



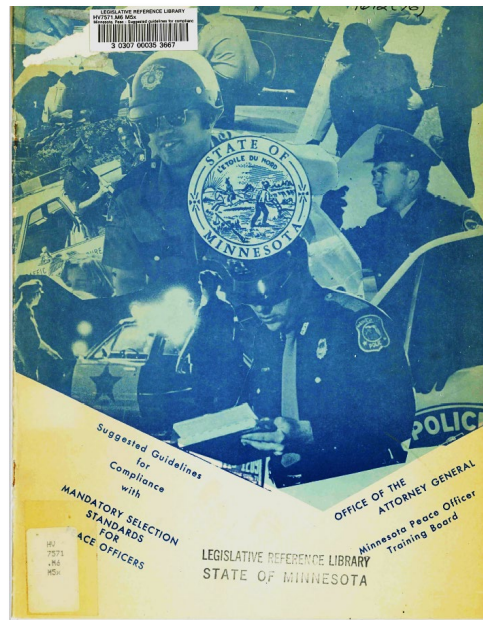
Professional Peace Officer Education

# **PPOE COORDINATOR'S MANUAL**

August, 2025

# INTRODUCTION

The Minnesota Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (POST Board) was created by the Minnesota legislature in 1977 and established a peace officer licensing system that was unique in the nation. Minnesota standards require those interested in taking the state *Peace Officer Licensing Examination* to earn a postsecondary degree from a qualifying institution of higher learning and successfully complete a specific program of professional peace officer education (PPOE) provided by certain board-certified colleges and universities (PPOE schools).



PPOE schools must abide by Minnesota Rules established to set standards around the selection and education of students seeking peace officer exam eligibility. The POST Board monitors these schools to ensure ongoing compliance with the following Minnesota Rules pertaining to professional peace officer education.

- MN Rules 6700.0100 Definitions
- MN Rules 6700.0300 Professional Peace Officer Education
- MN Rules 6700.0400 Certification of Schools
- MN Rules 6700.0401 Classroom Discrimination; Procedures
- MN Rules 6700.0500 Peace Officer Licensing Examination
- MN Rules 6700.0600 Licensing Examinations
- MN Rules 6700.0601 Examination Standards
- MN Rules 6700.0700 Minimum Selection Standards

This manual is assembled to assist coordinators of PPOE schools by outlining the duties and responsibilities of the PPOE Coordinator position and providing practical information and suggestions for meeting them. However, information contained in this document may become outdated. Information in this manual never supersedes the requirements of Minnesota Rules and it is the duty of the coordinator to maintain contact with the POST Board to remain current with requirements.



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# 1. Professional Peace Officer Education

## Learning Objectives

Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0300, require the POST Board develop, maintain and periodically revise *Learning Objectives for Professional Peace Officer Education*. These objectives must be incorporated into the professional peace officer education provided by POST-certified PPOE schools. Any individual interested in becoming a Minnesota peace officer (excluding those eligible for reciprocity\*) must successfully complete education and training in these objectives in addition to earning a qualifying degree.

The PPOE objectives, originally developed in 1977, have undergone comprehensive rewriting and occasional updating to reflect changes in law, science and technology, social issues and newly identified best practices. POST Strives to include input from PPOE schools in decisions to change objectives and when the changes will impact the licensing exam.

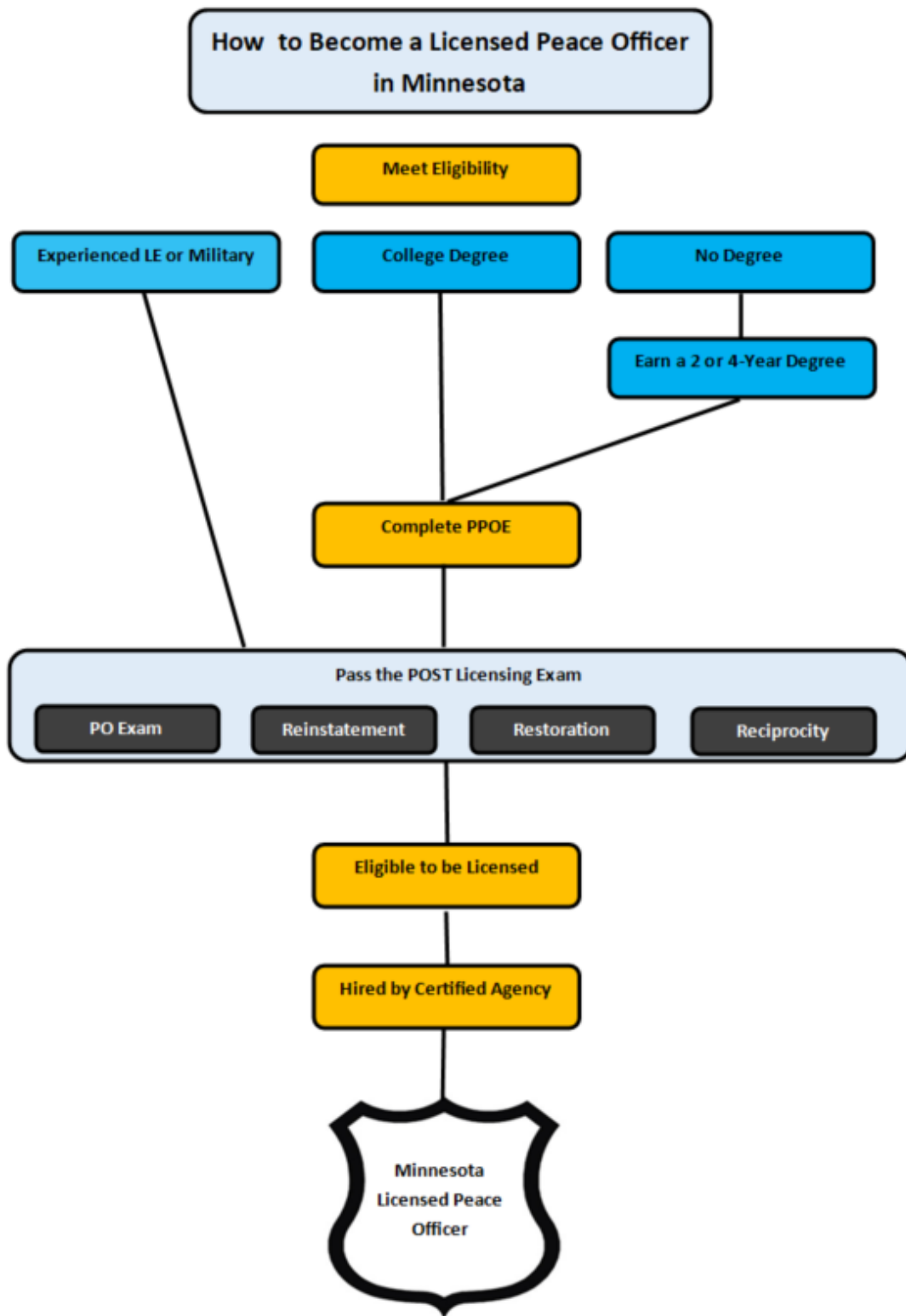
The *Learning Objectives for Professional Peace Officer Education*, available on the POST Board's website, are divided into 4 categories.

