

LETCSA VIOLENCE DE-ESCALATION TRAINING – COMPLIANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Washington State

Criminal Justice Training Commission

E2SHB

1310

July - December 2023



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LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

During the 2021 legislative session, Washington lawmakers passed E2SHB 1310, a new law governing when and how law enforcement officers can use force against members of the public. The law expects officers to de-escalate and requires law enforcement to exercise reasonable care in using physical force to reduce violence and prioritize the sanctity of life. RCW 43.101.450(6) and 2019, c 1 s 3 (Initiative 940) are each amended to read as follows:

- Beginning one year after December 6, 2018, all law enforcement officers in the state of Washington must receive violence de-escalation training. Law enforcement officers beginning employment after December 6, 2018, must complete such training within the first 15 months of employment. The commission shall set the date by which other law enforcement officers must complete such training.
- All law enforcement officers shall periodically receive continuing violence de-escalation training to practice their skills, update their knowledge and training, and learn about new legal requirements and violence de-escalation strategies.
- The commission shall set training requirements through the procedures in RCW 43.101.455.
- Violence de-escalation training provided under this section must be consistent with RCW 10.120.020 and the model policies established by the attorney general under RCW 10.120.030.
- The commission shall submit a report to the legislature and the governor by January 1st and July 1st of each year on the implementation of and compliance with subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

The report must include data on compliance by agencies and officers. The report may also include recommendations for any changes to laws and policies necessary to improve compliance with this section's subsections (1) and (2).

This report contains number of officers trained since July 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. It also contains year-to-date numbers as well as all time totals.

The report contains past and present achievements, as well as future goals and steps taken to ensure we can reach our goal of providing this training to approximately 11,000 Certified Peace Officers in the State of Washington.

Glossary of Terms

PTI	Patrol Tactics Instructor
PTIS	Patrol Tactics In-service
PTIR	Patrol Tactics Instructor Recertification
PTB	Patrol Tactics Basic (delivered in BLEA)
BLEA	Basic Law Enforcement Academy
BLEEA	Basic Law Enforcement Equivalency Academy
LETCSA	Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act
WSCJTC	Washington Criminal Justice Training Commission
ASTD	Applied Skills Training Division
ECW	Electronic Control Weapon

Definitions

Patrol Tactics Regional Hub – A regionally located venue that has certified instructors and has been certified to host PTI, PTIS and PTIR courses. Regional hubs are supplied with the needed training equipment by WSCJTC. The equipment is available for loan to smaller agencies located within the region that may need training materials to train their personnel.

Regional 24-hour In-service – Three consecutive days (24-hours) In-service Training that is open to all agencies. Must be delivered in a consecutive 3-day period.

Internal Only 24-hour In-Service Training – Training provided by an agency specifically to their own personnel. Can be delivered in 3 consecutive days or spread out over a maximum of 6 months.

The Path to Success

In 2023 LETCSA staff in ASTD created a new patrol tactics course to recertify peace officers and instructors who were trained under the original version of patrol tactics in 2020. WAC 139-11-020 requires all certified Washington peace officers to receive patrol tactics training every three years. The three-year mark for recertification is approaching for incumbent officers that initiated their LETCSA training cycle.

In addition to the development of materials for recertification, over 400-hours of curriculum development resulted in a new set of communication tools to improve an officer's ability to connect with their community. The communication tools are based on nationally recognized programs. These tools utilize the latest in negotiation and communication tactics.



The updated training emphasizes a positive and collaborative atmosphere which may ultimately result in building trust and positively influencing behavior even in the face of an adversarial confrontation. The goal is to influence people's behavior based on trust. To accomplish this task, this training teaches communication methods such as the employment of the right tone of voice, emotional labels, and mirrors to contribute to empathy.

This new curriculum incorporates the use of less lethal tools and is aligned with the WSCJTC definition of de-escalation that states the addition of these tools may "increase the likelihood of a favorable outcome for all" parties involved in a law enforcement contact.

The new communication and Electronic Control Weapon (ECW) certification curriculum are being piloted to determine additional staff, logistics, and supply considerations for future incorporation into future patrol tactics instructor certification courses.

The Current State of the Patrol Tactics Training

The patrol tactics program addresses legislative requirements for de-escalation and less lethal training by incorporating ECW component into the current patrol tactics instructor, in-service, and recertification courses.

In mid-November the patrol tactics team facilitated the fifth patrol tactics instructor recertification course in Clark County. This course provided instructors with updated curriculum for officers that are coming up on their three-year mark for certification. By receiving recertification, these instructors will service the Southwest region from a regional training hub that is anticipated for 2024.

The LETCSA patrol tactics program continues to innovate by continual assessment of the program and training. The goal of the curriculum is to always base it on data-driven and scientifically based sources. Currently Preflex (neuroscience of learning) and motor learning highlight patrol tactics programs efforts to meet this goal.

The integration of Preflex is ongoing and will continue in 2024. Preflex is a scientifically validated online training tool to help facilitate learning within the patrol tactics curriculum. The Preflex program is designed to assist officers in learning and retention of patrol tactics principles, such as employing sound tactics to create more time for communication and enhance force options in a critical incident. It is a proven method for better critical decision-making and improved outcomes for everyone.



What the Future Holds

The patrol tactics program now has three regional training hubs that are fully operational and offer services in Wenatchee, Yakima, and Everett. By establishing our regional training hubs, our law enforcement stakeholders have improved access to training materials, equipment, and personnel to assist them in the delivery of the 24-hour patrol tactics training.

Additionally, each hub can now host their own 80-hour Patrol Tactics Instructor training courses to continue increasing the number of certified instructors that can provide the regional and internal only 24-hour in-service curriculum.

The LETCSA patrol tactics team will continue their efforts in providing training across the state on the updated curricula, focusing in areas that may not be accessible to regional hub locations.



The LETCSA patrol tactics team remains committed and dedicated to maintaining training standards. The team continues to evolve by researching scientifically based training methods and innovative training principles.

Training Update

As 2024 begins, we will continue to focus on the training of all law enforcement officers in the state. While the total number of certified peace officers constantly fluctuates, all new entry-level (recruits) and lateral (experienced) officers are receiving the required patrol tactics training prior to graduating from BLEA and BLEEA training academy. This allows our focus to be on in-service training for incumbent officers.



The Numbers*

As a recap of the number provided, here are the numbers of Certified Peace Officers trained in the various Violence De-escalation courses this year.

Training Type	July 1 – December 31	YTD	ALL TIME
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patrol Tactics Instructor	27	103	590
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patrol Tactics In-Service	559	1059	3879
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instructor Recertification	7	66	66
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S.W.A.T.	15	44	89
Totals	608*	1272*	4624*

*These numbers are current as of December 20, 2023

Conclusion

The WSCJTC continues to diligently work towards increasing the opportunity for large and small agencies to meet the mandate of WAC 139-11 of providing Violence De-escalation training to all Certified Peace Officers by January 1, 2028. With the increased partnerships fostered through our Regional Training Hubs, we continue to march steadily towards the goal of providing this training to approximately 11,000 Certified Peace Officers in the State of Washington.