

*Texas Police Chiefs Association*



**Texas Law Enforcement  
Recognition Program  
Manual**



# Administrative Program Guide

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**Recognition Program Website**

**<http://rp.tpcf.org>**

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## Program Introduction

The Texas Law Enforcement Recognition Program is a voluntary process where police agencies in Texas prove their compliance with law enforcement's current Best Practices. These Best Practices were carefully developed by Texas Law Enforcement professionals to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service and the protection of individual's rights.

The Texas Police Chiefs Association developed the Recognition Program to assist Texas agencies in meeting their professional obligations to the citizens of Texas. An appointed Committee of professional Police Chiefs from across the state developed the Recognition Program and identified the Best Practices for Texas Law Enforcement. This Committee now conducts the final review of an agency's efforts and awards "Recognized" status.

Being "Recognized" means that the agency meets or exceeds all of the identified Best Practices for Texas Law Enforcement Agencies. These Best Practices cover all aspects of law enforcement operations including use of force, protection of citizen rights, pursuits, property and evidence management, and patrol and investigative operations. While being "Recognized" does not guarantee an agency will not make a mistake, it does ensure that the agency has carefully thought about these critical issues, has developed policy and procedures to address them and has systems in place to identify and correct problems.

There are a number of benefits to becoming a "Recognized" police agency. Police officers exercise government's most awesome powers – the power to stop and question a citizen, the power to arrest a citizen, to seize his person and property, and the power to use force in that process. Officers often operate alone without direct supervision. Police agencies direct and control their officer's activity through supervision, training, and written policies and procedures. Since supervisors cannot always be present, the training and the policies and procedures of an agency are critical to ensuring proper performance. Appropriate equipment is also necessary. The Recognition Program ensures an agency has addressed the most critical of law enforcement issues in both policy as well as actual operation.

The Recognition Program does not tell an agency what their policy must be, but rather it ensures that the policy, procedure, or operation addresses all of the critical aspects of an issue.

The Recognition Program assures both City Management and the citizens of a city that their Police Department is operating in a manner that reflects the current best practices of Law Enforcement. It can provide citizens with reassurance and improve community cooperation – and can also lead to improved performance of the department.

### ***The Recognition Process***

An agency that has been awarded “Recognized” status has undertaken a careful internal review of all of its policies and procedures, equipment, facilities, and operations and has then requested an outside review to prove their compliance with the standards. A Facilitator from a nearby agency is assigned as a resource to assist the Department in this initial internal review effort. After an independent review of their written policies and proofs of compliance, a team of assessors is sent to the agency to review their operations, facilities, and to interview staff. A Final Report outlining the findings is sent to the Recognition Committee. The Committee reviews the findings and, if the agency meets all the standards, votes to award “Recognized” status.

The “Recognized” status is awarded for a four year period. During the four year period the agency must submit an annual report and proofs of compliance for two performance related standards. These are reviewed as they are received and compliance verified. During the last year of the period the agency must prepare updated documentation on all of the Best Practices and another on site review is conducted. The findings are submitted to the Recognition Committee for consideration to approve “Recognized” status for the next four years. The Texas Police Chiefs Association has contracted with an outside group to manage the recognition process and ensure integrity and accountability.

### ***What about CALEA Law Enforcement Accreditation?***

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) was formed in 1979 and provides the only international accreditation process for law enforcement agencies. The Texas Police Chiefs Association fully supports the Accreditation process for Texas police agencies. The Accreditation process is, however, more difficult to achieve (up to 459 standards depending on agency size and complexity) and more expensive. Many agencies also find the Accreditation process is more administratively burdensome. For this reason, many Texas cities do not participate.

The Texas Recognition Program also includes a number of practices that are uniquely required by Texas law and not included in the CALEA accreditation process.

The Texas Recognition program was designed to address the critical issues in Texas law enforcement and to develop an inexpensive process that is easy to administer.

## Program Definitions

The following definitions are used throughout the program manual.

**Agency Facilitator** – Is an experienced Texas police professional who has been trained in the Recognition Program process and has been selected by the TPCA Recognition Committee to assist Candidate Agencies in meeting the Best Practices. An Agency Facilitator works with the candidate agency through their initial review process and conducts the agency’s Initial Compliance Review.

**Best Business Practices** – Also referred to as Best Practices, are a compilation of law enforcement practices and requirements determined by the Recognition Committee to be the most appropriate for Texas Law Enforcement agencies.

**Board of Directors** – The governing Board of Directors of the Texas Police Chiefs Association.

**Candidate Agency** – A Texas law enforcement agency that has contracted with the Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation to conduct an assessment of their compliance with the Texas Best Business Practices for Law Enforcement.

**Compliance Files** – Files created for each of the Best Practices which contain the Candidate Agency’s Proofs of Compliance with that standard.

**Contract** – An agreement between a Candidate Agency and the Texas Police Chiefs Association whereby the Texas Police Chiefs Association provides initial and ongoing evaluation of a candidate agency’s compliance with Best Practices and grants “Recognized” status.

**Document Submission Form** – A form designed to facilitate submission of proofs of compliance and explain the documentation and proofs submitted.

**Electronic Submission Process** – The method of submitting over two thirds of the required proofs of compliance via the Recognition Program website and having those proofs reviewed and accepted prior to the Final Compliance Review.

**Final Compliance Review** – An on site evaluation by a Police Chief and Agency Facilitator not associated with the Candidate Agency. This Final Review Team will ensure compliance with Best Practices which require visual confirmation of compliance. The Team Leader prepares a report on their findings which is submitted to the Recognition Committee for their action.