1 - Core Competencies
2 - Foundational Knowledge
3 - Performance of Peace Officer Duties and Tasks
4 - Tools, Techniques and Tactics

### Category Goals

1	Peace officer competency in these areas is critical to overall professional performance. PPOE programs need to provide a well-grounded theoretical foundation in these concepts as well as practical experience in applying them throughout the student's PPOE experience.
2	One of the hallmarks of a profession is a specialized body of knowledge that is the foundation of, and intrinsic to, competent professional practice. PPOE programs need to ensure peace officer license eligible candidates comprehend law enforcement, criminal justice and human behavior concepts and theories and use this knowledge to form a view about how the roles of peace maker and law enforcer relate to the world in which peace officers live and work.
3	PPOE Programs need to ensure individuals who are eligible for a peace officer license have experience in performing the most common, most important, and highest risk duties of a peace officer. This includes the integration of the core competencies, foundational knowledge and tools techniques and tactics.
4	Peace officers may employ a wide variety of tools, techniques and tactics to enhance safety, effectiveness and efficiency of performance. It is a goal of Minnesota's professional peace officer education to ensure peace officer license eligible candidates demonstrate the ability to properly use and maintain tools, and demonstrate the mechanics of techniques and tactics peace officers need to employ.

## 2. How to Become a Peace Officer



### 3. Certified PPOE Schools

Twenty-nine colleges and universities in Minnesota are POST Board certified to provide the professional peace officer education (PPOE) that leads to peace officer licensure. A list of these schools and their contact information is provided on the POST Board website.

#### **The Certification Process**

Any schools not already certified and interested in providing the professional peace officer education must provide the POST Board with:

- proof the school is regionally accredited and authorized to award academic degrees,
- a statement of need for a PPOE program at the school,
- documentation that supports the statement of need, and
- higher education system at the school supports a PPOE

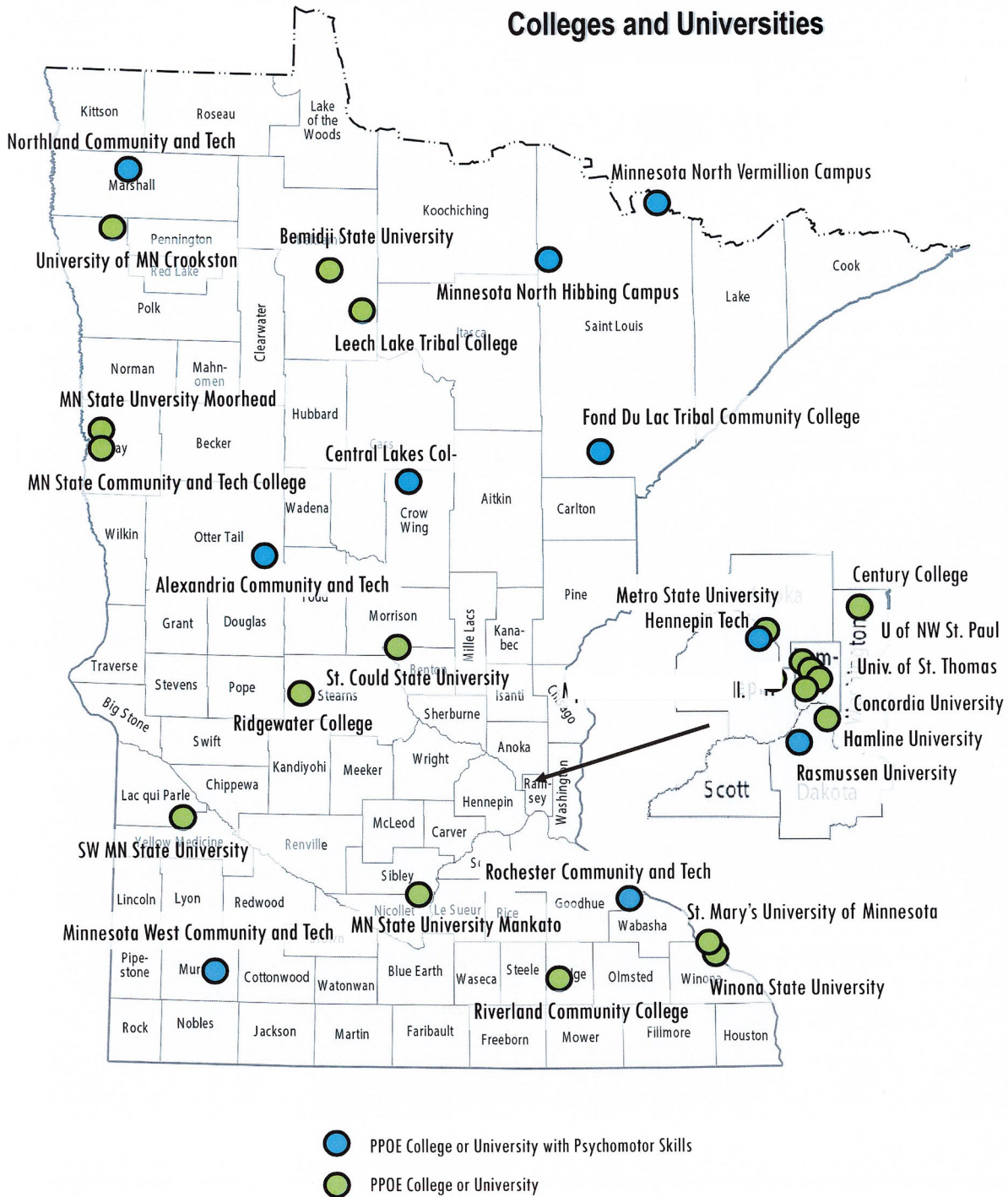
If the POST Board receives the required information and agrees with the statement of need the school can submit an application for certification. The application requests information regarding:

Administrative Requirements and Policies, Degrees Awarded, Coordinator Requirements and Duties, Student Admission and Services Curriculum and Delivery Methods, Instructor Qualifications, Development and Facilities/Learning Resources  
Evaluation Procedures

When a school submits an application it is evaluated by POST Board staff and an initial site visit is conducted. If a school meets the application requirement the school's request for provisional certification goes before the POST Board's training committee and then the full POST Board. The Board may then grant the school provisional approval of their PPOE program. Within a year of provisional approval staff will make another site visit to the program. If the program is found to be meeting all of the requirements for certification the school may request the Board lift the program's provisional status and certify the program.

# Professional Peace Officer Education (PPOE)

## Colleges and Universities



Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training



## **Obligations of Schools that Provide the PPOE**

In applying for certification these schools agree to:

- Provide students with an education that covers all of the POST Board's PPOE learning objectives and notify the POST Board of students who have successfully completed the program and earned a degree.
- Develop and administrate a set of admission standards
- Employ a qualified PPOE coordinator
- Maintain and make available to the board pertinent information on all classes conducted in the certified school that would document the school's PPOE curriculum
- Implement a record retention schedule to maintain curriculum materials used in the delivery of the PPOE for at least five years
- File with the POST Board each year an affirmative action plan and a report on the previous year's plan
- Employ qualified instructors who possess a postsecondary degree and/or have professionally recognized training and experience to teach the assigned subject matter in the PPOE
- Implement a formal written safety policy
- Establish written procedures for the investigation and resolution of allegations of classroom discrimination as described in Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0401.
- Retain documentation and official school transcript(s) showing how each student completed the professional peace officer education
- Cooperate in periodic reviews by the POST Board including a full recertification process conducted by the POST Board once every five years
- Provide appropriate facilities for classroom and practical education exercises and the on-going purchase and safe storage of equipment.
- Seek written approval of the POST Board before offering PPOE courses at any site not included in its original application.

