice data, or crafting documents or communications that may contain criminal justice data, including, but not limited to: drafting or authoring reports, arrest warrants, search warrants, affidavits, background investigations, and documents that may contain private, protected, or confidential information.
- b. initial training, in a manner determined by the agency, that highlights the proper use of agency-approved, CJIS-certified systems, if applicable, and/or that highlights the security concerns of use of non-approved, non-CJIS-certified applications

Narrative: If the agency does not utilize a CJIS-certified, law enforcement-restricted AI application, the agency must have a policy prohibiting use. Potential users must recognize the inherent security issues with using open AI applications to transmit criminal justice, criminal history, treatment, or intelligence data and be restricted from using non-purpose-built applications, including the availability of that data to non-criminal justice users and the inability to retract or control the distribution of that data.

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- 3.6.5 – “Emergency” Access to Property & Evidence Control Room(s) (*New “If” Standard*)

A written directive stating that if an agency provides for administrative or emergency access to the property and evidence control room(s) by personnel other than authorized Evidence Custodians, it must address:

- a. Secure storage of any physical means for access, or tracking/record keeping of any electronic access method utilized for access;
- b. Documentation of approved personnel with access to the means for entry, and agency-identified exigent circumstances that would permit use of such method for entry; and
- c. Documentation and required notifications for any use.

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- 4.11.3 – Act 134 (*New Standard – Law*)

A written directive stating that the agency must comply with the *Crime Victims' Right of Access* law (Act 134 of 2022).

Narrative: Since the requesting party or a requesting party's legal representative may obtain criminal history investigative information for use in or investigation of an actual or potential civil action in the Commonwealth relating to that criminal history investigative information, the directive must address the procedures for making, complying with or denying requests for criminal history investigative information.

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Revisions to Existing Standards

- 1.3.6 – A written directive requiring an agency-approved *use of force report form* to be submitted to and reviewed by the agency Chief Executive Officer or designee whenever any agency personnel, *during the performance of their duties or when exercising their lawful authority: (Review requested by Chiefs of Police & Accreditation Managers)*
 - a. *utilizes any lethal or less lethal weapon other than for routine training or animal disposal.*
 - b. *takes any action that results in, or is alleged to have resulted in, any injury to another person.*
 - c. *applies weaponless physical force at a level defined by the agency.*

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- 1.3.8 – Use of Force – Weapons and Ammunition Specifications and Inspections (*Review requested by Accreditation Managers*)

A written directive requiring that *the agency maintain a record of* weapons and ammunition approved and authorized by the agency *to* be carried and/or used by its sworn personnel. This directive shall apply to both on and off-duty weapons, as well as ammunition, and it shall address:

- a. the types and specifications of all lethal and less lethal weapons authorized for use;
- b. the types and specifications of all ammunition and munitions authorized for use;
- c. that all agency-authorized weapons, lethal and less lethal, are inspected and approved by a certified weapons instructor of that discipline or an agency armorer before authorization is granted to carry on duty, and, if applicable, off-duty; at least annually in a manner determined by the agency; and
- d. *a process for maintaining records on agency-authorized weapons, including provisions for updating and expunging those records.*

Narrative: The law enforcement agency needs to have stringent guidelines about the type of weapons, firearms, munitions, and ammunition that the officers are permitted to utilize both on and off duty. Exact standards and requirements must be established by the agency. The agency should maintain a record of all approved weapons, and it should list the agency official providing the approval for each item. Those approvals must be conditional with the necessary proofs of proficiency and competency required.

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- 1.3.9 – Use of Force – Initial Weapons Training and Qualification *(Review requested by Accreditation Managers; currently reserved)*

A written directive that:

- a. newly hired personnel shall demonstrate satisfactory qualification on all agency authorized lethal weapons and/or weapon systems before approval is granted to carry and/or use such weapons and/or weapon systems on duty and, if applicable, off-duty.*
- b. newly hired personnel shall demonstrate satisfactory skill and proficiency on all agency-authorized less lethal weapons and/or weapon systems before approval is granted to carry and/or use such weapons and/or weapon systems on duty and, if applicable, off-duty.*
- c. all personnel shall demonstrate satisfactory skill and proficiency on any newly implemented firearm or ECW before approval is granted to carry and/or such weapon or weapon system on duty, and if applicable, off-duty.*

Narrative: This requires that all agency employees who are authorized to carry weapons receive initial training on the proper use of each weapon and demonstrate satisfactory performance before authorization is granted for them to utilize weapons in the performance of their duties. It also ensures the agency prepares transition training for new firearms and ECWs to ensure personnel being issued new weapons are proficient in their use.