**Full Review Process** – The method of utilizing only paper files for proving compliance with Best Business Practices. This is the alternative process to using Electronic Submission and will result in a slightly longer Final Compliance Review.

**Initial Compliance Review** – An on site evaluation conducted by the Agency Facilitator to ensure the agency meets the Best Practices scheduled for visual confirmation during The Final Review. This informal review is designed to assist Candidate Agencies achieve Recognized status with the least cost and difficulty.

**Initial Meeting** – Is a meeting between the Candidate Agency and the Agency Facilitator to start the Internal Review Process. The Facilitator conducting the Initial Meeting will conduct an inspection of the agency facility to identify any physical or equipment issues which would pose a problem in gaining recognized status.

**Internal Review Process** – The process where a Candidate Agency reviews its policies, procedures, and operations to ensure it meets the Best Practices. Proofs of Compliance are collected and placed in Compliance Files. Many of the Proofs may be submitted electronically to the Program Coordinator for acceptance.

**Mail Review Process** – The process where a Candidate Agency sends the files (designated E or EV) to a Program Manager by mail or shipping company for review. Files can be sent in either a paper file format or in three ring binders with appropriate dividers at the choice of the agency.

**Program Coordinator** – An individual assigned to a candidate agency with overall management oversight of the program. The Texas Police Chiefs Association currently contracts with an outside agency to conduct Program Coordination and ensure the integrity of the process.

**Program Manager** - The person designated by the Chief of Police to administer and oversee the Recognition program for the Candidate Agency. This

may be a sworn or non-sworn member of the agency or may be a community volunteer. In some agencies the Program Manager may be the Chief of Police.

**Proofs of Compliance** – Any written or visual evidence which proves the agency is complying with the Best Practice. 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 Best Practices.

**TPCAF Board** – The Board of Directors of the Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation, a non-profit organization created for the improvement of law enforcement in the State of Texas.

**TPCAF Recognition Committee** – A Committee of nine Texas Chiefs of Police appointed by the TPCAF Board who make the decisions regarding the Program process, modifications and additions to Best Practices, and vote to award “Recognized” status to candidate agencies which have proven compliance with standards.

**Standards** – A common term used to refer to the Best Business Practices.

**User’s Group** – A voluntary association of Chiefs and Program Managers, whether in the Recognition Program or not, that participate in assisting each other in achieving recognition through the sharing of ideas, policies, and procedures.

## **Application Process**

### ***Preparation***

The Chief of an Agency which is pursuing Recognition is required to attend a Recognition Program familiarization program offered periodically. This program is intended to ensure the Chief is fully aware of the program requirements.

Initially the Chief should designate a Program Manager. The Program Manager can be any sworn or non-sworn member of the department. The more familiar the Program Manager is with departmental operations, the easier the task will be. There are several factors to consider when choosing a PM. The Chief should appoint an individual who:

- 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 the Chief of Police may be the Program Manager.

In addition to the Chief attending Familiarization Training outlined above, the Program Manager must attend both the Familiarization and Program Manager/Facilitator training. It is recommended that the Chief of Police also attend this training, however it is not required unless the Chief is the Program Manager. If the Chief wishes to become an Agency Facilitator, this training is required.

This training is provided at annual conferences and in regional training programs around the state. A listing of upcoming training programs as well as the Best

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Practices is maintained on the TPCA website at [www.texaspolicechiefs.org](http://www.texaspolicechiefs.org) under the tab “Recognition Program.”

The agency should thoroughly review the Best Practices to ensure they will be able to meet all the requirements. Copies of the most current Best Practices are provided to all Texas Agencies at no charge on the Recognition Program Website in the Download section at <http://rp.tpcf.org>. Agencies do not “register” on the website until accepted into the electronic submission process.

### ***Three Compliance Processes Available***

There are three methods for attaining Recognized status; the Full Review Process, the Electronic Submission Process, and the Mail or Shipping Process. While the application is the same using all methods, the timing of the application is different and each method has its advantages. A flow Chart for each process is available on the website for download.

The **Full Review Process** is where the agency attends training and begins work on their Internal Review Process. They develop their files and participate with other agencies in the User’s Group to ensure their files are properly developed.

Agencies using this process are highly encouraged to participate in the TPCA Users Group and conduct a “Mock” assessment using User Group members prior to their Final Compliance Review.

When the agency believes all their files are complete, they can then make application and request an immediate Final Compliance Review. This review will require two assessors spend a total of three days at the department and the on-site fees will be slightly more than the two day on-site required by the Electronic Submission or Mail Process.

This process allows the agency to work at its own pace in reviewing and rewriting agency policy, developing procedures, and creating its files. User Group members can provide assistance in policy and procedure development and file review. Sample Policies are also being added to the Recognition Program website.

The **Electronic Submission Process** is an optional program which allows agencies to submit over two thirds of their proofs of compliance electronically and Program Coordinators will “accept” them. This provides the agency with immediate feedback on their level of compliance and reduces the length of the Final Compliance Review from three days to only two days, thereby saving the department additional expense.

Because of the limited number that can be enrolled in the Electronic Submission Process at any one time, agencies who wish to seek admission to this process

should submit their application as soon as possible after receiving training. No fees are due until being accepted into the program. Agencies can begin work on files and proofs at any time and submit them electronically when accepted into the program.