Each of these tasks has related procedures and responsibilities spelled out in Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6700. The PPOE Coordinator of each school acts as the liaison between the school and the POST Board to ensure these tasks and other coordinator duties and responsibilities are managed properly.

## **The Certified School and Possible Disciplinary Actions**

According to MN Rules failure of a certified school to comply with any of the following requirements will result in imposition of disciplinary sanctions against the school:

- A.** provision of instruction consistent with the published learning objectives in the subject areas for which the school was certified pursuant to Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0300, subp. 1;
- B.** filing with the board all information which the board requires;
- C.** cooperation of the staff and faculty of a certified school with any board investigation relative to its certification status;
- D.** cooperation of the staff and faculty of a certified school with any board investigation of alleged misconduct by students, staff, or faculty in the giving or taking of examinations, reports, or investigations required by the board. The staff and faculty shall report any misconduct which is discovered to the board. For purposes of this requirement, the term "misconduct" includes cheating on any licensing examination or tests required by the rules of the board, or helping another to cheat; filing a false report with the board; or obstructing a board investigation; and
- E.** compliance with any part of Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0300 - 6700.0500

Sanctions for failure to comply with the requirements will include one or more of the following: a letter of censure to the coordinator of the certified school; formal or informal probation for the certified school; or suspension, revocation, or nonrenewal of certification of the certified school.

## 4. The PPOE Coordinator Position

### Requirements to Become a PPOE Coordinator

According to Minnesota Rules all PPOE coordinators must:

- be employed full-time by a certified school and designated by the school to manage the day-to-day activities of the professional peace officer education program
- have a bachelor's degree in law enforcement, criminal justice, education, social or behavioral science, or related field
- have at least three years of experience with a criminal justice agency

### Requirements for Changing Coordinators

According to Minnesota Rules when a coordinator leaves a certified school, the chief executive officer of the certified school must notify the board no later than 20 days after the coordinator has left the position and provide the board with the name of the new coordinator. This is done through submission POST's **Professional Peace Officer Education Coordinator Designation Form**. The new coordinator must meet all of the coordinator requirements and a signature facsimile of the new coordinator must accompany this notification. Coordinators must be recognized and approved by the board before they can approve a student to take the peace officer licensing examination.

The POST Board recognizes there may be short periods of time where a temporary or acting coordinator may be needed, however, the POST Board must be notified and approve the appointment of a temporary coordinator to ensure the individual is qualified and receives training in the duties of the position.

## 5. Duties and Responsibilities of the PPOE Coordinator

According to Minnesota Rules a PPOE Coordinator is the person assigned by the school to manage the day to day operation of the PPOE program. Operation includes duties and responsibilities in eleven areas (A-K).

### **The Program's Curriculum**

Writing and implementing course curriculum is the responsibility of the college or university. But when a coordinator notifies the POST Board a student is eligible to take the peace officer licensing examination, the coordinator is attesting to the student's successful completion of education and training required in all of the *Learning Objectives for Professional Peace Officer Education*. The coordinator must know how the objectives are incorporated into the school's curriculum and make sure the curriculum is revised as necessary when the objectives change.

The coordinator is also responsible for making sure curriculum materials for all classes used in the delivery of the PPOE are retained for at least five years and be able to make them available to the board upon request.

### **Managing Program Instruction**

It is the duty of the PPOE School to employ qualified instructors to teach in the PPOE courses. Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0300, Subp. 7, states that all instructor who teach in a certified PPOE program "shall possess a postsecondary degree or have professionally recognized training and experience to teach the assigned subject matter."

It is the duty of the PPOE coordinator to monitor the employment of instructors to ensure they meet the qualification standards. The coordinator also needs to make sure instructors:

- i. know what PPOE learning objectives are assigned to courses they teach,
- ii. have the facilities and equipment necessary to safely and effectively instruct,
- iii. are aware of the program's safety and discrimination policies and procedures.

### **Managing PPOE Facilities and Equipment**

#### 1) For Academic Providers

It is the duty and responsibility of the PPOE coordinator and the school to ensure instructors and students have access to the facilities and equipment needed to provide the PPOE. For schools that provide the academic component of the education this includes typical things like classrooms, library and computer access, and so on. But even in the academic courses it also means training aids and training methods must be safe, humane and educationally sound and meet the requirements of the policy against classroom discrimination.

Providers of the academic component of the PPOE also need to make sure students are provided with opportunities for developing the physical fitness attributes required for successful completion of the practical component of the PPOE. PPOE schools have been asked to provide students with:

- information about what specific physical fitness standards they will be required to meet to successfully complete the practical component of the PPOE,
- opportunities to assess their ability to meet those standards, and
- access to facilities and equipment to promote student success in physical fitness assessment.

### **Special responsibilities of coordinators of the practical component of the PPOE**

For schools that provide the skills component of the education there are many additional duties and responsibilities for the school and for the coordinator due to the the facilities and equipment necessary for provision of the PPOE and the risks associated with the applied education and training.

Schools must have procedures in place to ensure equipment is maintained in safe working order and replaced when it is not safe, out of working order or too out of date to meet the learning objectives. Equipment storage must be regulated, including who has access to it and guidelines for separation of ammunition and weapons.

Training facilities, like an EVOC range, firearms range, defensive tactics training room or other spaces for practical training need to be evaluated for safety regularly. Contracts with rented facilities need to be current and allow for the type of training intended, i.e., students must be able to shoot from short, medium and long range, and be able to practice driving using emergency vehicle procedures and pursuit tactics.

MN Rules also require certified schools implement a safety policy (see below) and employment of instructors who are qualified to ensure sites, equipment and instruction practices are safe, human and educationally sound.

### **Managing the Program's Policies, Procedures, and Advisory Board**

#### **Safety Policy**

According to Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0300, Subp.8, each certified PPOE school must have a formal written safety policy that includes rules, procedures, and protocols to ensure student and faculty safety as well as provide a safe, humane and educationally sound learning environment. Per this Rule the policy must include:

- *a process for students to identify any preexisting injuries or medical restrictions which may affect their ability to safely participate in the training;*
- *a prohibition against unduly harsh training activities, or training activities which are designed to humiliate or inappropriately accentuate student shortcomings;*

- *a process for written documentation of details associated with any student injury which occurs during any training course. Specific injury trends and any particularly high risk training practices or techniques shall be evaluated, amended, or eliminated if safe environments cannot be ensured;*
- *guidelines to direct instructors to reduce instructional pace and intensity during heat waves, cold waves, or other adverse climatic or environmental conditions; and*
- *a prohibition against depriving students of necessary food, water, or protective equipment when engaged in physical or psychomotor skills training.*

The Rules require students and faculty be provided with written safety policy and instructors review the policy prior to any psychomotor skills training.

