



Kim Vickers
Executive Director

TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

Technical Assistance Bulletin

To: All Texas Law Enforcement Agencies/Contract Training Providers/Licensees
From: Kenny Merchant/Director, Credentialing and Field Services
Regarding: **COVID-19 Response**
Date: June 17, 2020

As with all State agencies, TCOLE is responding to the potential COVID-19 crisis by modifying delivery of services to best protect our customers and our own employees. These modifications may cause a slow-down in delivery of some non-essential services in order to prioritize for essential services. Please be patient as we try to work through this issue. In order to assist, we would like to supply the following information, which will be continuously updated until the end of the crisis:

1. TCOLE offices are closed to walk-in traffic. Mail deliveries will still be accepted. All call-in and email services will still be available for customers, but waiting times may increase.
2. We will still be accepting and processing all electronic and hard-mailed forms, applications, and training rosters. There may be slight delays in approval of non-essential applications
3. Basic licensing courses- academies are free to modify timelines and schedules to accommodate their immediate needs. Use of remote, video, or online training to replace the cognitive portions of classroom training may be considered, but only after the academy has submitted their plan of action to TCOLE for approval.
4. With more than a year left until the end of the 2019- 21 Training Unit and the 2017-2021 Training Cycle, TCOLE has not yet made a decision as to an extension resulting from COVID-19. We will continue to monitor the situation and make a determination closer to that date.
5. Any mandated training which falls due during the crisis period will be extended, but NOT WAIVED. Extension timelines cannot be predicted at this time.
6. Any currently held TCOLE license or certification due to expire during the designated crisis period will be considered by TCOLE to still be valid. At the end of the crisis, definite end dates for those licenses and certifications will be addressed. Examples include Temporary Licenses, Firearms Certifications, Specialty Certificates (School Based LE, Courtroom Security, etc.). Caution- TCOLE cannot control how outside agencies will view an expired license/certification.
7. Appointments (L1's) which would normally be rejected due to missing training will be approved, if the missing training is required to be taken in a classroom. There will be a process in place to hold the licensee/agency responsible for completing the missing training within 90 days- the training will not be waived. This will also include any reactivation/reinstatements/out-of-state/Federal/military applications, where an agency head will provide written notice that the application and subsequent appointment are immediately necessary. Contact Credentialing for further information.
8. State Licensing Exams will continue to be conducted at our Austin Headquarters, but time and seating are limited, so call and plan ahead. Walk-ins for exams are not accepted.



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9. For applications which require fees, TCOLE will temporarily accept personal checks, as well as the money orders, cashier's checks, and agency checks listed on applications.
10. Agencies who are unable to complete the required face-to-face interview portion of the required psychological exam (L3) process may apply to TCOLE for a Temporary waiver allowing a video interview. The interview must be by secure connection meeting industry standard security requirements (HIPAA). All other Rule requirements for the L3 remain in place. Apply by sending a letter on agency letterhead, signed by the Agency Head or designee, to credentialing.help@tcole.texas.gov.
11. The Governor's Office has waived the statutory limitation on appointing a Temporary Jailer to a repeat Temporary position (OC 1701.310(b)). This means agencies may bring back inactive Jailers and appoint them as Temporary Jailers while waiting for their reactivation to be completed. It also means that Temporary Jailer Licenses expiring during this crisis will still be considered active and the expiring Temporary Jailer Licensee need not be removed from service. All other statutory requirements for appointment are still in place.
12. The School Based Law Enforcement Certification, required of all School Resource Officers and ISD Officers, has 2 due dates- within 180 days for those officers appointed to that position on or after 09/01/2019, or before 09/01/2020 for those officers appointed to that position prior to that date. The deadlines are statutory, and therefore cannot be waived. The Commission will, however, not take any enforcement action against licensees who have not met the guidelines until the current crisis is over. At that time, enforcement dates will be announced