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- 1.3.10 – Use of Force – In-service Weapons, Policy, and Tactics Training and Qualification (*Review requested by Accreditation Managers*)

A written directive requiring annual in-service training on the agency Use of Force Policy, in-service practical evaluation of proficiency with agency-authorized lethal and less-lethal weapons, and a practical in-service training for Defensive Tactics and other hands-on skills:

- a. all agency personnel authorized to carry weapons to receive annual in-service training on the following agency policies: use-of-force, deadly force, de-escalation, and duty to intervene;
- b. to annually demonstrate qualification with all approved lethal weapons that the employee is authorized to use;
- c. in-service training for all authorized less lethal weapons and empty-hand control, arrests, post-arrest positioning, and defensive techniques shall occur at least annually;
- d. *instructors evaluating skill and proficiency and/or qualification for each agency-authorized weapon must be certified in the specific weapon and/or weapon system; and*
- e. *reserved*
- f. the agency shall have procedures for remedial training for an employee unable to exhibit skill and proficiency and/or qualification with any authorized weapon.
- g. *reserved*
- h. *reserved*

Narrative: This requires that all agency employees who are authorized to carry weapons receive in-service training on the use-of-force and deadly force policies annually. It also requires that all authorized agency personnel demonstrate proficiency and/or qualification with all weapons that they are authorized to use. Annual in-service training is required for agency personnel who are authorized to carry and use less lethal weapons.

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- 1.4.3d, e – Written Directives (*Delete existing bullet d. content and replace with new content and revised bullet e.*)

The agency has a written directives system that, at a minimum, includes the following:

- a. *reserved*
- d. *processes for identifying the format of the signature of the Chief Executive Officer and or the person(s) or positions, of anyone authorized to issue appropriate written directives*
- e. *methods for the review of proposed or revised policies, procedures, rules, and regulations prior to their issuance.*

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- 1.4.4 – Written Directives (*Delete bullets a. and b. after merging content into standard*)

The agency has written procedures for the release and storage of agency-written directives, which include the methods for the dissemination of *and access to* directives to affected personnel.

- a. *reserved*
- b. *reserved*

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- 1.8.3 – Bias-Based Policing (*Revision of bullets a. b. and d*)

A written directive prohibiting bias-based policing that includes the following:

- a. Initial training on agency policy and bias-based policing issues in a format determined by the agency for all personnel;
- b. annual in-house refresher training on agency policy and bias-based policing issues for sworn personnel in a format determined by the agency;
- c. corrective measures if bias-based policing occurs; and
- d. *annual administrative review comparing US Census Data (or other official demographic data) to the number of Biased based policing complaints (by demographic) and a minimum of two of the following categories (by demographic); Criminal Arrests, Non-Traffic Citations, Traffic Citations, Use of Force Reports, Field Contacts, Internal Affairs Complaints, or Consent Searches. The review shall contain a conclusion regarding the effectiveness of the Agency's Bias-Based Policing Policy.*

Narrative: Bias-Based Policing: Also known as "racial profiling or bias bias-based profiling," is any traffic stop, field contact, vehicle search, asset seizure/forfeiture, or enforcement action based solely on a common trait of a group. Common traits include, but are not limited to, race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, age, or cultural group. It must be made clear that under no circumstances will bias-based policing be condoned.

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- 1.10.6 – Specialized In-Service Training (*Review requested by Accreditation Managers*)

A written directive requiring that if the agency has a tactical team or members are assigned to and part of a multi-jurisdictional tactical team, negotiators, *comfort* animals, or *mounted* teams, all personnel assigned to those functions:

- a. successfully complete entry-level basic training prior to assuming those duties;
- b. tactical teams, including assigned negotiators or mounted teams, must train, at a minimum, quarterly

Narrative: Mounted Teams and tactical teams require additional training beyond that of other police officers or incur additional liability. It is necessary that specialized training is held at regular intervals and that the training is always documented. Those training records should be retained by the agency due to potential liability that may occur as a result of the actions taken by the team or its members. If the agency has a tactical team that regularly participates with another tactical team, inter-agency training is encouraged.

