



THE OHIO PEACE OFFICER TRAINING COMMISSION- OPOTC Meeting

Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy
1650 State Route 56 S.W., London, Ohio 43140

Minutes
August 12th, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vernon Stanforth at 10:22 a.m. in the cafeteria of the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, London, Ohio.

The following members attended the meeting:

Voting Members

Sheriff Vernon Stanforth
Chief Robert Chabali
Colonel Charles Jones
Carol O'Brien
Wynette Carter-Smith
Leah Amstutz
SAC Gregory Nelsen

Non-voting Members

Scott Helkowski, Attorney General

Absent

Lieutenant James Fitsko

Staff

Erica Wilson
Brittany Brashears
Brian Malachowsky
Thomas Quinlan
Anthony Traska
Richard Butsko
Arturo DeLeon
Alexis Miller

With a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m.

Chairman Vernon Stanforth moved to approve the May 20th, 2025, OPOTC minutes. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

Director Quinlan advised that the 2026 CPT mandates that were set out in the March meeting have been prepared, and the memo is ready for dissemination. There was a need to wait for the State Budget to pass to see what the funding availability would be for the year. After reviewing it they might be able to provide up to 32 hours, due to the budget decrease. The 24 hours will be paid for out to all officer the mandatory training. If there is availability it will consist of first come first serve for reimbursement above that amount.

Brittany Breshears provided Continued Professional Training Updates:

- 1,435 CPT Pre-approval applications
- 507 Agencies have reported some CPT training or all training for 2025. Those agencies include a total of 15,565 officers.
- Q2 reimbursement was sent completed in early June with a total of \$3,223,238.63. Q1 \$4,359,090.18 plus Q2 \$3,223,238.63 totals \$7,582,328.81

Dr. Erica Wilson presented the January 2026 release. There will be 16 hours removed as well as adding additional 16 hours with a few non-discretionary and legal updates that were added to the curriculum. The removal of the 16 hours will include First- Aid/CPR/AED, ICS and NIMS. Those 3 lesson plans will be removed for the curriculum and will be replaced with ICAT/Crisis Mitigation. This topic has been discussed in previous meetings where it was decided to be held on hold until January to provide the academy with plenty of time to receive the accreditation. ICAT will have six SPOs that will be new for that course.

1-1 Intro. to Basic Training

Non-discretionary update; removed reference of 7-1 First Aid/CPR/AED, 13-4 ICS, and 13-5 NIMS as these topics are being removed from POBT

2-1 Legal Basics

Legal Update: HB56 – 135th GA, eff. 10-24-2024- Language was added

2-2K Crimes Against the Admin. of Safety & Justice

Legal Update: HB96 – Changes the name of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH)

2-20 Other Offenses

Legal Update: HB96 – Changes the name of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH)

7-2 Critical Injury

Non-discretionary update; removed reference of 7-1 First Aid/CPR/AED as this topic is being removed from POBT

8-1 Patrol Aspects & Overview

Non-discretionary update; removed reference of 13-4 ICS as this topic is being removed from POBT

11-7 Drug Awareness

Legal Update: HB96 – Changes the name of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH)

13-1 HazMat & WMD Awareness

Non-discretionary update; removed reference of 13-4 ICS as this topic is being removed from POBT

Chairman Vernon Stanforth moved to approve changes to the January 2026 Release. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

Alexis Miller stated that the Canine Evaluator lesson plan was revisited and there were changes made. There were new Subject Matter Experts who were selected to be on the panel; however, they were not the best selected due to their inexperience. Therefore, earlier this year there was a mas email that was sent out to all canine evaluators within the state. Overall, there were seven SMEs that were selected which then were able to revamp the Canine Evaluator Lesson Plan. There were seven major changes:

- On page 9 of the Canine Evaluator Training document, it has the OPOTA Definitions, which was not included in the 2023 edition and now it is included in the 2025 edition. This clears up any misconceptions that are made by units going through the evaluations and evaluators as they are evaluating the units.
- The evaluations regarding the obedience portion, all those obedience portions have been moved to the beginning to get them completed first. That was a decision made by the SMEs for continuity purposes.
- On page 26-27 the new section of obedience with gun fire which was titled “Maintaining Canine Control with Gunfire” is now Maintaining Obedience. The steps with that have changed and how that control is maintained. Verbiage was changed for Conducting an Open Area Search and the areas that can be searched.
- Conducting the Termination without Engagement (Down Enroute, Recall, Bark and Hold), those are details on how the handler maintains control of the canine through that process.
- On page 29 it defines the amount of narcotic- the amount of narcotic substance used for evaluation WILL NOT be less than five (5) grams per hide, nor more than one ounce.
- Page 31 states Conducting the EXPLOSIVES DETECTION evaluation there must be a minimum of 15 grams (g), with a maximum of 1 pound (lb), of each type of explosive used during the evaluation.
- Potassium Perchlorate was added to the list, which is a colorless chemical used in flares.
- On lead and off lead parameters were defined (on-lead is between 15-30 feet) for this specific evaluation.

Chairman Vernon Stanforth moved to approve the Canine Evaluator Curriculum. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

Director Quinlan advised that the 2025 Virtual reality courses have been released. There were six released, which make a total of 12 courses available for training. There are currently 300 instructors trained around the state. Currently they are writing 7 additional, 6 of those are being funded by a grant, through the Bureau of Justice Assistance which will be ready for 2026. The seventh one is funded by a grant with the Forensic Nurse Network on sexual strangulation.