The **Mail or Shipping Process** is similar to the Electronic Submission Process only the agency submits the files by mail or shipping (Fed Ex, UPS, etc.) instead of electronically. The same files (designated as E or EV) may be submitted. The agency may submit the files in any order either a file folder or in three ring binders.

### ***Application***

Agencies that have attended the Familiarization program and have had their Program Manager attend Manager/Facilitator training may make formal application. The agency should download a Texas Recognition Program Application from the Recognition Program website. The completed application should then be sent to the Texas Police Chiefs Association at the address listed on the bottom of the application.

### ***Submission of Application to the Committee***

The Texas Police Chiefs Association will review the applications received and will submit the applications to the TPCAF Recognition Committee periodically. If the agency has already completed its Internal Review Process and has all files ready for inspection, the Recognition Committee will approve the application and direct the Program Coordinator to send a Final Compliance Review team to the agency. If the agency is seeking admittance into the Electronic Submission Process or the Mail Submission Process, the Recognition Committee will approve agency for participation when space is available.

As soon as the agency is approved for entry (or immediately if using the Full Review Process and the agency is ready for a Final Review) The Program Coordinator will have a Contract mailed to the agency. The contract should be completed and signed by both the City CEO and Chief of Police. As soon as the Contract is completed and returned with the first year program fees, the Program Coordinator will contact the agency and provide submission instructions, appoint an agency Facilitator if necessary, and arrange for scheduling an initial meeting.

Agencies that are not immediately accepted into the Electronic Submission or Mail program due to space limitations may still begin reviewing the standards,

modifying policies, developing their files and collecting proofs of compliance. When the agency is accepted, the Internal Review process will be much shorter. In fact, some agencies may be ready for their final review immediately after being accepted if they have properly prepared.

### ***Expect Agency Change***

The Program Manager (PM) is a key change agent. The Chief should also be aware that Recognition is a task in which the entire agency participates. Chiefs cannot simply assign this task to someone in the organization and forget about it. Because the Chief make final policy decisions, and presumably know more about the department than most, their active participation is essential.

Chiefs are encouraged to hold regular briefings on Recognition status. The PM will also serve as an information liaison. The Chief may also want to schedule time at regular staff meetings for the PM to bring staff up to date on progress and address problem areas. Some agencies may find it useful to assign agency staff to conduct policy reviews in certain areas to assist the PM.

The PM should make every effort to visit other Recognized or Accredited agencies. The information gathered will prove to be invaluable.

The Best Practices developed by the Recognition Committee should serve as a blueprint for agency policy. They are not, however, the only resource the agency should explore. Texas law enforcement agencies have an excellent reputation regarding the sharing of information, especially in the area of policy development. Law enforcement agencies that have a long-term commitment to Recognition efforts can serve as a tremendous resource to those departments just starting the process. New PM's seeking advice should never hesitate to contact other agencies involved in the recognition process or the Recognition staff.

## **The Internal Review and Recognition Process**

### ***Agency Initial Meeting***

Because some of the Best Practices require specific facility and equipment standards to be met, an Initial Agency Visit is conducted 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 Best Practices requirements will require additional budgeting efforts. All agencies accepted into the Electronic Submissions program are assigned an Agency Facilitator to assist in reviewing agency documentation and ensuring an agency is prepared for the Final Review visit. The assigned Facilitator usually conducts the initial visit to ensure the agency is aware of the documentation process, conduct a facility inspection, and to assist the agency in locating and developing directives if necessary.

Agencies who are proceeding under the Full Review Process can request an Initial Meeting from the Program Coordinator. A trained Facilitator will be provided to conduct an Initial Visit for these agencies.

### ***Internal Review Process***

Once an agency has been accepted into the program, they may begin reviewing and developing policy and collecting documentation as proof of compliance. (There is no reason an agency cannot begin development of policies and procedures that meet the Best Practices prior to their official application or acceptance into the program. Submission or review can then be completed quickly once an agency is accepted into the program and the overall review process shortened significantly.) Agencies accepted into the Electronic Submissions Program and Mail program are expected to complete their internal review and have their Final Review visit within two years from their date of acceptance.

## ***File Requirements***

The Texas Law Enforcement Agencies Best Business Practices are available online at no charge. Candidate Agencies must develop a file (folder or divided section of a three ring binder) for each standard and will maintain Proof of Compliance for each standard in the respective file. Details of the file construction and maintenance process is covered in Chapter 5 of this Manual.

An agency may request that a particular standard, originally designed to be submitted electronically or by mail (E or EV), be viewed on site instead if the documentation is voluminous or part of the proof cannot be submitted electronically. Hard copy files are maintained by the agency even if Proofs are submitted and accepted electronically.

The self-assessment will typically begin as an exercise in comparison. The Program Manager (PM) starts comparing current agency policy to the Recognition standards. Many managers will quickly come to the conclusion that the agency is closer to compliance than anticipated. Law enforcement typically adapts to the ebb and flow of legislative changes and most agencies quickly adopt policy that is consistent with the law.

As the PM compares what must be covered for the Recognition purposes, he/she will probably find that some fine-tuning is necessary. The Program Manager may want to address high liability areas first in order to get any necessary changes in agency policy into the hands of those it affects as quickly as possible. Use of force, pursuit driving, property and evidence control, arrest procedures, etc. are some of these high liability areas.

