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Important Notice of Changes to P.O.S.T. Commission Rules

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IMPORTANT NOTICE OF CHANGES TO P.O.S.T. COMMISSION RULES

By Rex Barton
Police Consultant

The Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) Commission recently enacted several rule changes. Many are merely “housekeeping” revisions, such as changing the term “police officer” to “law enforcement officer” throughout, but several will have a significant impact on local law enforcement agencies. The changes are effective now, but the P.O.S.T. Commission will not enforce the rule changes until January 1, 2003.

Following is a summary of important rule changes.

Completion of Basic Law Enforcement Academy

1. The amount of time an officer may work before completing a basic law enforcement course (basic police academy) has been reduced from 12 months to six months. During the initial six-month period prior to attending the Basic Law Enforcement Course, the recruit *must* be paired with a field training officer or other certified senior officer.
Rule 1110-02-.03(3).
2. An officer from another state who challenges the P.O.S.T certification test will be required to take the test within 30 days of the date of employment. If the employee does not pass the test on the first attempt, the employee can retake the test within 30 days of the first attempt. If the employee does not pass on the second attempt, he or she will be required to attend an approved basic law enforcement school in order to be certified.
Rule 1110-02-.03(5)1.

Test Scores

The minimum passing score for all basic police school tests and in-service tests is being raised from 70 percent to 75 percent. This change also will affect officers challenging the P.O.S.T. test for certification.

Length of Basic Academy

The Basic Law Enforcement Course (Basic Academy) will now include a minimum of 400 hours of instruction and study. The previous minimum was 320 hours. This change should have no impact on local governments as the basic academies already provide more than 400 hours of instruction and study. *Rule 1110-7-.01.*

Mental Evaluation

The minimum standard relating to mental evaluations has been changed to read as follows:

...have been certified by a Tennessee Licensed Health Care Provider qualified in the psychiatric or psychological fields as being free from any disorder, as set forth in the current edition of the DSM, that would, in the professional judgment of the examiner, impair the subject's ability to perform any essential function of the job.

1. No waiver will be granted for mental disorders.

It is important that law enforcement agencies use the correct mental evaluation form as the old form does not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Rule 1110-2-.03*

For More Information

The new regulations are available on the Internet at www.state.tn.us/sos/rules. You can obtain new mental evaluation forms directly from the P.O.S.T Commission by calling (615) 741-4461. For additional help, please contact Rex Barton, MTAS Police Consultant, at (865) 974-0411 or your MTAS Management Consultant. You also may call the **MTAS Answer Line** to receive quick answers to short questions: **888-667-MTAS (6827)**. Or, visit our Web site at www.mtas.utk.edu.

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