



# The Police Corps

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## Guidelines for Training

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The Police Corps is designed to address violent crime by helping local police departments and sheriffs' offices increase the number of highly-qualified patrol officers working in especially challenging communities. To prepare them for service, college students accepted into the Police Corps undergo 16 to 24 weeks of physically and intellectually demanding residential Police Corps training. Police Corps officers also receive additional training from the local or state agencies with which they serve.

### *Goals and philosophy of Police Corps training*

Police Corps training lies at the heart of the program. Paid for by the federal government, Police Corps training is intended to go well beyond typical recruit training in depth, scope, and realism. Designed to develop the physical, moral and analytical capabilities of trainees, Police Corps training places special emphasis on leadership, integrity, fitness, effective communication, understanding of social context, problem solving in multi-cultural settings,

and commitment to the principles embodied in the Constitution, including respect for the dignity of all people.

To achieve these aims, Police Corps training emphasizes training approaches that:

- P Accurately reflect the complex situations and challenges that confront patrol officers in communities hard hit by crime, poverty, and social disorder;
- P Require participants to apply and practice their knowledge, skills and judgement in increasingly complex and realistic “hands-on” or scenario activities;
- P Address the challenges and stresses patrol officers may encounter within their agencies as well as those they can expect on “the street;”
- P Integrate ethical issues, leadership development, and other cross-cutting themes into all areas of training, including training on traditional law enforcement topics;
- P Reflect ongoing consultation with local police chiefs and sheriffs, outstanding rank and file officers, serving Police Corps officers, and community representatives; and
- P Call upon participants to hear from and respond thoughtfully to the perceptions and experiences of highly-respected serving officers, noted experts, and citizens from all segments of local communities, as well as the experiences and ideas expressed in a broad range of articles and books.

All Police Corps training must be approved in advance by the Office of the Police Corps and Law Enforcement Education (“Office of the Police Corps”). Training may take place at a state or regional facility that has developed a training program approved as satisfying these goals and guidelines as well as state POST requirements. Training may take place during college summers and/or after college graduation. States new to the program may wish to

train out of state in conjunction with an established Police Corps program. In such cases, the newer program would be expected to provide residential counselors to work with and mentor its participants, as well as instructors to train students on topics that are specific to the newer state.

Approval of Police Corps training requires that the proposed training staff and site demonstrate – through written submissions and site visits – how the Police Corps training will enhance and supplement strong POST training within the state to meet the goals and guidelines set out here. Once a site has conducted an approved Police Corps training, approval of subsequent training sessions requires a demonstration of how each subsequent session will build upon and enhance not only POST training, but also the previous Police Corps training session.

States that intend to conduct Police Corps training therefore should plan to invest a good deal of time and effort on training. Normally, development of approved Police Corps training will require significant changes in teaching techniques, additional hours of training – especially on evenings, nights, and weekends – and expansion of the scope of training to include a number of non-traditional topics and activities.

Crucial tasks for new programs include identifying a person with the commitment, experience, and understanding essential to an effective training director; identifying and orienting appropriate instructors and residential counselors; and identifying the most appropriate training site. All Police Corps training staff, including the training director, are expected to have a major role in actual instruction and training. Use of large numbers of outside instructors who work with trainees only a few times is discouraged.

All approved expenses of Police Corps training are covered by the Office of the Police Corps. Appropriate training expenses are outlined in the Police Corps *Guidelines for Budgets* and in the Police Corps *Financial Management Policies*.