## ***Compile Supportive Documentation***

There are several ways to prove compliance on most standards. The Document Submission Form (DSF) allows an agency to use any number of methods of proofs of compliance including written directives, other documentation, interviews and observation. Agencies use the Document Submission Form (DSF) to explain what is being submitted as Proof of Compliance. If a standard requires a Written Directive, the agency's directive must cover all aspects or requirements of the standard. Other proofs of compliance with the directive (items that prove the agency is complying with their own directive) must be included to show full compliance with the Best Practice. The Evaluator's Review section of the DSF can provide the Program Manager with an understanding of what needs to be submitted. A discussion of the Document Submission Form is provided in Chapter 5.

**Written Directives** — Usually a policy or general order of the department issued

by the Chief, generally codified in the department's Operating Manual. It can also be local ordinances, state laws, civil service rules, city personnel rules or other written material that requires employee compliance.

**Written Documentation** — Examples of written documents include, but are not limited to lesson plans, memos, 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 Manager 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 Final Review team. The Manager may want to list individuals on the DSF who are most knowledgeable about the agency action in a specific area. For example, the director of personnel for the jurisdiction may be listed as a potential interview to prove compliance with certain 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 insure that the assessment team will interview the person. However, if the team does choose to interview the suggested person, the Manager has already supplied them with the name (and proper spelling) of the person to be interviewed. This makes the assessor's job easier 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 simply observing the action or a piece of equipment is proof that the agency is in compliance with the standard. PM's should be aware that assessors are not required to settle for a single proof of compliance unless it is overwhelming in nature. The wise Manager will list proofs in at least two categories, and in some cases, all four categories. The more ways a Manager can show the agency is truly 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 folder. Having additional proofs will never hurt, but not having enough is a common shortcoming.

### ***Train Agency Personnel in Policy Changes***

If policy changes are necessary, it is imperative that all members of the department receive a copy and be trained in those changes. This receipt of a copy or training should always be documented and maintained by the agency. The Manager may want to have other agency personnel present the changes (including the Chief or other high ranking officer) or may simply coordinate with shift commanders. The important point is that agency personnel know about newly adopted policy as soon as possible. Any new policy should include a training component for those it

affects. Depending on the type of policy change, training may be formal classroom training, Roll Call Training, or even Roll Call Training Bulletins as long as there is documentation that the individuals received the training. The PM should remember that the assessment team may desire to interview agency rank and file on the particular issue addressed.

### ***Electronic or Mail Submission of Proofs of Compliance***

If the Candidate Agency is enrolled in the Electronic Submission Process or Mail Process, over two thirds of the standards allow electronic or mail submission of proofs of compliance.

The notation next to the Standard Title (E, EV, or V) indicates which standards are approved for electronic or mail submission. An “E” indicates the standard may be submitted electronically or by mail. An “EV” indicates the standard may be submitted electronically or by mail, but it will also be reviewed on-site by the Final Review Team. A “V” notation indicates the file will be reviewed by the On-Site Team. An agency may request an electronic or mail submission standard be reviewed on-site due to the amount of proof required to show compliance. If electronic submission is allowed, the following process is used.

A Document Submission Form (DSF) is used as the first item in all files regardless of the type of review process used. If Electronic Submission or Mail Submission is used the DSF is submitted as the first attachment of each standard submission. If a standard has multiple parts or requirements, the Candidate Agency must show compliance with each part of the standard. The Proofs of Compliance may be listed as Item 1, 2, 3, etc. on the DSF with an explanation of what the item is and what part of the standard the item proves. A sample of a completed DSF and complete file is located on the download section of the website under Sample Submissions. The Evaluators Review section of the DSF provides the Program Manager with an understanding of what need to be submitted for acceptance.

Proofs of Compliance for some standards will be clear and obvious. However, if the agency has any question concerning the documentation or the level of proof required, they should review the “Discussion” section of the standard for clarification. The agency’s Program Coordinator may also be contacted for clarification of what might be required. Participation in the User’s Group can also assist Program Managers in the understanding what is required for proof of compliance. The Program Coordinator reviews documentation from many agencies and ensures the appropriate level of proof and consistency of documentation. If the documentation is sufficient to prove compliance, the Program Coordinator accepts the documentation and notifies the agency of the acceptance.

Agency documentation which is submitted electronically for acceptance as proof of compliance is maintained on a private host server and is backed up biweekly. The program will automatically send an email receipt when a Proof is received. When the Proof has been accepted, an email will be sent indicating acceptance. This email should be printed and placed in the front of the agency's paper file.

If the documentation submitted is believed to be insufficient in proving compliance, the Program Coordinator shall contact the Program Manager and to discuss the issue. The Program Coordinator may suggest other documentation or other adjustments that would prove compliance. If the agency requests, the Program Coordinator will request review of the issue and submitted proofs of compliance by the Recognition Committee for a decision.

The Program Coordinator may identify standards for review by the on site Final Review even with documentation "accepted" as proof of compliance. The Final Review team will also randomly select a number of electronically "accepted" files for on site review to ensure proper documentation and review.

If an agency fails to complete the internal review within a two year period, they may request a six months extension. The extension request will be reviewed by the Program Coordinator and submitted to the Recognition Committee for consideration. Failure to request an extension before the end of the two year period or failure of the Committee to grant an approval of the extension will result in the agency being dropped from the program. The agency may reapply at any time.

