

Telecommunications Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2023

The Telecommunications Policy Committee of the Board on Public Safety Standards and Training held a regular meeting on March 16, 2023, at the Oregon Public Safety Academy in Salem, Oregon. Chair, Michael Fletcher called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Committee Members:

Michael Fletcher, Chair, APCO-NENA
Travis Ash, Oregon State Sheriff's Association (Webex)
Ronda Griffin, APCO-NENA EMS Section (Webex)
Chelsea LaBar, APCO (Webex)
Rebecca Long, Emergency Medical Services & Trauma Rep (Webex)
Raeann Thurber, Telecommunicator (Webex)
Ray Rau, Oregon Associate of Chiefs of Police (Webex)
Les Thomas, Oregon Fire Chiefs Association (Webex)

Committee Members Absent:

Stephen King, APCO
Vacant, Line Level Communicator
Vacant, Oregon State Police

Guests:

None

DPSST Staff:

Phil Castle, Director
Suzy Herring, Professional Standards Administrator
Marsha Morin, Standards and Certification Manager
Melissa Lang-Bacho, Professional Standards Case Manager
Jennifer Howald, Administrative Rules Coordinator
Erica Riddell, Criminal Justice Office Specialist
Shelby Wright, Executive Support Specialist



1. Introductions

Introductions of members, guests and staff.

2. Policy Discussion on Background Investigation and Pre-employment Psychological Evaluation Standards for Telecommunicators and Emergency Medical Dispatchers

Presented by Jennifer Howald, Administrative Rules Coordinator

In November 2022, the Telecommunications, Corrections and Police Policy Committees reviewed proposed rule changes that were developed based on the Department's interpretation that the checklist and questionnaire would become the minimum standard for all law enforcement units when hiring public safety officers. As a minimum standard for hiring a public safety officer, the checklist's requirement to include information about a

psychiatric or psychological evaluation of the applicant would then extend to all criminal justice public safety officer disciplines. To ensure the standards applied to all disciplines equally, the proposed rules included public and private safety agencies in addition to law enforcement units.

The proposed rule changes received a total of 17 public comments. After the public comment period, the Department returned to DOJ for additional guidance. As a result, it was determined that the Department meets the legal requirements of HB 2936 by creating and providing the checklist and the questionnaire forms.

On February 16, 2023, the Department asked all three policy committees to have a collective policy discussion to determine if the background checklist and the personal history questionnaire should be made available as resources or if they should be required as minimum standards. The Corrections Policy Committee and the Police Policy Committee voted to recommend requiring the background checklist and personal history questionnaire. The Telecommunications Policy Committee voted to return the issue back to the TPC for additional discussion.

The TPC reviewed the psychological evaluation standards and determined telecommunicators and emergency medical dispatchers should have a pre-employment psychological evaluation. The TPC recommended this standard become effective January 1, 2024. The TPC recommended that emergency medical dispatchers employed by private ambulance companies be exempt from this employment standard.

The TPC reviewed the background investigation requirement to complete a standardized personal history questionnaire. The TPC recommended that agencies hiring telecommunicators and emergency medical dispatchers retain the discretion to use the questionnaire of their choice.

The TPC reviewed the background investigation requirement to complete a background checklist. The TPC recommended that hiring agencies be required to use a background checklist based on the rule language that allows the agency to use either the checklist or an equivalent checklist.

Rebecca Long moved to recommend approval of OAR 259-008-0011 with the discussed revisions for the psychological evaluation standards, and approval of OAR 259-008-0015 with the amendment that the personal history question list is not a requirement for telecommunications or emergency medical dispatchers. Chelsea LaBar seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Next Telecommunications Policy Committee Meeting: May 3, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Administrative Notes:

These minutes reflect the order of the discussion/voting items as they appear on the official meeting agenda. The actual order in which they were discussed may vary.

All documents reviewed and discussed in this meeting are subject to Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.410 to ORS 192.505). These documents can be requested by contacting DPSST at dpsst.records@dpsst.oregon.gov.