### **Training session structure**

- P** All participants graduating from college in the same year should train together at the same time at the same facility. A minimum of 15 participants should train together. Police Corps participants cannot train jointly with non-participants absent exceptional circumstances.
- P** Training must satisfy most or all basic requirements of the state POST (Peace Officers Standards & Training) commission.
  - R** The approved training facility should coordinate with participating police departments and sheriffs' offices to ensure that the additional training they conduct at the local level will address any requirements not covered in the Police Corps training.
  - R** Topics that vary considerably from department to department – such as qualification in a specific firearm, specialized driving techniques, local ordinances, internal procedures – may be deferred to the additional local training. Each participant, however, must qualify in at least one commonly used handgun by the end of the Police Corps training.
- P** Training must be residential, with a demanding and varied schedule that reflects the schedules of officers actively involved in community patrol.
  - R** Participants in the Police Corps receive substantial scholarships in return for their agreement to undergo rigorous physical and mental training. Police Corps training schedules should include frequent early morning, evening, late night

and weekend exercises, as well as thought-provoking reading assignments and serious hands-on projects working with community members.

**R** Structured residential training where students rise together, eat together, train together, relax together and support one another will further the goal of teaching participants self-discipline, organizational loyalty, teamwork and mutual tolerance.

**P** The 16 to 24 weeks of required training must take place in a formal residential setting. If training is conducted in two or more sessions, no session can be shorter than eight weeks.

**R** College course work may not substitute for the training sessions.

**R** Training may take place upon graduation from college and/or during the summers after participants' sophomore and junior years of college.

### **Training for physical fitness, ethics and self-discipline**

**P** Each training session should include vigorous daily physical training consisting of both physical conditioning to develop endurance, strength and agility and thorough, mastery-level training in unarmed arrest and control tactics. The training in unarmed tactics is intended to supplement – not replace – full training in all appropriate police weapons and equipment, and to reinforce training in the ethical and moral considerations in the use of force. Boxing, while not itself a technique for police, is encouraged for physical training and development of self-confidence.

**P** Each training session should include, on a weekly basis, exercises designed to challenge participants to think through ethical issues that confront patrol officers, including issues relating to the integrity and performance of other officers. These exercises – which should become progressively more challenging – should guide

participants to develop high standards of professional conduct and self-discipline, and should foster a strong commitment to ensuring that all officers adhere to high standards of professionalism.

- P Ethics exercises should be integrated into the overall teaching curriculum, not treated as a supplemental, stand-alone, or add-on activity. Ethical issues should be built into scenarios and practical exercises.
- P Training facilities are encouraged to use integrity testing techniques and to carefully monitor – and strongly respond to – cheating in any kind of test, report or official activity.
- P Training programs also should include challenging field exercises designed to develop and test participants’ character, courage, stamina, honesty, self-discipline and ability to work in cooperative teams. State facilities are encouraged to employ obstacle courses, confidence courses and Outward Bound-style ropes courses. (If the equipment for these kinds of activities is not otherwise available, the Office of the Police Corps may provide the necessary funds.)
- P Training programs should set high minimum standards for physical, mental and emotional fitness and should evaluate participants on an ongoing basis during training. Participants who do not satisfy the standards cannot continue with the Police Corps.
- P Training programs are encouraged to offer remedial training to participants who find it difficult to meet the physical standards of the program. (If equipment necessary for remedial training is not otherwise available, the Office of the Police Corps may provide the necessary funds.)

- P State programs will not be penalized for dropping or failing participants who do not meet the defined standards for physical, mental or emotional fitness, or for attrition that results from maintaining a rigorous program.

### **Preparation for community patrol**

Police Corps training should impart to all participants the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential to effective service on community patrol, whether or not all of these are explicitly required by the state POST commission. Effective preparation for community patrol necessarily begins with a thorough grounding in law enforcement skills. Participants must develop high levels of skill in such areas as unarmed tactics, arrest and restraint techniques, disengagement techniques, observation, and interrogation. They must have a strong knowledge of constitutional law, and of state and local law. To meet the demands of community patrol in areas of great need, they also need skills in – and training sessions should cover – each of the following key areas:

- P Strategies for effective beat patrol
  - R Becoming familiar with a designated patrol beat and the community it represents
  - R Developing long-term goals and strategies for reducing crime and improving public safety
  - R Working jointly with officers on overlapping/adjoining beats
  - R Maintaining personal safety
- P Demographics and social characteristics of the communities in which participants will serve
- P Social context of pervasive community problems

