

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH  
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



**PA 22-119**—sSB 135

*Public Safety and Security Committee*  
*Appropriations Committee*

**AN ACT CONCERNING ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT UNITS**

**SUMMARY:** This act makes several changes to the minimum standards and practices for administering and managing law enforcement units (see BACKGROUND), including eliminating a requirement that units obtain and maintain accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) by 2025. Instead, by 2026, units must either (1) be certified as meeting the requirements for all three state-accreditation tiers the act requires the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) to develop or (2) meet a higher level of accreditation standards from CALEA. Units and POST had related requirements leading up to 2025 under prior law and do as well up to 2026 under the act.

The act also requires that the minimum standards and practices include compliance with specific POST guidance on reporting procedures for police officer certificate suspension, cancellation, or revocation (i.e., POST General Notice 20-09). Under the act, if a law enforcement unit fails to comply with the guidance, then POST may revoke the unit's state-accreditation certificate of compliance.

Lastly, the act makes several conforming changes, including to the law on POST's authority and a prohibition on civil actions against a law enforcement unit for damages from failing to obtain and maintain the required certification or accreditation.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**ADJUSTED MINIMUM STANDARDS AND PRACTICES**

Prior law required POST and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to jointly develop, adopt, and revise, as necessary, minimum standards and practices for administering and managing law enforcement units until they were to be sunset on December 31, 2024. Additionally, law enforcement units had to:

1. from January 1, 2019, until December 31, 2024, adopt and maintain (a) POST-DESPP's minimum standards and practices or (b) a higher level of accreditation standards developed by POST or CALEA; and
2. starting in 2025, obtain and maintain CALEA accreditation.

The act eliminates the sunset date on POST-DESPP developing, adopting, and revising their minimum standards and practices and requires POST to, within available appropriations, divide the minimum standards and practices into three state-accreditation tiers by January 1, 2023, thereby codifying POST's existing

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three-tiered accreditation structure.

Prior to the introduction of the tier structure, units must continue to adopt and maintain through December 31, 2022, (a) POST-DESPP’s minimum standards and practices, as amended by the act, or (b) a higher level of accreditation standards developed by POST or CALEA. Afterwards, as described in the table below, the act sets different minimum standards and practices for each state-accreditation tier and dates by which units must generally be certified for each tier.

**Minimum Standards & Practices Tiers Schedule**

	<i>Tier I</i>	<i>Tier II</i>	<i>Tier III</i>
<b>Minimum Standards &amp; Practices Description</b>	Minimum standards and practices designed to protect law enforcement units from liability, enhance service delivery, and improve public confidence in units	Minimum standards and practices for unit administration, management, and operation	Higher minimum standards and practices for unit administration, management, and operation
<b>Required Certification Dates</b>	By January 1, 2023, and until December 31, 2023	By January 1, 2024, and until December 31, 2025	By January 1, 2026, and after

Under the act, during the above tier schedule, units may alternatively meet higher accreditation standards developed by CALEA that are otherwise acceptable for each tier. Additionally, as units progress up the tier scale, they must maintain certification with the prior tier or tiers (e.g., at the tier three stage, they must ultimately be tiers one, two, and three certified). The act makes conforming changes to extend to each tier the existing requirements for POST to (1) post on its website the standards and practices and distribute them to law enforcement units, (2) jointly review and certify unit compliance with DESPP, and (3) work with units to obtain the required certification or accreditation if they fail to do so.

**BACKGROUND**

*Minimum Standards and Practices*

The current version of the DESPP-POST minimum standards and practices is published within POST General Notice 20-04. By law, they must be based on CALEA standards and include standards and practices for:

1. bias-based policing,
2. use of force,
3. response to family violence crimes,
4. body camera use,
5. police misconduct complaints,
6. electronic defense weapons use,
7. eyewitness identification procedures,

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8. notifications of death and related events, and
9. police pursuits.

### *Law Enforcement Units*

By law, a “law enforcement unit” is any state or municipal agency or department (or tribal agency or department created and governed under a memorandum of agreement) whose primary functions include enforcing criminal or traffic laws; preserving public order; protecting life and property; or preventing, detecting, or investigating crime (CGS § 7-294a(8)).