### ***CALEA Agency Proof of Compliance***

Texas agencies that are CALEA Accredited have already addressed many of Texas Best Practices. To simplify the Internal Review Process for these agencies, a Comparative Table is available on the Download section of the Recognition Program website. While some duplication may occur, CALEA agencies are required to maintain full Texas Best Business Practices Compliance Files and documentation to prove compliance with the Texas standards. The process is simplified however, due to CALEA agencies having immediate access to Proofs of Compliance for many of the standards.

### ***Initial Compliance Review***

When the agency has submitted and received acceptance of all standards recommended for electronic or mail submission (or has all hard copy files prepared if not using electronic submission) and believes it has all on site review requirements completed, they should schedule their Initial Compliance Review. The Initial Compliance Review is usually conducted by the Agency Facilitator and

will be coordinated through the Program Coordinator. The Agency Facilitator will travel to the agency and conduct an initial review of the entire on-site requirements. This process assists agencies by making sure their on-site files and the required proof of compliance is complete before the Final Review.

The Agency Facilitator will review the DSFs and proofs of compliance for those standards planned for the on-site Final Review. While he will not review in detail or formally accept the standard, he will ensure the file is ready for review. Since the Agency Facilitator is typically located close to the agency, this Initial Compliance Review may take only a couple of hours if electronic or mail submission has been used. If no standards have been submitted electronically or by mail, the agency should use a Mock Assessment to ensure they are ready for the Final Review.. All travel expenses of the Agency Facilitator, including overnight stays if necessary, is the responsibility of the Candidate Agency.

Upon successful completion of the Initial Compliance Review, the agency may request the Final Review. The agency should complete any necessary changes or additions to their proof of compliance identified in the Initial Compliance Review prior to requesting their Final Review.

CALEA Accredited agencies may omit the Initial Compliance Review if they wish but a Final Compliance Review will be required.

### ***Final Compliance Review***

The Final Compliance Review is requested by an agency when documentation for all standards has been completed and when the Initial Compliance Review (if required) has been conducted. (Any modifications recommended by the Agency Facilitator in the Initial Compliance Review (or Mock Assessment) should be completed prior to requesting the Final Review.) The Final Review is requested through the Program Coordinator.

The Program Coordinator will select a Program Coordinator or Agency Facilitator and a Chief of Police from another area in Texas that has no personal connection with the Candidate Agency. The Final Review Team will travel to the agency and conduct the Final Review by visually confirming the compliance with the remaining Best Practices where documentation has not been previously submitted. The 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. The team leader shall moderate all discussions regarding compliance issues. The PM will be expected to be available to discuss issues anytime the team is working.

If the agency has electronically submitted all standards allowed, the Final Review will normally take two days. The team will usually arrive by noon on the first day, meet agency personnel and begin their tour and review of the agency in the early afternoon. The team will usually conclude their review before noon on the second day. An exit interview is held with department leadership, and the team then travels back to their respective agencies that afternoon.

Members of the team may want to attend shift change, ride along with officers, and/or interview members of the agency not scheduled for interview. This means the entire agency needs to be prepared for these possibilities. The team is instructed to weigh all responses to queries. The Manager should arrange to attend shift briefings prior to the assessment and brief the department members on the upcoming Final Review and what to expect.

Program 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 Chief 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 give the 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.

DSFs for the on site review items will be initialed and dated by the Final Review Team during the on site review process. The originals will be left with the agency and a copy provided to the Team Leader if requested to assist in the development of the Final Report.

The Chief assigned to the Final Review Team will prepare a report of the Final Review and submit it to the Program Coordinator within 10 business days of the Final Review visit.

The expense of the Final Review Team, including overnight accommodations, is the responsibility of the candidate agency.

### ***Committee Review and Award***

Upon receipt of the final report from the reviewing Chief, the Program Coordinator will prepare a Summary Report of the agencies status and readiness

for Committee Review. The Program Coordinator will electronically forward the summary report and the Final Review Report the Committee Chairperson. A copy of the report will also be forwarded to the Candidate Agency.

If there are no significant concerns regarding the agency's compliance, the Committee Chairperson may request an electronic vote as allowed in the Committee Bylaws. This electronic vote to award "Recognized" status allows more expeditious response. The Chairperson may request additional information from the Candidate Agency or may delay the vote until the next scheduled business meeting of the Committee.

## ***NOWWHAT?***

*You have done it — congratulations! Now enjoy the benefits.*

### **Recognition Term**

Recognized status is awarded for a four (4) year term. Requirements for maintaining Recognized status is provided in Chapter 7.

### **Official Recognition**

The agency will be identified and introduced as a "Recognized" agency at the Texas Police Chiefs Association annual conference. The agency will also be listed on the Texas Police Chiefs Association website as a Recognized agency.

### **Certificate Presentation**

The agency will receive a framed Certificate of Recognition. Additional certificates are available should an agency have more than one facility.

Local awards can be made within the agency's city at either a City Council meeting or dinner if requested. Local awards would be presented by a member of the Recognition Committee or a Program Coordinator depending upon scheduling. Expenses for the individual making the presentation are the responsibility of the candidate agency.

### **Recognized Agency Logo**

Recognition staff will provide the Program Manager with camera-ready copies of the official "Recognized Agency" seal. This logo may be displayed on agency letterhead, web pages or any other official manner.

