



Greg Stevens
Executive Director

TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

Technical Assistance Bulletin

To: All Texas Law Enforcement Agencies, Chief Administrators
From: T.J. Vineyard, Compliance and Standards
Regarding: Public Information Officer certification and training
Date: January 9, 2026

Under the provisions of HB 33, certain law enforcement agencies are required to have a designated public information officer (PIO) (Texas Government Code Section 411.3735). Those agencies subject to this requirement are:

- A municipal police department,
- A sheriff's office,
- A county constable's office,
- A school district police department, and
- The Texas Department of Public Safety.

The PIO may be the chief administrator but is not required to be a peace officer. If the chief administrator is the PIO, they must obtain the certification and complete the continuing education requirements. An agency is only required to have one certified PIO.

The PIO, if not directly employed by the chief administrator, should be clearly designated to the role through policy or written agreement. For example, a county PIO may, by written policy, act as the PIO for the sheriff's office and the constables in the county. A school district PIO may, by written policy, be designated as the PIO for the school district police department. A small agency could obtain a Memorandum of Understanding where a PIO from a larger agency agrees to act as the PIO for both agencies.

The PIO must complete training and obtain a certification from the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) within one year of appointment to this position, and complete continuing education annually (Texas Government Code 418.333). Individuals designated as a PIO currently have until September 1, 2026, to complete this requirement.

A PIO should be able to produce proof of certification and proof of continuing education (certificates) on inspection. Agencies that designate an external PIO through policy or agreement must maintain a copy of that PIO's proof of certification and continuing education with the agreement or policy.

The currently approved courses to meet this requirement are:

- Bill Blackwood LEMIT Public Information Officer course
<https://www.lemitonline.org/programs/?mode=view&item=1>
- TEEX MGT 318 Public Information in an All-Hazards Incident
<https://teex.org/class/mgt318/>
- FBI LEEDA Media and Public Relations course (TCOLE course no. 3763)
<https://fbileeda.org/page/MediaPublicRelations>
- FBI LEEDA Master Public Information Officer (TCOLE course no. 3775)
<https://fbileeda.org/page/MasterPIO>
- FEMA/NIMS Advanced Public Information Officer (FEMA E-388, TCOLE course no. 667388)
- FEMA/NIMS All-Hazards Public Information Officer (FEMA E-952, TCOLE course no. 667952)

How to Complete Certification to TDEM:

1. Select and complete one approved course from the list above.
2. Save your completion certificate, ensuring your name and TCOLE PID are clearly displayed.
3. Upload your certificate to <https://www.preparingtexas.org/>. Please see below for further instructions.

Public Information Officer Training for House Bill 33 Requirements

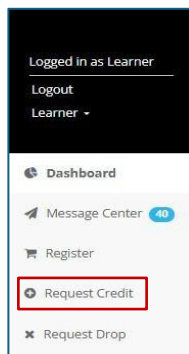
The following six courses satisfy the certification training requirement for the “HB 33 for Public Information Officers”:

- Bill Blackwood LEMIT Public Information Officer course
- TEEX MGT 318 Public Information in an All-Hazards Incident
- FBI LEEDA Media and Public Relations course
- FBI LEEDA Master PIO course
- FEMA Public Information Basics
- FEMA/NIMS Advanced Public Information Officer
- FEMA/NIMS All-Hazards Public Information Officer

If you already have an account in [PreparingTexas.org](https://preparingtexas.org), visit [PreparingTexas.org](https://preparingtexas.org) and click Log In in the top right corner.

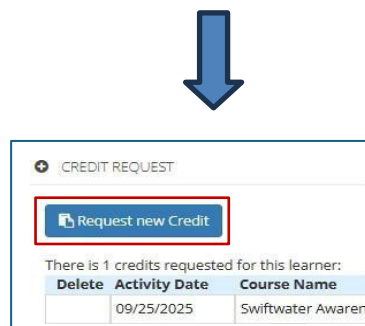
If you do not have a [PreparingTexas.org](https://preparingtexas.org) account, visit [PreparingTexas.org](https://preparingtexas.org) and click Create Account the top right corner. To create an account, you’ll first need to have a FEMA SID number. For details on creating a FEMA SID, visit <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>

Follow the steps below to upload your certificate to your [PreparingTexas.org](https://preparingtexas.org) account:



Upon logging into your account, click “Request Credit” on the left.

On the Credit Request page, click “Request New Credit.”



Type the Course name from the certificate.

Leave the Reason for Requesting Credit as “Need Prerequisite for Class Enrollment.”

The number of Requested Credits is **2.0**. Select “HB33” from the box under Equivalent Course.

Drag your certificate file into the bottom box.

Click “Request Credit.”



If you have any questions or issues, please reach out to the TDEM Training Division at training@tdem.texas.gov or at (512) 377-0011.

