

More about TPCAF Recognition



Recognition Program
TEXAS POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

What is the Law Enforcement Agency Best Practices Recognition Program?

The Law Enforcement Recognition Program is a voluntary process where police agencies in Texas prove their compliance with over 150 Texas Law Enforcement Best Practices. These Best Practices were carefully developed by Texas Law Enforcement professionals to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service and the protection of individual's rights.

What does it mean to be "Recognized?"

Being "Recognized" means that the agency meets or exceeds all of the identified Best Practices for Texas Law Enforcement. These Best Practices cover aspects of law enforcement operations such as use of force, protection of citizen rights, pursuits, property and evidence management, and patrol and investigative operations. While being "Recognized" does not guarantee an agency will not make a mistake, it does ensure that the agency has studied these critical issues, has developed policy and procedures to address them and has systems in place to identify and correct problems.

What are the benefits of "Recognition?"

Police Officers exercise government's most awesome powers – the power to stop and question a citizen, the power to arrest a citizen, to seize his person and property, and the power to use force in that process. Officers often operate alone without direct supervision. Police agencies direct and control officer's activity through supervision, training and written policies and procedures. Since supervisors cannot always be present, the training and the policies and procedures of an agency are critical to ensuring proper performance. Appropriate equipment is also necessary. The Recognition Program ensures an agency has addressed the most critical law enforcement issues in both policy as well as actual operation. The Recognition Program does not tell an agency what their policy must be, but rather it ensures that the policy, procedure, or operation addresses the critical aspects of an issue. The Recognition Program assures both City Management and the citizens of a city that their Police Department is operating in a manner that reflects the current Best Practices of Law Enforcement. It can provide citizens with reassurance and improve community relations and cooperation – and also leads to improved performance within the department.

Who "Recognizes" an Agency?

The Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation (TPCAF) developed the Recognition Program to assist Texas agencies in meeting their professional obligations to the citizens of Texas. An appointed Committee of professional Police Chiefs from across the state developed the Best Practices for Texas Law Enforcement. This Committee now conducts the final review of an agency's efforts and awards "Recognized" status.

How do you get to be "Recognized?"

An agency that has been awarded "Recognized" status has undertaken a careful internal review of its policies, procedures, equipment, facilities, and operations, and has then requested an outside review to prove their compliance with the standards. A Facilitator from a nearby agency is assigned as a resource to the Department in this internal review effort. After an independent review of their written documents and proofs, a team of assessors is sent to the agency to review their operations and facilities, and to interview the Department's staff. A Final Report outlining the findings is sent to the TPCAF Recognition Committee. The Committee reviews the findings and votes whether or not to award "recognized" status.

How long are you "Recognized?"

The "Recognized" status is awarded for a four year period. During the four year period the agency must submit an annual report and show compliance with two performance related standards. These are reviewed as they are received and compliance verified. During the last year of the period the agency must submit updated documentation on all Best Practices and another on site review is conducted. The TPCAF Recognition Committee must then vote again to approve "Recognized" status for the next four years. If the agency does not submit the required annual proofs, or there is indication received by the Committee that the agency is not in compliance during the period, the Committee may vote to remove "Recognized" status. The TPCAF has contracted with an outside group to manage the recognition process and ensure integrity and accountability.