### **Classroom Discrimination Procedures**

Per Minnesota Rules every certified PPOE school must establish written procedures for the investigation and resolution of allegations of classroom discrimination. The Rules define classroom discrimination as:

*“Oral, written, graphic, or physical conduct directed against any person or group of persons because of their race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran's status that has the purpose or reasonably foreseeable effect of demeaning or intimidating that person or group of persons.”*

The procedures must minimally specify:

- A. the person to whom the formal complaint must be made;
- B. the process by which complaints will be investigated;
- C. the sanctions that may be imposed if a complaint is sustained;
- D. the appeal process for the offending party;
- E. the process that will be used to notify the complainant of the investigation and disposition; and
- F. the effective date of the procedures or subsequent modifications of procedures.

The Rules also requires the coordinator:

- provide all new students who are in courses taught as a part of the PPOE program a summary of the written procedures
- provide all faculty and staff who participate in PPOE courses, a copy of the written procedures
- make the procedures available to anyone else upon request
- ensure complaints which allege classroom discrimination at a certified school be processed according to the written procedures

### Affirmative Action Plan and Report

According to MN Rules Chapter 6700.0300, Subp6. C.,

*"The chief executive officer of the certified school shall, by October 1 of each year, file with the board an affirmative action plan and such other relevant information as the board may require. The affirmative action plan must include specific goals and objectives which describe measurable statements of performance for the recruitment and retention of minority students and women in the certified school's professional peace officer education program. By September 1 of each year, the chief executive officer of the certified school shall submit a written report to the board evaluating the effectiveness of the special goals and objectives included in the affirmative action plan from the previous year. "Minority student" means a Black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian, or Alaskan native person. Relevant information may include lesson plans and course outlines."*

One per year the POST Board sends the PPOE Coordinator an *Affirmative Action Worksheet*. This form allows Coordinators to record program strategies and plans for affirmative action through a simple system of checking boxes. Schools can also meet these requirements without the worksheet by submitting reports of their own.

### POST Board Investigations and Reporting Student Misconduct

According to Minnesota Rules a certified school must report any misconduct by students, staff or faculty relative to the giving or taking of POST Board examinations, including cheating on any licensing exam or helping another to cheat or to file a false report to the board. The Rules also require the school to cooperate with the POST Board in any investigation relative to cheating or to failure of the school to comply with other PPOE related Rules.

### Advisory Board Management

There is no requirement that PPOE programs have an advisory board but most do. The coordinator typically determines who should be on the board, what the board's role should be, and when the board will meet.

## **Managing Student Admission and Admission Standards**

According to Minnesota Rules all certified schools "shall develop and administrate" a set of admission standards for the PPOE program. Since PPOE coordinators manage the PPOE Programs, the duty of deciding to admit or not admit a student lies with them. The Rule also states school may establish standards above these minimum requirements.

### When to admit students into the program

There is no one best time for all coordinators to formally admit students into the PPOE program but there are a couple of things to consider when making the decision. First, it is not usually practical to admit every student who takes any course that is part of the PPOE, e.g., Intro to Criminal Justice. This would mean admitting many students who are not really interested in law enforcement careers. On the other hand it is not advisable to hold off on program admission until students are into the practical skills component of the education because by then valuable evaluation and advising time is lost.

In practice, coordinators often use informal surveys or other methods to identify potential PPOE students prior to admission, then select an admission point within students' education program that best fits with how courses are provided at the school. This is beneficial to the students because they find out if they are eligible for the program before investing too much in it and beneficial to coordinators who plan courses and conduct advising of students. It also greatly reduces the number of students who are actually denied admission to PPOE programs.

When setting the actual admission point in a PPOE program, coordinators should identify any admission prerequisites and what courses students may not take until after they have been formally admitted to the PPOE program.

### Determining who to admit into the PPOE Program

MN Rule requires certain elements be a part of every school's admission standards including:

- 1) Measuring the likelihood of success – Minnesota Rules state the admission standards must “measure the student’s likelihood of successful completion of the program”. This vague language is interpreted by each school and may be impacted by the school’s overall admission standards and policies but generally, admission standards should consider an applicant’s academic, physical and psychological readiness to be successful in the PPOE program.
- 2) Prohibitions to admission - According to MN Rules PPOE admission standards must prohibit students who:
  - A. pose a serious threat to the health and safety of themselves or others, and/or,
  - B. have been convicted of any crime listed as a disqualification from appointment to the position of peace officer under Minnesota Rule 6700.0700, subpart 1, item F.

The Rules also require the school to have a process for handling the denial of students from a program. This process needs to include:

- informing the student of the denial and the reasons for it and explaining the appeal process, and
- having a written formal appeals process.



## **Setting Academic, Physical and Psychological Admission Standards**

Academic Standards and Attendance Requirements - All colleges and universities have academic standards for students but law enforcement is a field of study with greater risks associated with marginal performance or missed class time. The education and training of the PPOE program replaces the police academy of other states – and academies set high standards for attendance and performance. PPOE schools should have well-considered standards for successful completion and attendance.

Physical and Psychological Standards - Like academic standards, the physical and psychological standards necessary to safely operate a PPOE program are unique to each program and are generally enforced through a combination of evaluations by medical and psychological health professionals and coordinator evaluating and advising.

Physical Wellness Evaluation – According to Minnesota Rules PPOE schools must have a process to identify any preexisting injuries or medical restrictions that may impair a student’s ability to safely participate in the PPOE or endanger the student or others.

At some point in the program participation will include involvement in a wide variety of vigorous physical activities, practicing restraint and defensive tactics techniques, operating firearms, driving emergency vehicles, and participating in simulated police activities. Therefore, it is important for coordinators to keep a student and physician signed and dated record indicating each student:

- was made aware of the physical requirements of the program
- has had a medical examination and
- is approved to participate in a program that involves vigorous activity under highly stressful conditions without posing a serious threat to the health and safety of the student or others.

PPOE coordinators at schools that do not provide the skills component of the PPOE should work with their skills provider to provide students with:

- information about what specific physical fitness standards they will be required to meet to successfully complete the PPOE,
- opportunities to assess their ability to meet those standards, and
- access to facilities and equipment to promote student success in physical fitness assessment.

Psychological Evaluation – According to MN Rules PPOE admission standards must prohibit admission of students who pose a serious threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. Also MN Session Laws 2001, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 8, Article 7, Section 3, states an individual is not eligible to take the peace officer licensing examination unless the individual has completed a psychological evaluation demonstrating the individual is not likely to engage in racial profiling. It is also in the best interest of the student and school to conduct some professional measurement of student's mental and emotional readiness to safely handle the equipment and duties of the police activities required in the PPOE. This evaluation is required prior to formal admission to the PPOE program and must be accomplished prior to the student's entry into classes that provide greater opportunity for injury, like firearms.

PPOE coordinators should select a psychologist to conduct evaluations for students. The chosen psychologist should be one who understands the character traits necessary to become a successful peace officer, and the unique stresses and duties of the law enforcement profession.

It is important coordinators keep a record signed by both student and psychologist indicating each student:

- was made aware of the psychological requirements of the program
- has had a psychological evaluation from a school-approved psychologist
- has provided the school with the results of the a psychological evaluation that indicates the psychologist's approval to participate in the program
- has a psychologist's signed statement indicating the student's participation does not pose a serious threat to the health and safety of the applicant student, other students or the staff of the program, and
- has a psychologist's signed statement indicating the student is not likely to engage in racial profiling.