Standards Updates for 2026

- 2.1.1 – Patrol Operations (*Review of request has been ongoing*)

A written directive shall be prepared to establish appropriate procedures for *a police response to calls for service in a police vehicle*. It shall also include guidelines for the use of authorized emergency equipment that conforms with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (Title 75) and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Rules and Regulations, to include:

- a. *emergency response;*
- b. *non-emergency response;*
- c. *Initial training on safe police vehicle operations, in a manner determined by the agency; and*
- d. *Refresher training on safe police vehicle operations, in a manner determined by the agency, at least once per accreditation cycle.*

Narrative: It is necessary and important that law enforcement agencies classify responses for service according to the seriousness of the call. This will provide guidelines on when emergency lights and sirens shall be used and the method of response to an incident. *The safety of all those on a highway is paramount when police respond to a call for service. Safe and responsible police vehicle operations are necessary during all police responses. Training can be initial EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operators Course) training provided during ACT 120 training for newly certified officers, policy review, EVOC updates, or similar safe driving training based on criteria set by the agency, every three years.*

Attention must be given to the applicable provisions of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (Title 75) and the regulations of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Consideration must also be given to Chapter 5 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code (Title 18) in regard to the use of force and deadly force due to recent court decisions involving high-speed police vehicle emergency responses to incidents.

Standards Updates for 2026

- 2.5.1 – A written directive that requires: *(Combines existing standards: 2.5.1, 2.5.2 and 2.5.6)*
 - a. a thorough search at the beginning of each shift of all vehicles used for transporting prisoners;
 - b. the search of any transport vehicles prior to and after transporting prisoners;
 - c. the transporting officer thoroughly searches the prisoner prior to transport; and
 - d. the use of restraining devices (including seat belts) and the methods to be used during prisoner transport, with necessary exceptions noted

Narrative: At the beginning of each shift, any vehicle designated for prisoner transport shall be thoroughly searched for contraband, weapons, or implements of escape. This search shall also be conducted before and after each prisoner transport.

The transporting officer is responsible for conducting a comprehensive search of the prisoner and all of the prisoner's possessions before placing the individual in the patrol vehicle. A subsequent search shall be performed each time the prisoner is returned to the officer's custody. Officers shall never assume that a prisoner has not had an opportunity to obtain a weapon or an implement of escape.

All law enforcement officers shall be familiar with the proper use of restraining devices to ensure officer safety and maintain secure prisoner custody. The agency shall establish a policy governing the appropriate use of restraining devices and techniques. This policy shall specify the types of devices and techniques approved for use, required training, the circumstances under which they are to be used, and any additional guidance deemed necessary by the agency.

Both the officer and the agency share responsibility for ensuring the prisoner's safety, the officer's safety, and preventing escapes.

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- 2.5.2 – A written directive that requires: ***(Combines existing standards: 2.5.7 and 2.5.8)***
 - a. the procedures for transporting sick, injured, or disabled prisoners.
 - b. the procedures for the security and control of prisoners transported to medical care facilities or hospitals for treatment, examination, or admission.

Narrative: The law enforcement agency's policy regarding these transports should clearly outline the procedures required for the safe and humane transportation of injured or disabled prisoners. Such transports place additional demands on transport officers, and concerns for safety and security remain paramount. Injured or disabled prisoners may still attempt to overpower the officer or escape custody, and officers must remain vigilant throughout the transport.

Transporting a prisoner to a medical facility presents additional challenges. Hospitals often increase the opportunities for escape, particularly when medical procedures require the removal of restraining devices or when examinations must be conducted outside the officer's immediate presence. For these reasons, agency policy must account for the heightened risks associated with medical transports and provide clear guidance for mitigating them.