Due to the budget bill passing, the officers returning to service will be changing. The change that has occurred now is that any officer after one year, and up to four years, is required to take up to a 40-hour refresher course. The new law agencies will not be able to appoint an individual and place them into service until they have completed the mandatory refresher course.

Arturo DeLeon advised they are transitioning to no longer requiring the state certification exam for breaks in service. At the end of an advanced training course, OPOTA will verify the commission and the completion of the 40-hour or 80-hour course.

A break in service is considered over one year, and less three years requires up to a 40-hour refresher course. Any break in service over 4 years will require the 80-hour course. The two-year rule is still intact. This does not apply to those individuals who have never held a commission.

Motion #1

Brian Malchowsky stated that this motion is to modernize and strengthen the standards for Basic instructor certification and discipline, while streamlining renewal processes and reducing unnecessary regulatory steps. The changes will promote higher instructor quality, allow faster action in cases of misconduct, reduce unnecessary renewals processing, and bring greater clarity to the public, schools, and instructors.

The following document was received and filed with the record:

1. OAC Motions

Ms. Carol O'Brien moved that the Commission recommend amending the Ohio Administrative Code provisions regulating Basic instructors, consolidating all proposed changes into a single JCARR submission. The motion incorporated eight recommendations outlined in the "OAC Motions" document provided by the OPOTC attorney and submitted for the record. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

Motion #2

Updating the OAC will eliminate conflicting provisions, provide clear guidance to commanders and officers, and ensure that training and certification requirements match the new law that begins September 30, 2025.

Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith moved that the Commission recommend amending the Ohio Administrative Code on or after September 30, 2025, to align with House Bill 96 by removing provisions related to breaks in service under former law and implementing the new 80-hour refresher training requirement. This is the last scheduled meeting before the law takes effect. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

Motion # 3

This amendment will ensure compliance with state law, provide consistency across all Commission credentials, reduce barriers for experienced professionals moving to Ohio, decrease the likelihood of OPOTC-related litigation, and enhance recruitment into the law enforcement profession. R.C. 4796 requires Ohio licensing authorities to provide a pathway for qualified applicants from other states or with qualifying professional experience to obtain an Ohio license. The Commission's rules currently do not provide a process applicable to all its licenses, potentially limiting applicant access and creating compliance risk. Moreover, the adoption of Chapter 4796 rendered some of our provisions outdated.

Mr. Gregory Nelson moved that the Commission recommend amending the Ohio Administrative Code to provide a process for applicants under R.C. 4796, allowing recognition of out-of-state licensure or comparable professional experience for all Commission-issued certifications, not limited to peace officer certification. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

Motion #4

Currently, a student who fails one subject may be required to repeat the entire Basic academy, which can be unnecessarily costly and time-consuming. Allowing targeted remediation aligns with educational best practices, keeps more students on track, and avoids wasting training resources. This change will improve student retention, make better use of academy resources, and maintain the same performance standards by requiring successful completion of all subjects, while avoiding the inefficiency of re-teaching already mastered material. This will give Basic academy students who fail a single subject the ability to retake that subject without repeating the entire program.

Chief Robert Chabali moved that the Commission recommend amending the Ohio Administrative Code to permit academy students that fail a subject to repeat only that subject, rather than repeating the entire academy. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

Brian Malachowsky invited everyone who is interested to attend the public comment when it continues forward. All these proposals are not final; they will go through the JCARR process. This process invites the public to speak once there is a final draft filed with JCARR. He invites everyone to participate in the rule making process.

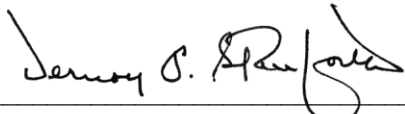
Motion #5

H.B. 452 from last General Assembly enacted a law that requires OPOTC to adopt rules granting hospital security personnel access to our training. The law requires rules to be adopted by October 9, 2025. The rules will create a structured process for granting eligible hospital security personnel access to OPOTA training while ensuring consistency with the Ohio Department of Health's enforcement framework and statutory definitions. H.B. 452 of the last General Assembly assigned ODH primary responsibility for enforcing most of the new hospital-related requirements, with hospitals themselves performing the majority of the act's obligations. OPOTA's role is limited to providing access to certain training for "security personnel employed directly by a hospital system, or a hospital that is not part of a hospital system."

The proposed rules will set clear eligibility verification processes, restrict access to current personnel, and give OPOTA flexibility to manage resources through defined access periods, course format options, and discretion to offer additional training beyond hospital-specific courses. The rules will ensure compliance with statutory mandates, provide hospitals with a predictable and consistent process for securing training access for their security staff, safeguard OPOTA resources, and reinforce the distinction between hospital security personnel and sworn peace officers. This alignment with ODH's definition will also promote uniform implementation and avoid conflicting interpretations between agencies.

Ms. Carol O'Brien moved that the Commission recommend establishing access to OPOTA training for hospital security personnel, consistent with the statutory framework enacted in R.C. 109.7411. The rules should do all the following outlined in the "OAC Motions" document provided by the OPOTC attorney and submitted to the record. Without objection, roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:55 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vernon S. Stanford", written over a horizontal line.

Chair Vernon Stanforth

These minutes are not verbatim. Audio recordings are available upon request.