After admission to the program it is the duty of the coordinators and PPOE instructors to continue to evaluate students' academic, physical and psychological condition relevant to the PPOE program requirements and disqualify from the program students who fall short of these standards.

## **Minimum Selection Standards for PPOE Admission (Criminal History Background Check)**

According to Minnesota Rule, no student may be admitted to the PPOE who has been convicted of any of the crimes listed in MN Rules 6700.0700, Subp. 1., F. The Rules further require all students be advised of these standards and the standards for licensure in writing “using a form developed by the POST Board”. Coordinators must provide this form, the *Minimum Selection Standards Advisory*, to students in order to help them make informed decisions about participation in the professional peace officer education program. By signing the form students affirm they have read and understand the minimum selection standards and had an opportunity to ask questions about them. Coordinators must then retain the form in the student’s file.

### **The crimes that are bars to licensure include:**

- (1) A felony in this state or in any other state or federal jurisdiction;
- (2) Any offense in any other state or federal jurisdiction which would have been a felony if committed in Minnesota;
- (3) Crimes under the following Minnesota Statutes,  
609.224 Assault in The Fifth Degree,  
609.2242 Domestic Assault,  
609.231 Mistreatment of Residents or Patients,  
609.2325 Criminal Abuse,  
609.233 Criminal Neglect,  
609.2335 Financial Exploitation of A Vulnerable Adult,  
609.234 Failure To Report (Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults),  
609.324 Other Prostitution Crimes; Patrons, Prostitutes, And Individuals Housing Individual Engaged In Prostitution; Penalties,  
609.465 Presenting False Claims to Public Officer or Body,  
609.466 Medical Assistance Fraud,  
609.52 Theft,  
609.72, sub.3, Disorderly Conduct, Subdivision 3 Caregiver; Penalty For disorderly conduct
- (4) Any state or federal narcotics or controlled substance law irrespective of any proceeding under Minnesota Statutes, section 152.18, or any similar law of another state or federal law; (not including petty misdemeanors) or
- (5) Any of the crimes listed in this item in another state or federal jurisdiction, or under a local ordinance that would be a conviction if committed in Minnesota.
- (6) Any crime that requires registration as a predatory offender.

**Non-felony convictions and other standards that prevent licensure 3/23**  
**6700.0700**

- (a) Gross misdemeanor assault in the fifth degree under Minnesota Statutes, section 609.224;
- (b) Bias crimes, including assaults motivated by bias under Minnesota Statutes, 609.2231, subd. 4, and criminal damage to property under Minnesota Statutes, 609.595, subd. 2(b);
- (c) Domestic assault under Minnesota Statutes, section 609.2242;
- (d) Violation of a domestic abuse no contact order under Minnesota Statutes, 629.75, subd. 2;
- (e) Violation of an order for protection under Minnesota Statutes, section 518B.01, subdivision 14;
- (f) Harassment or stalking under Minnesota Statutes, section 609.749;
- (g) Violation of a harassment restraining order under Minnesota Statutes section 609.748, subd. 6;
- (h) Sexual extortion under Minnesota Statutes, section 609.3458;
- (i) Criminal sexual conduct under Minnesota Statutes, sections 609.341 to 609.3451;
- (j) Indecent exposure under Minnesota Statutes, section 617.23;
- (k) Any mistreatment of a vulnerable adult, including under Minnesota Statutes, sections 609.2231; 609.231; 609.2325; 609.233; 609.2335; 609.234; and 609.72, subdivision 3;
- (l) Patrons of prostitution
- (m) Making false claims for profit to a public body or officer under Minnesota Statutes, 609.465;
- (n) Attempting medical assistance fraud
- (o) Theft under Minnesota Statutes, section 609.52, except that misdemeanor theft of movable property valued at \$500 or less is not an automatic disqualification;
- (p) Interference with an emergency call under Minnesota Statutes, 609.78, subd. 2, (1);
- (q) Nonconsensual dissemination of private sexual images under Minnesota Statutes, 617.261;
- (r) Interference with privacy under Minnesota Statutes, 609.746;
- (s) Malicious punishment of a child under Minnesota Statutes, section 609.377;
- (t) Mistreating animals under Minnesota Statutes, section 343.21;
- (u) Misconduct of a public officer or public employee under Minnesota Statutes, 609.43; and
- (v) Narcotics or controlled substance law, excluding any nonfelony marijuana offenses;
- (w) Or been required at any point in time to be registered as a predatory offender under Minnesota Statutes, section 243.166 or 243.167; or required to register as a sex offender

\* Not be listed on the National Decertification Index or have had a law enforcement license, certification, or authorization to serve as a law enforcement officer in any jurisdiction revoked or rescinded;

\* Be free of any indication of discriminatory conduct that would cause a reasonable person to call into question the applicant's ability to impartially serve and protect members of protected groups consistent with the Minnesota Human Rights Act, Minnesota Statutes, chapter 363A, and federal law;

\* Have no record or indication of participation or support of an extremist or hate group as described in part 6700.1600, subpart 1(H)-(I);

\* Emergency medical responder training or within the first six months of employment;

It is important for coordinators to know that even if a student has had a conviction expunged or continued for dismissal the student is still barred from peace officer licensure according to Minnesota Rule 6700.0100, Subp.9a.

## **Additional Admission Standards**

According to Minnesota Rules PPOE programs may set higher standards than those required by Rule and coordinators often use interviews and standards of conduct agreements to help in their student admissions decisions. Oral interviews may help the coordinator get an idea of each student's verbal communication skills and provide an opportunity to discuss the reasons a student is interested in law enforcement. The coordinator can use this time to help the student decide whether their impression of law enforcement matches the realistic expectations of the career or to help steer them in a direction that is more in line with their expectations and aptitudes.

Coordinators also may require students sign a "student expectations" agreement prior to admission and make a violation of these of expectations grounds for dismissal from the program. These expectations may include: academic standards and behavioral/conduct standards.

## **Student Advising and Counseling**

Admission standards and student advising go hand-in-hand. Sometimes new PPOE coordinators underestimate the importance and the amount of time necessary for proper advising of PPOE students. Per Minnesota Rule students need to be advised about:

- the academic, physical, psychological standards and performance expectations of the program, and
- the minimum selection standards for admission and the standards for employment

But students also need to be advised about many other things and, at the same time evaluated by the coordinator for characteristics that will help determine the student's likelihood of success in a law enforcement career. Students need to understand the additional standards that will be imposed at the time of hiring (i.e. citizenship requirement, thorough background check), and be given a realistic idea of what kinds of positions are available in law enforcement, the nature of shiftwork and more. PPOE coordinators can help students overcome unrealistic ideas about police work they have gathered from television and prevent students from wasting time and tuition costs on these unrealistic goals. Students also rely on coordinators for advice about the POST Board's peace officer examination and the peace officer licensure process.

If there's uncertainty as to eligibility concerning a legal matter, the student should complete the Preliminary Licensing Application found on the POST website under "forms". This application should be filled out completely and submitted to the POST Exam Coordinator for review. The Exam Coordinator will review and make an official determination as to the student's eligibility and provide them with a written response.