- 2.5.5 – ***(Already addressed in 2.5.3; Delete and change status to Reserved)***
- 2.5.6 – ***(Moved into 2.5.1 and status changed to Reserved)***
- 2.5.7 – ***(Moved into 2.5.2 and status changed to Reserved)***
- 2.5.8 – ***(Moved into 2.5.2 and status changed to Reserved)***

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- 2.7.1 – Records (*Review requested by Accreditation Managers*)

A written directive that includes information regarding each item of legal process, civil and/or criminal, shall be recorded and include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- a. date issued by the authorizing authority and received by the agency;
- b. type of legal process, civil or criminal;
- c. name of plaintiff/complainant or name of defendant/respondent;
- d. court docket number, warrant number, or other identifying number
- e. address of service/attempt and date service was executed/attempted, along with reason for non-service, if applicable, and;
- f. name of sworn law enforcement officer(s) executing/attempting service;
- g. *reserved*

Narrative: The record system must allow entries to be retrieved by docket number, by name, or by a unique cross-reference number. It must maintain essential information for each execution, or attempted execution, of legal process documents.

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- 2.7.7 – Property (*Misinterpretation of the Standard*)

A written directive requiring that property acquired *by the agency through asset forfeiture proceedings and/or* through the civil process function is accounted for in agency records and is disposed of by the agency pursuant to legal authority.

Narrative: There are occasions when an agency may take ownership of property through asset forfeiture or other civil processes. This would include property initially seized as evidence and, upon the associated criminal case being closed, determined to be an asset subject to forfeiture. Upon taking lawful ownership of the asset, the agency must track the asset until lawfully disposed of. This tracking could be achieved by adding the newly acquired asset to the agency's general assets inventory. Cash acquired through asset forfeiture shall not be commingled with agency funds, and all expenditures of asset forfeiture money must be accounted for.

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- 3.3.3 – Communications Facilities and Equipment (*Revision*)

A written directive stating that *if the agency operates a communications center*, it has the capability of immediate playback of recorded emergency telephone and radio communications while it maintains a continuous recording of radio transmissions and emergency telephone communications to and from the communications center, and directives provide for:

- a. a requirement that recordings be retained for a minimum period of 30 days; (O)
- b. secure handling and storing of the recordings; (O)
- c. criteria and written procedures for reviewing recorded conversations; and (O)
- d. an alternate source of electrical power sufficient to ensure continued operation of emergency communication equipment in the event of the failure of the primary source, with documentation of monthly inspections and testing at least monthly or in conformance with manufacturer recommendations. (O)

Standards Updates for 2026

- 3.4.1 – Field Reporting and Management (*Revision*)

A written directive *that requires an agency to have a Records Management System* in place that allows for a uniform field reporting system and includes:

- a. guidelines to indicate when reports must be completed;
- b. designated forms to be used in field reporting;
- c. data required to be included in field reports;
- d. procedures to be followed in completing field reports; and
- e. process for submitting completed field reports.

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- 4.2.3 – Pursuit of Vehicles (*Revision of bullet a. to ensure consistency with other standards/bullets, for example, 1.3.6, since it is a high-liability action*)

A written directive establishing:

- a. the procedures for reporting a pursuit and its submission to and review by the agency's Chief Executive Officer or designee

Standards Updates for 2026

- 4.2.2 – Pursuit of Vehicles (*Review requested by the Pennsylvania State Police*)

A written directive describing the circumstances warranting the use of special stopping techniques, which specifies the procedures for correct implementation:

- a. immobilization devices;
- b. stopping techniques;
- c. initial training and in-house policy refresher training at least once every three years; and
- d. *circumstances in which in-house practical training shall be conducted in a manner determined by the agency*

Standards Updates for 2026

- 4.13.1 – Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation
(Bullets b. and c. did not align with the law)

The agency must have a directive addressing the requirements of the Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Act (Title 42, Chapter 62A04).

- a. The agency shall provide initial training to all its officers to make them familiar with this Act; and
- b. The agency shall make reasonable efforts to notify any person protected by an order issued under this chapter of the arrest of the defendant for violation of an order as soon as possible. *Unless the person cannot be located, notice of the arrest shall be provided not more than 24 hours after the preliminary arraignment.*
- c. *reserved*