## **Best Practices and Proofs of Compliance**

### ***Best Business Practices***

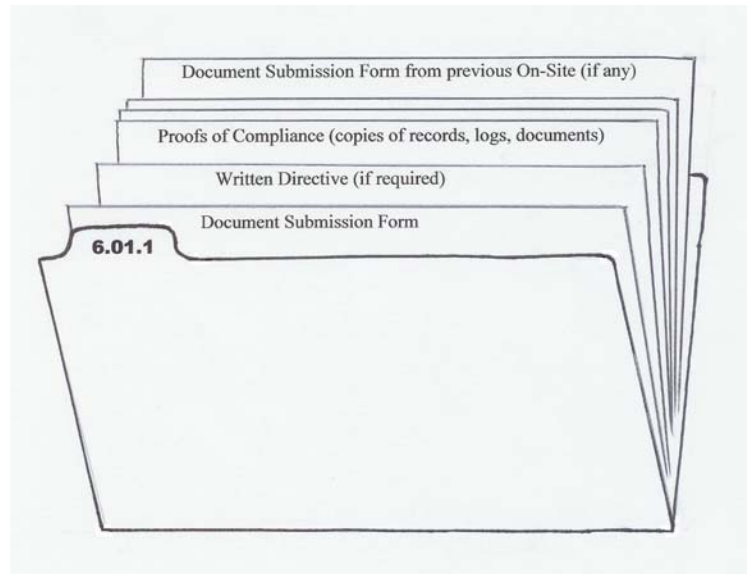
The Best Business Practices are compiled in a separate document for ease of review and study. The Best Business Practices, also informally called standards, are reviewed annually and updated as necessary. New or revised Best Practices must be complied with as indicated in Chapter 8 of this manual.

### ***File Development***

As indicated earlier, the agency will develop a file folder for each standard and will maintain Proof of Compliance with each standard in the respective file (or three ring binder if the agency prefers). Hard copy files are maintained by the agency even on Proofs that are submitted and accepted electronically or by mail. The files are typically manila or similar type files labeled with the Best Practices number.

The documents inside the file should be maintained in the following order:

1. Email “Accepting” Proof of Compliance for Standard (if electronically submitted)
2. Document Submission Form (DSF) for the standard
3. Copy of Written Directive (Departmental Policy or Procedure if required by the standard)
4. Documentation showing Proofs of Compliance (in same order as listed on DSF)
5. Acceptance Email and DSFs from prior reviews.



### ***Numbering System***

The standards are numbered according to their placement within the chapter and section to which they apply. For example, in the standard number 1.02.1, the 1 refers to the chapter, Administration and Organization, and the .02 corresponds to the chronological order of the standard within this chapter, and the .1 indicates the first standard in this particular topical area. Additional standards added later to the Best Business Practices regarding the Budget may be numbered 1.02.2 and 1.02.3, etc.

### ***Electronic Submission Notation***

Immediately adjacent to the Standard number and Title is a notation indicating whether the standard is authorized for electronic submission (E), is authorized for electronic submission and on-site review (EV), or an on-site standard (V).

### ***Components of the Best Practices Statement***

Best Practice Statement - The Best Practice is identified by its specific number, such as 1.02.1. The Best Practices statement then presents the requirements of the standard. The Best Practice may contain a number of separate requirements. Each of the separate requirements must be addressed in the agency's directive (policy statement) or operations and proof of compliance is 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, however, create a file folder and a Document 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 Communications or Property Room functions are performed by agencies other than the Candidate Agency, the Agency performing those functions must meet the Best Practices for those functions. Because these functions provide critical services to both the officers of the Candidate Agency and the citizens of the city, these standards must still be met. The Candidate Agency must provide the appropriate evidence of compliance and the Final Review Team may need to make site visits to those providing agencies during the Final 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 most of Chapter 10 as Not Applicable, IF the holding facility used is subject to the Texas State Jail Standards Act. Several standards within Chapter 10 will still apply to the agency.

Standards 10.01.1, 10.02.1, 10.03.1 and 10.22.1 still apply to the Candidate Agency. Standard 10.10.1 still applies to the Candidate Agency to the extent that the prisoner's property is cared for until released to the holding agency. Standard 10.12.1 still applies to the Candidate Agency to the extent that officers are instructed on how and when to obtain medical aid for a prisoner prior to release to the holding agency. The agency must also comply with 10.14.1 and 10.15.1 regarding strip or body cavity searches. If these actual searches are performed for the Candidate Agency by another agency at the Jail, the Candidate Agency must still have a policy on when and how requested and if they are to be performed prior to arrival at the jail.

If the agency used by the Candidate Agency to hold prisoners is not subject to the Texas State Jail Standards Act, the Candidate Agency must comply with all of Chapter 10.

## ***Waiver from Standard Compliance***

Waivers of Standards are not granted by the Committee. The Best Practices were designed to be minimum requirements for agencies in Texas. Agencies should carefully review the standards manual and resolve any questions before making application.

## ***Proofs of Compliance***

Proofs of Compliance are those methods used by the Candidate Agency to prove they comply with the Best Practices and their own policies. Proofs can be written documentation, copies of logs, sign-off sheets, photographs, visual inspections or interviews with agency staff. Most of the standards can have documentation submitted electronically, but some will require visual inspection during the on site Final Review. The electronic submission process is outlined in the following chapter. This chapter addresses the content and construction of Proofs of Compliance.

## ***The Document Submission Form (DSF)***

The Document Submission Form is designed to provide basic information about the documents being submitted and minimize the amount of data necessary. A prepared Document Submission Form for each standard has been prepared and may be downloaded from the website. The data fields on the DSF are mostly self explanatory. The open field entitled “Proof of Compliance Submitted” is designed as a free flow narrative for the agency to identify each document submitted, where the document is from, and identify the portions of the standard that it addresses. This allows an agency to attach only a single page of a multi-page policy and state in the narrative of the DSF that “Item 1” is “*Page 3 from the Use of Force Policy (General Order 2.1) and addresses the reporting requirements for any use of force.*” At least one full page of any policy or order should be submitted to show the submission is actually part of a larger document.