## **Assessing Equivalent Education and Granting Waivers**

According to Minnesota Rule instruction in some of the learning objectives may be waived by a PPOE coordinator for an individual who has already completed, in the opinion of the coordinator, equivalent education. Evaluation of equivalent education may require the coordinator to view the syllabi of courses a student has completed to determine which learning objectives have been covered. After evaluation of a student's education, the coordinator may choose to waive certain courses altogether or to require the student complete some independent work rather than take a course. Students who already have a post-secondary degree from a regionally accredited school do not need to complete another degree.

These students do need to receive education in all of the POST Board's learning objectives either through the PPOE program or from equivalent education. At many schools these students earn a PPOE certificate rather than another degree and are commonly referred to as "certificate students."

To determine if a potential "certificate student's" degree was issued by a regionally accredited school coordinators need to get the name and state of the school and check it against the list of institutions that are regionally accredited for the state. A list of the web-addresses for the regional accrediting bodies sorted by State is included in the appendix of this document.

## **Developing Remedial Education Plans**

Students who fail the POST Board's peace officer exam and wish to retake it must reapply. The reapplication must include a PPOE coordinator sign-off and fee each time. After the student has taken and failed the exam three times the student must also include proof of completion of a remedial education plan that has been approved by the POST Exam Coordinator. The POST Board's exam coordinator can help the coordinator develop the plan by providing information about the student's particular area of deficiency as demonstrated through exam results. The PPOE coordinator can be a resource for study assistance as well.

## **Student Sign-Off**

One of the most important tasks of the PPOE Coordinator is to notify the POST Board of the names of students who have successfully met the requirements to be eligible to take the POST Board's peace officer examination. This process is commonly called the sign-off.

The sign-off process includes the following steps on the part of the coordinator. Step 1) Determining who is eligible to sign-off

The coordinator must determine which students are eligible for the POST Board's peace officer examination. Students are eligible if they have:

- passed the school's PPOE admissions standards
- successfully completed the entire PPOE program including the academic component and the skills component.
- have completed a degree program and been awarded a degree from a postsecondary institution that is accredited by a one of the six regional accrediting associations, and
- supplied the coordinator with an official certified transcript showing the degree.

If the student's degree did not come from the coordinator's own school the coordinator must check to be certain the degree was received from a regionally accredited school. (This check should also have been done at the time the student was admitted to the PPOE program.)

Coordinators should maintain a copy of the student's school transcript **with the degree posted on it** in the students file or have it accessible electronically. POST staff will conduct spot checks of students' files to ensure schools are maintaining these transcripts. A coordinator who signs-off on a student who does not have a degree posted from a regionally accredited school posted on the transcript or who does not have a copy of the transcript may be subject to POST Board sanctions and the PPOE school could be placed on probation or decertified.

Step 2) Providing eligible students with information about when and how to apply for the peace officer licensing examination. Under no circumstance should anyone other than the POST approved PPOE Coordinator of a certified PPOE program submit a sign-off form. Coordinators should not share the password with other staff or students.

Before a coordinator submits a sign-off form to the POST Board, the coordinator must have the transcript of each student listed on the form and the degree must be posted on the transcript on the date the coordinator submit the sign-off. Under no circumstances should a coordinator

sign-off on a student unless the coordinator possesses an official certified transcript with a degree posted on it. POST Board staff will conduct on-site audits of PPOE coordinator records to ensure compliance with this requirement and PPOE programs may be sanctioned for failure to comply with this requirement.

## 6. POST EXAMINATIONS

The purpose of requiring occupational licensing examinations is to protect the public by determining whether a person who wants to become a member of a given occupation has passed an initial screening and has the necessary basic knowledge and skills for the occupation. It is the job of each law enforcement agency to then select from among those who pass the POST Board's examination, individuals who are most likely to be successful at a position within the agency.

The POST Board's PPOE learning objectives provide the basis for the peace officer examination. A student who successfully completes the PPOE education is eligible to take the peace officer examination once POST receives the students' application, examination fee, a certified transcript showing the student's degree, and a sign-off from the PPOE coordinator at the student's school attesting to the student's successful completion of the PPOE. The Peace Officer Licensing Exam is administered to individuals who possess a post-secondary degree from a regionally accredited college or university and successfully complete a Minnesota Professional Peace Officer Education (PPOE) program from a POST Board certified school.

Applicants should contact their PPOE coordinator if they intend to take this exam. The coordinator must submit a certification of completion document to the POST Board on behalf of the applicant before the applicant can take the exam. Upon approval, the applicant will create an online account and apply for the exam using the Minnesota E-Licensing process. Alternately, the coordinator can provide applicants with a paper application for the licensing exam that is then mailed to the POST Board.

Applicants who failed the exam on a previous attempt, will have received a retake application with a letter from the POST Board. The PPOE coordinator must sign/approve the retake application after the applicant has consulted with him or her.

If the applicant has taken the exam three times and failed, the student must submit a remedial plan to the POST Exam Coordinator prior to reapplying to take the exam for the fourth time.

Applicants should not apply for the Peace Officer Licensing Examination if they have passed the exam at some point in the past. If the applicant passed the exam more than three years ago but was never licensed, they must apply for the Reinstatement Exam.



### Computer Based Testing

All of Minnesota's peace officer licensing exams are administered by Talogy using computer based testing (CBT). CBT allows exam applicants to choose from a variety of exam dates, times and locations including numerous sites throughout Minnesota and selected sites in other states.

### Examination Standards

Violations of the following standards are grounds to deny an applicant to take a POST Board examination or to deny or revoke eligibility for a peace officer license.

- Making any false material statement to the board;
- Communicating with any other person in any way during an examination, except with the express permission of the monitor;
- Referring to books or any study material during the examination, except with the express permission of the monitor;
- Obstructing a board investigation;
- Without board authorization, possessing a copy of any of the board's examinations
- Aiding another person to violate any of the items listed above; or
- Having been convicted of any crime listed as a disqualification from appointment to the position of peace officer under Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0700, subpart 1, item F.

### How to Take the Exam

To take one of the Minnesota peace officer licensing examinations, an applicant must submit the appropriate exam application form and the application fee of \$105. Approval of the exam application is required before any licensing examination can be scheduled.

All of Minnesota's peace officer licensing exams are administered by *PSI* using computer based testing (CBT). CBT allows exam applicants to choose from a variety of exam dates, times and locations including numerous sites throughout Minnesota and selected sites in other states.

**Exam applicants will pay an exam registration fee of \$70.00 to PSI. This is a separate fee and is not included in the \$105.00 exam fee that is paid to the POST Board.**

Upon submission of an application to take an exam, either through E-Licensing or through an exam application form, applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of the application by the POST Board. Applicants who are approved to take an exam will receive specific information relating to registering and scheduling an exam date at a *PSI* site.

After completing the exam, *PSI* will notify applicants of their unofficial exam result, either a pass or fail. Applicants will then receive official confirmation of the exam result from the POST Board in a letter that can be used as proof of peace officer license eligibility.

### About the Exam

PPOE Coordinators are often asked about the exam itself. The licensing exam is made up of all multiple-choice questions based on the 4 learning objective categories. All learning objectives are within the scope of the exam. The exam takes about 4 hours.

