

# IADLEST

## Training Standards



**The International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement**

**Standards and Training encourages “best practices” in training design and delivery.**

Peggy M. Schaefer, NCP Program Director

IADLEST maintains national training standards through the [National Certification Program \(NCP\)](#) and publishes the [Model Minimum Standards](#) outlining Peace Officer’s Standards and Training (POST) and Academy recommendations to improve law enforcement training development and delivery at the State and local level. Every State POST commission accepts NCP certified training for officer training credit.

The NCP applies rigorous standards, utilizes subject matter experts, and incorporates best practices to recognize excellence in law enforcement training. This National Certification simplifies access to training for agencies across the United States by collecting certified courses in a national catalog. Agencies seeking current, evidence-based training find value in this third-party review and certification that focuses on validating quality training programs. Communities can be assured that there is external oversight and enhanced legitimacy in the process.

### ***What constitutes good training?***

IADLEST recommends policymakers consider the following when reviewing training models and requirements:

1. All training programs should have complete and detailed written instructor and student lesson plans developed from valid job task and training needs analysis. It is not enough to teach from slides or provide only the slides to the participants. Lesson plans should be scripted and detail the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of the participants.
  - Curriculum design should include comprehensive research of the topic(s) or curriculum, source documents written from the research, lesson plan(s) developed from the source documents, and the source documents and lesson plans should be kept on file for reference. Detail all concepts using an endnote system indicating the specific reference materials used to validate the source.
  - Curricula should indicate the dates initially drafted and delivered and subsequent dates when revised. Curriculum version control is critical to track individual officer attendance.
  - Handout materials should be serialized, and corresponding numbers placed on lesson plans and related curricula.
  - Validation procedures for curricula should be job task-related, contain performance objectives based upon identified training needs, and test items should be valid and reliable in testing the performance objectives.
  - A competent curriculum committee with the appropriate education and background should review and recommend all curriculum. When POST commission directors are the sole curriculum approving authority, they should have the background, education, and credentials necessary to make such judgments. The committee or commission director should have statutory authority to approve or deny curricula.
2. All training programs should engage and challenge the participants mentally and physically with well-designed lesson plans that include discussion questions, in-class collaborative exercises, and realistic, practical exercises replicating the most common tactics and incidents for effective police response. Moreover, training should be delivered using dynamic and competent instructors with advanced knowledge in the specific topic area.
  - Instructors should effectively communicate with students in a supportive manner and render objective

- judgments concerning student efforts.
- Instructors should have the skills to instruct and facilitate in a manner that motivates students to learn.
  - Instructors should be able to research, revise and write training materials such as source documents, lesson plans, and tests.
3. Good training should be evidence-based and developed in an unbiased manner. Curriculum designers should ensure training materials reflect the law enforcement profession's diversity and the communities they serve.
- Training should be developed using proven adult learning theory pertaining to instructional design and delivery mentioned above. Special care should be used to ensure that slides, videos, and lesson content do not disparage any individuals' ethnicity, race, or gender.
  - Evidence-based training is developed from research articles and best practices in each topic area. Special care to document legitimate sources is critical.
4. All training programs should incorporate a variety of learning preferences that will stimulate students and foster content retention. The goal should be to apply training technologies to enhance the students' learning ability, not solely to expedite the training process.
- Curriculum scripted using adult learning theory involving a variety of engaging activities has the most appeal. These activities should incorporate all learning preferences and styles to accommodate most of the students' needs.
  - Technology can be used in a myriad of ways to engage students and aid retention. Asynchronous online training can be useful with activities that encourage student action, including knowledge checks to show content mastery and video examples.
  - Colorful and professionally developed slides stimulate the senses and help students remember essential concepts.
  - Simulators can reinforce critical skills providing ample practice opportunities to develop skills competency in a variety of areas.
5. Students should demonstrate content mastery and training transfer with pre-and post-testing. Inadequate performance requires a remediation plan and continuous training in critical topic areas to ensure viable job performance.
- Student grading policies should be established in terms of pass/fail, re-testing in regards to a failure (if permitted), the appeal of test results, and necessary repeating of a subject area if a failure is substantiated or in case of excessive absence from class. All remedial or re-training should be applied equitably.
  - Attendance at courses should be mandated. If a percentage of time is allowed for excused absences (for any reason), the percentage of time a student is allowed to be absent and still pass the course should be determined by each POST commission.
  - Methods of developing test questions conforming to the performance objectives stated in the course should be explained to each student. The test development process should be noted in a procedural format, outlining how the testing program is administered.
  - Testing, whether pre-test or post-test, should be valid and reliable. If pre-testing is used, it should be done with a specific purpose and accurately measure the instructional results.
6. Critical skills areas (vehicle stops, use of deadly force, de-escalation techniques, responding to individuals with mental illness, etc.) should be tested using graded practical exercises. Acceptable pass/fail criterion should be established for each skill, and students should demonstrate proficiency to pass the activity.

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