Multiple entries describing different documents proving different parts of a standard can be placed on one DSF. Other formatted proofs such as “pdf.” files or photographs, can be explained on the DSF and submitted as a separate document or attachment. Additional information which the agency wishes the reviewer to be aware of can also be included.

The DSF forms are available in the download section of the website.

### ***Preparation for Electronic Submission***

The DSF is the first attachment for each proof submitted. For each standard, a DSF must be prepared. The DSF is then saved on the agency computer using the City name and Standard number as the title – such as Test City 6.01.1, and a copy printed for the hard copy file folder.

### ***Minimization of Documentation***

While each part of a Best Practices standard must be proven individually and completely, the minimum number and amount of documents should be submitted which accomplishes that purpose. If submitting a part of a document such as a policy, the agency should submit a copy of a 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. An explanation of the document is provided on the DSF. 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 aware that the Final Review team may request to see proof of entire agency training on any issue (all members) when on site.

### ***Highlighting***

Microsoft Word 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. If an entire document is needed to prove compliance, highlighting is unnecessary.

## **Web Based Electronic Submission Process**

### ***Web Based Electronic Submission and Review of Proofs of Compliance***

The Recognition Program maintains a web based system of submitting and reviewing most proofs of compliance. Training on the use of the system is provided in the Manager/Facilitator Training Program and the agency receives access information when it is accepted for Recognition.

Proofs are submitted using a 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 and news posted about the program.

### ***Electronic vs. Paper Files***

The Recognition Program's web based system was designed for ease of administration and to reduce the amount of on-site time necessary to observe compliance. This saves the agency money by reducing on-site expenses. While most proofs of compliance may be submitted and accepted electronically, the on-site proofs (and possibly some proofs already accepted electronically) may still require physical examination to confirm compliance. The electronic submission process, therefore, does not relieve the agency of keeping complete hard copy files on all standards.

Clearly, the on-site review of proofs is best facilitated by the review of a paper file with the DSF and documents attached. While electronic submission proofs may also be maintained in electronic format, agencies are required to keep paper files to ensure protection and access to files.

## *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. (It may be easier to copy a portion of a general order to a new document, highlight appropriate areas, and save under a temporary name.) The Program Manager then opens the appropriate DSF form, completes the form, and saves it on their computer system.

Each requirement of a standard must be met separately and a different document showing proof of compliance may be necessary for each. All attachments should be clearly explained on the DSF form.

PDF files or photographs submitted as proofs can be submitted as an additional attachment when submitting the file on-line. They should still be explained on the original DSF however. Up to five attachments (the DSF and four different attachments) can be submitted on each proof.

If additional attachments need to be submitted, submit the first set of five, then go to the “View Proofs” portion of the website, select and click on the standard just submitted. A “post reply” button will appear on the right side and clicking it will allow adding up to five additional attachments.

Prior to signing on to the Program Website, the Program Manager should have the file being submitted properly prepared for submission and any other .pdf or photograph files identified and available on the computer. The Program Manager then logs on to the website.

1. After logging onto the website, the Program Manager selects “Submit a Proof of Compliance” and designates the Recognition Program as the “Department” for submission. A submission page appears. The priority should remain “low.”
2. The subject of the submission should always be the city name and standard number such as “Test City 1.02.1.” The large comment field immediately below the subject line must have an entry of some kind in order for the program to accept the submission. This field could have any narrative comments about the submission. Agencies might simply state “Attached is the DSF and proofs for standard number 1.02.1.”
3. The last section of the submission page is “Uploading Files.” Click on the top ‘Browse’ button and locate the appropriate DSF file for the subject standard created earlier on your computer and attach it. Up to four additional attachments can be submitted.

4. After all attachments are added, click on “Send,” and the page should indicate the proof was sent successfully.

### ***Viewing the Proofs Submitted***

When on the base webpage, the Program Manager can review the proofs of compliance previously submitted by clicking on View Proofs. The status of each proof indicated whether it has been “Accepted,” is still open “Open,” or is “On-Hold” pending additional information.

## Maintaining Recognized Status

### *Annual Report and Review of Selected Standards*

Recognized status is awarded for a four year period. During this period the agency must continue to comply with the Best Practices. The Agency Facilitator is no longer involved in the process as the agency has achieved Recognized status.

Not every standard needs new Proofs of Compliance submitted each year. Agencies are required to submit an Annual Report and Proofs of Compliance for two of the standards which require specific reports on the part of the agency. The Annual Report Form is available for download 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 Annual Report.

Should an agency fail to submit these proofs in a timely manner, the Program Coordinator will query the agency. Failure to promptly submit the required proofs/fees, or other issues which provide proof that an agency is not complying with Best Practices will result in the Program Coordinator notifying the members of the Recognition Committee. Action of the Committee may revoke Recognized status.

### *Renewing Recognized Status*

During the last twelve months of the four year cycle, if the agency wishes to renew their Recognized status, the agency is required to provide documentation and Proofs of Compliance for all standards as they did during initial Recognition. The Proofs of Compliance may be collected in paper files or forwarded directly to the web based file system as before. The Agency Facilitator is no longer assigned to assist the agency and no Initial Compliance Review is conducted unless specifically

requested by the agency. The Program Coordinator is the primary contact for the agency during this Recognition Renewal process. A Final Review Team visit and Committee Review will be conducted in the same manner as in the initial process.