An exam study guide created by POST is available on the POST website under “exams”. Some PPOE schools offer their own study materials or prep classes.

### Passing the Peace Officer Examination and Reinstatement of Eligibility

A person who passes the peace officer exam is eligible to be licensed as a peace officer for three years. A peace officer license is issued upon hiring by a Minnesota law enforcement agency. A person who is not licensed after three years may reinstate eligibility by passing the peace officer licensing examination again. Upon successful completion of the examination the person is eligible to be licensed for three more years.

## 7. The PPOE School Recertification Process

According to Minnesota Rules Chapter 6700.0400, C. every PPOE school must be recertified once every five years. Specifically the rule states:

*By May 1, 1990, and every five years after that, the board must send a renewal application form to all certified schools. This application form must request information regarding the criteria contained in subpart 1. The coordinator must file the completed application with the board by November 1 of the year the application form was received. All applications for renewal of certification must be accompanied by evidence that the higher education system office governing the applicant school has approved the application of the school and, if required, that the application has been approved by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. Upon review of the properly filed application form, the board shall renew the school's certification for another five years, if the board finds that the requirements of subpart 1 have been met. If a certified school does not comply with the requirements of this subpart, the school's certification will be deemed to have expired and the school will be required to reapply for certification under the procedures in subparts 1 and 2.*

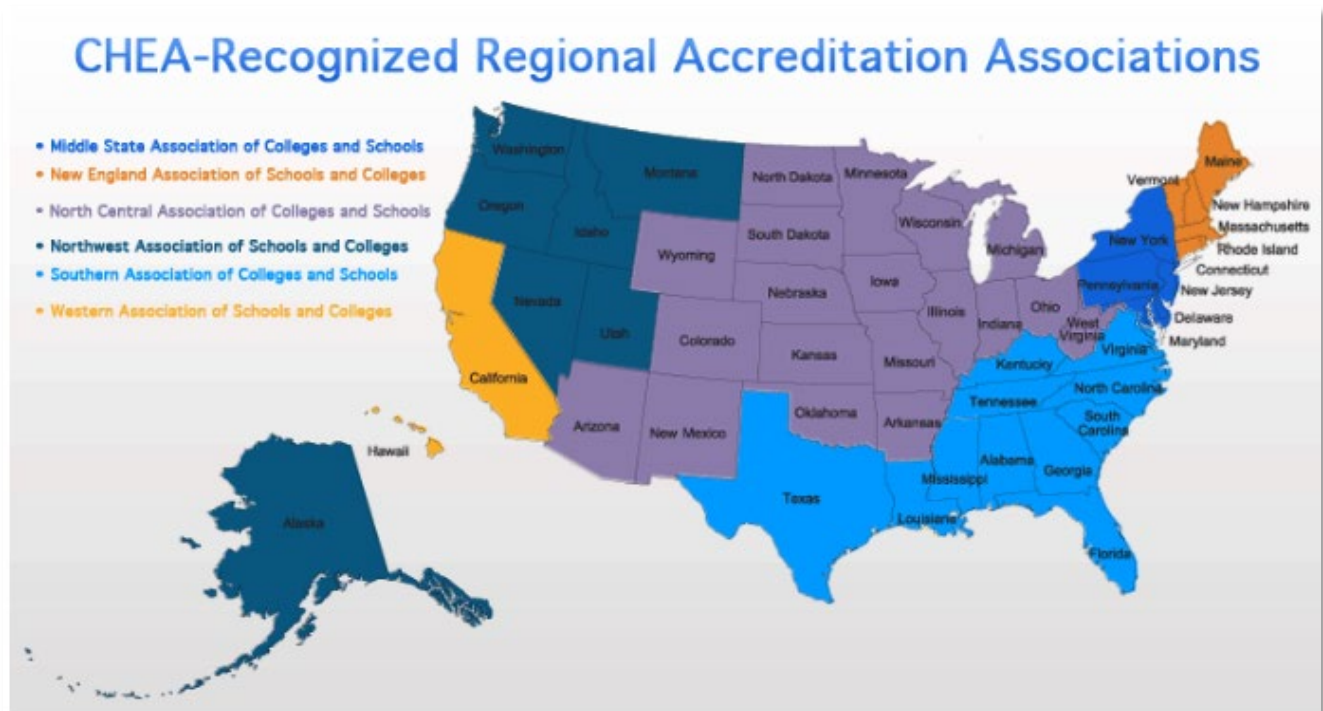
The recertification process consists of:

1. POST PPOE Coordinator site visit check:
  - a. Satisfactory training/classroom facilities and equipment, library.
  - b. If skills school, skills related training areas and equipment.
2. Recertification Application: (Submitted by school PPOE Coordinator)
  - a. School higher education office or Minnesota Office of Higher Education approval.
  - b. School president approval.
  - c. Evidence that school offers courses that meet required learning objectives.
  - d. Evidence that school adheres to 6700-0300 and 6700-0400 of MN Rules.
  - e. List of qualified instructors (post-secondary degree or have professionally recognized training and subject matter experience)
3. POST Board consideration and approval, denial, or pending.
  - a. Remedial measures as required by Board (if necessary)
4. Recertification certificate issued for 5-year period.

## REGIONAL ACCREDITING ORGANIZATIONS FOR POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS

The regional accrediting organizations for postsecondary school are:

1. Higher Learning Commission <https://www.hlcommission.org/>
2. Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Middle States Commission on Higher Education <http://www.msche.org/>
3. New England Commission of Higher Education <https://www.neche.org/about-neche/>
4. Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities <http://www.nwccu.org/>
5. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges <http://www.sacscoc.org/>
6. Western Association of Schools and Colleges (select website based on the school type)  
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) <https://accjc.org/>  
OR  
WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) <https://www.wscuc.org/>



## 8. FAQ's

### **Is a felony conviction always a bar to peace officer licensure in Minnesota?**

Answer: Yes. According to MN Rules a felony conviction is a bar to licensure if the individual was convicted of a felony in Minnesota or in any other state or federal jurisdiction or of any offense in any other state or federal jurisdiction which would have been a felony if committed in Minnesota.

### **Are there any other convictions that could be bars to licensure not specifically listed in 6700.0700, subp. 1, F.1-3?**

Answer: Yes, the minimum selection standards (6700.0700, subp. 1, F.3-4) also say an individual is barred from licensure if convicted of a crime:

- under any state or federal narcotics or controlled substance law irrespective of any proceeding under Minnesota Statutes, section 152.18, or any similar law of another state or federal law, or,
- of a crime that, if committed in Minnesota, would be a bar to licensure.

If students don't know if their particular crime falls into one of these categories they should get a written legal opinion. Neither a PPOE Coordinator nor a POST Board staff member can provide a student with a legal interpretation of the student's particular circumstances.

### **What is the one thing that will bar someone with only a juvenile record from being licensed as a peace officer in Minnesota?**

Answer: Anyone who is required to register as a predatory offender is barred from licensure. If a person is required to register for 10 years beginning at age 15 that person is barred until they are no longer required to register at age 25.

All other juvenile records are not a bar per the minimum selection standards.

Even though Minnesota's legal system now uses the term "juvenile conviction" instead of the old term juvenile delinquency, juvenile conviction is not the same as adult conviction. The term conviction used in the list of bars from licensure does not mean juvenile convictions.