- P Problem-solving and critical thinking skills
  
- P Communication skills
  - R Formal and informal interviewing
  - R Formal and informal conversation with community members
  - R Conflict resolution skills (including tactical communication)
  - R Listening skills
  - R Effective writing for various contexts, such as formal reports, informal notes, communications with community members
  
- P Strategies for leadership
  - R Earning trust and respect within the community
  - R Earning trust and respect within the police organization / professionalism and peer leadership
  - R Identifying opportunities for leadership / taking initiative
  - R Strategies and techniques for community mobilization
  
- P Strategies for working and communicating with children and youth
  - R On the street and in casual (“day to day”) encounters
  - R At school
  - R In emergency or crisis situations
  - R In enforcement situations (arrests, formal questioning)
  
- P Strategies for bridging communication barriers, including those related to race or ethnicity, age, illness or disability, education, or native language.
  
- P Strategies for working – and building relationships with – formal and informal community leaders, including
  - R Churches
  - R Social agencies

- R Nonprofit groups
- R Local businesses
- R Neighborhood organizations
- R Parent/family groups
- R School personnel
- R Other agencies of local government

A list of recommended readings related to these key areas is available from the Office of the Police Corps.

### **Realistic training**

No officer on community patrol has a single role. Each plays a combination of roles – enforcer of the law, protector of public safety, role model for children and community, and so on – at all times of day and night. A realistic training program will teach essential knowledge and skills in an integrated manner and will frequently place participants in demanding situations that call for complex analyses and thoughtful responses. To this end,

- P Except where climate conditions make it dangerous or impossible, Police Corps participants should train frequently in full gear. Use of disabled weapons clearly identified as disabled is recommended for this purpose. If such weapons are not available locally, the Office of the Police Corps may provide funds for their acquisition.
- P Since officers on community patrol routinely work at night and in the dark, training programs are to conduct significant training exercises at night, including patrol exercises and night firearms training.
- P Since officers on community patrol frequently must meet with fellow officers and community members in the evening or on weekends, training programs are to use

evening and weekend sessions for activities that call on participants to interact with community members or experienced officers.

- P** Instruction should integrate realistic preparation for community patrol with ethics training and traditional law enforcement content.
  - R** As one example, participants should train with judgmental shooting (“shoot/don’t shoot”) scenarios, as well as standard target shooting. States that have access to firearms training simulator equipment or other electronic training systems are encouraged to use them and follow up with appropriate discussion and analysis. Training with “simunition” bullets, paint balls or comparable equipment also is recommended. The Office of the Police Corps may provide funds for essential training equipment (including protective vests and goggles) not otherwise available within the state.
  
- P** Lesson plans should call upon students to apply their new knowledge and skills and develop judgement through frequent “hands-on” activities, including realistic scenarios and simulations that become more complex as training progresses. Other appropriate teaching techniques include interviews and surveys; independent research and writing; structured discussions with experienced officers active in the field; meetings with representatives and clients of community agencies; and hands-on work with community members, including children and youth. (The staff of the Office of the Police Corps can provide assistance on incorporating this type of teaching.)
  
- P** Hands-on learning, supported by challenging readings, should be the primary approach for many key areas of training for community patrol. As noted earlier, these include:
  - R** Beat patrol / strategies for effectiveness
  - R** Demographics and social characteristics of communities
  - R** Social context of pervasive community problems

- R Problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- R Communication skills
- R Strategies for leadership
- R Strategies for working with children and youth
- R Strategies for bridging communication barriers
- R Strategies for working with community leaders
- R Ethics and integrity

The Office of the Police Corps recognizes that the adoption of scenario-based training and hands-on learning as primary teaching techniques may mean that training facilities will submit budgets with expenses quite different from those of training programs that rely heavily on lectures, quizzes and standard texts.

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