Agencies wishing to renew their Recognized Status must schedule their Final Review at least 30 days prior to the expiration date of their Recognized status. All proofs of compliance for this review must be dated within the last 12 months of their prior Recognition period.

## **New or Revised Standards**

Law enforcement is an ever changing process. As such, it is anticipated that modifications and additions will be made to the Best Practices over time. The Recognition Committee is charged with the responsibility of keeping the standards up to date and consistent with best law enforcement practices. The Committee may consider at their periodic meetings, any change, modification, or additions to the standards. Any Texas Police Chief, Facilitator, Program Coordinator, or Recognized agency may suggest or recommend modifications or additions.

When additions or modifications to the standards are made, the Committee will decide an effective date for the addition or modification. Agencies in the process but not yet recognized must meet the standard if their Final Compliance Review is after the effective date. The Committee will also determine if the currently Recognized agencies must meet the new or modified standard. If currently Recognized agencies are required to meet the new or modified standard, the Committee will establish a time frame for compliance and the agencies notified. Otherwise, agencies already in Recognized status must comply with the revision or modification at their next Recognition Renewal.

### ***Reapplication for Recognized 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 Recognized status due to any other action of the Recognition Committee are allowed to 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 Best Practices and Appeal***

The Program Coordinator is charged with the interpretation of Best Practices 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

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interpretation of standards and proofs of compliance is the Recognition Committee. If an agency requests, the Program Coordinators will request an interpretation of a standard or proof of compliance from the Recognition Committee.

## **Fees and Expenses**

### ***TPCA Participation Required***

To participate in the program, the agency Chief must be a member of the Texas Police Chiefs Association. Current dues for membership are \$3.00 for every \$1,000 of the Chief's annual salary. Membership also provides numerous other benefits including legal updates, legislative representation on law enforcement issues, training, and access to Chiefs around the state to assist in solving problems.

### ***Recognition Program Annual Fees***

Recognition program annual fees depend on the size of agency as listed below:

Sworn Officers	Fee Amount
1 – 10	\$250
11 – 25	\$400
26 – 50	\$600
51 – 100	\$800
101 – 200	\$1,000
201 or more	\$1,200

After acceptance of the contract by the Committee, the agency will be billed for their first year's fees. The initial meeting for the Candidate will be scheduled. These annual costs will subsequently be billed each year.

The agency is also responsible for the expenses of the Facilitator's visits (only one required but others can be requested by the agency) and the Final Review team. (This expense is incurred every four years.) Facilitators are generally located close by. If an over night is required, expenses are expected to be less than \$250. Final Review teams are from another area of the state but overnight travel expenses are not expected to exceed \$750 if the electronic or mail submission option is used. If the agency does not submit electronically or by mail, the Final Review will be

extended (usually one additional day) with additional estimated expenses of about \$300.

Travel expenses for the Facilitator and Final Review Team are controlled by the Program Travel Expense Policy and will be reimbursed immediately upon final approval of the expense report. The Candidate Agency will subsequently be billed with a single itemized invoice after the Final Review.

## **TPCAF Recognition Committee**

### ***Membership***

The Recognition Committee is composed of nine members appointed by the TPCAF Board of Directors. Members are Chiefs of Police in good standing and who agree to serve a full three year term. The Board Members serve staggered three year terms with three members being appointed each year. Individual members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. New Board Members are appointed at the first TPCAF Board Meeting each year and begin their term of office immediately upon appointment.

### ***Organization***

Officers of the Committee include a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Recording duties are performed by the TPCA staff or Program Coordinator attending the meeting. The Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed each year by the Board.

### ***Meetings***

The Committee will meet as needed to consider the business of the Committee. The Committee may take action electronically if approved by the Chairperson. Electronic voting on all issues is permitted by Committee Bylaws.

### ***Voting***

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

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When issues are submitted to the Committee members for electronic vote, a time limit shall be established by the Chairperson, 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 Chief of Police will abstain from voting on Recognition 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 President of the Texas Police Chief's Association.



# **TPCAF Recognition Program Travel Policy**

Recognition Committee Members, Program Coordinators, Facilitators and Final Review Team members will adhere to the following travel policies.

## ***Travel***

Travel to and from an agency or event under this program will be at the lowest possible expense. If travelers use personal vehicle they will be reimbursed at federal rate for total mileage. Airfare and car rental must be approved in advance by a Program Coordinator.

## ***Lodging***

Every effort should be made to select lodging at the state rate. Anticipated lodging rates at more than state rate must have prior approval of a Program Coordinator. Receipts for lodging must be submitted. The program will not reimburse exceptional expenses such as in room movies.

## ***Meals***

No more than \$40 per day is authorized for meals. If a meal log is completed receipts are not required. The program will not pay for alcoholic beverages.

## ***Other Expenses***

Other necessary and required expenses may be reimbursed with prior approval of the Program Coordinator.

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## *Travel Expense Invoice*

Upon completion of travel, a Travel Expense Invoice should be prepared and submitted to the Program Coordinator along with all required receipts within five business days of return from travel. The Program Coordinator will review and approve the Invoice and forward it to TPCAF for payment. TPCAF staff will then bill the Candidate Agency for the travel amounts.

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