\* Minnesota Rule 6700.0100 says that conviction means a person has been charged with a crime and found guilty "regardless of length of or imposition or execution of any sentence received, any deferred finding of guilt or imposition of sentence by the court, or any expungement of the offense records or conviction." This is a high standard set for peace officer licensure and not all judges or other individuals in the criminal justice system understand it. Students may receive advice that having a conviction expunged or dismissed is sufficient but in the case of peace officer licensure in Minnesota, it is not.

**True or False, having a conviction withdrawn and vacated is a fairly common occurrence and relatively easy to have done.**

Answer: False. MN Rules of Criminal Procedure 15.05 allows, in rare cases, for a conviction to be erased completely; not expunged, not dismissed but withdrawn and vacated as if no conviction existed. Students should be advised that to have a conviction withdrawn and vacated is a rare occurrence and that it is up to them to pursue this change.

**Is the student in the following scenario barred from peace officer licensure in Minnesota?**

Scenario: A student says “I was arrested for a crime that is listed in the minimum selection standards but I was sent through adult diversion. I served five days in the county jail, paid a fine and was on probation for two years. “

Answer: No, the student is not barred. Pursuant to MN Rules of Criminal Procedure 25.05 the student never pled guilty therefore the student is not barred from licensure for this crime because there was no conviction.

**Is the student in the following scenario barred from peace officer licensure in Minnesota?**

Scenario: A student says “I was convicted of a petty theft as an adult, but it was just a dollar candy bar and I just forgot to pay for it.”

Answer: Yes, if the student was convicted under MN Statute 609.52 because it is a theft. Points to remember when advising this student:

- Although people often refer to petty theft as a petty misdemeanor (based on the common word petty) petty theft is not a petty misdemeanor, it is theft and therefore a bar to licensure.
- POST has no discretion in enforcing this rule.
- If the student was tried as a juvenile then it would not be a bar.
- If the student had said “I was charged with a petty theft” or “I was tried for petty theft” then the answer depends on the outcome; if there was an adult theft conviction it is a bar.

**Do the POST Board’s minimum selection standards have a vision requirement?**

Answer: Yes, but by default. Although there is no vision requirement in the minimum selection standards, there is a requirement for all peace officer license applicants to possess a valid Minnesota driver’s license and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) does have a vision requirement so by default their standard is also ours.

**Can a student who is not a U.S. Citizen take the POST Board's PPOE exam?**

Answer: Yes. Persons need to be able to legally work in the US, and US citizenship is not required. Information on ways to gain legal employment can be found at the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website.

**Does Minnesota have a minimum age for peace officer licensure?**

Answer: No. Since individuals must complete at least a two year degree, then pass the State exam, most license eligible candidates are, in fact, 21 years of age or older but there is no minimum age requirement in the minimum selection standards. POST is aware of individuals who have attained eligibility at 19. Students should be advised, however, that some law enforcement agencies have a minimum age requirement for hire.

**How should the student in the following scenario be advised?**

A student says he "got into some trouble when he was younger" and wonders if he can become a police officer in Minnesota. He says he was never convicted as an adult and is not required to register as a sex offender.

Answer: Although the student is not barred from licensure by the minimum selection standards it is important for him to understand that law enforcement agencies can have more restrictive standards than those listed in the minimum selection standards. The student should be advised that passing the POST Board examination and becoming eligible to be hired does not guarantee a successful career in law enforcement and that he should talk with the people who do the hiring at some of the law enforcement agencies he is most interested in working for to find out if his juvenile record or other personal history will prevent him from being hired. Also the student should be advised law enforcement agencies are required by law to do a thorough background check and it is his own best interest to be open about his past.

**What do students need to understand about the minimum selection standards and their relationship to getting hired as a peace officer and being successful in a law enforcement career?**

First, students need to know there may be a big difference between minimum selection standards for license eligibility pursuant to 6700.0700 and the hiring standards of a particular law enforcement agency. Agencies have an obligation to conduct a thorough background investigation pursuant to MN Statute 626.87 and may have much more restrictive employment standards.

Second, background issues, physical and psychological issues and even individual personality traits that do not bar licensure may very well bar employment at some agencies and impact an individual's ability to become a competent peace officer. Students need to understand that law enforcement is a unique field encompassing a broad variety of tasks and situations that require mature critical thinking and decision making skills as well as the ability to apply techniques and tactics with of a variety of equipment. Students should understand that law enforcement is not like most of what is on television and should be encouraged to participate in ride-alongs, internship programs and other experiences that will help them understand the realities of peace officer duties.

### **What is a variance, and what can a student do if they have a hardship or special circumstance?**

Basic Legal Requirements for Variances on a Rule:

If an individual or entity asks for an exemption from a rule in MN Rules Chapter 6700, the board must apply the requirements outlined in Minnesota Statutes, section 14.055 and 14.056. The Request for Variance of a Rule form is used to apply for a variance, and outlines the information required in order for the Board to consider the request.

There are two types of variances: mandatory and discretionary.

A **mandatory variance** is when the board determines that "the application of the rule, as applied to the circumstances of that petitioner, would not serve any of the purposes of the rule." – MN Statutes 14.055 Subd. 3. The board *must* grant the variance in these circumstances.

A **discretionary variance** *may* be granted by the board, if the board finds these 3 statements to be true:

- (1) application of the rule to the petitioner would result in hardship or injustice;
- (2) variance from the rule would be consistent with the public interest; and
- (3) variance from the rule would not prejudice the substantial legal or economic rights of any person or entity.

- MN Statutes 14.055 Subd. 4

Parameters for rule variances under statute are:

- (1) the agency may attach any conditions to the granting of a variance that the agency determines are needed to protect public health, safety, or the environment;
- (2) a variance has prospective effect only;
- (3) conditions attached to the granting of a variance are an enforceable part of the rule to which the variance applies; and



(4) the agency may not grant a variance from a statute or court order.

Once the board makes a decision on the request, the Assistant Attorney General representing the board will draft the order and a signed order is sent to the requestor within 5 days. The Board is required to maintain a record of variance requests, sorted by the rule citation involved. Requests for Variances are brought to the board after the requestor has provided the required information. Once a request is received, the board has 60 days to respond, unless the requestor agrees to a later date. Failure to meet the deadline means that the request for the variance is automatically granted. If the next scheduled board meeting is more than 60 days in the future, it is explained to the requestor that the board would like to consider the variance at the next scheduled board meeting. If the requestor agrees to the delay, the requestor confirms in writing that they agree to their request being heard at the next board meeting on (date). If the requestor refuses to agree to a later date, a special board meeting is called to hear the variance request and comply with the statutory timeline.

**A student wishing to enter PPOE already has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from a university in Liberia. Does the foreign degree meet POST requirements?**

No. The degree is not from a regionally accredited institution so it cannot be used to satisfy the licensing requirement. The student can however have their degree evaluated by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) to determine if it meets degree requirements of the US educational system. Although the degree itself won't be allowed, the PPOE coordinator can determine if any of the evaluated coursework meets PPOE requirements and allow a course or courses.

The student is also able to file a variance in some situations to ask that the degree be allowed. A variance request should be made through the POST Rules Coordinator.