

THE BRIEFING



A Publication of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement

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TCOLE's COVID-19 Response

As with all state agencies, TCOLE is responding to the ongoing COVID-19 situation by modifying delivery of services to best protect our customers and our own employees. These modifications may cause a slow-down in delivery of some non-essential services in order to prioritize for essential services. Please be patient as we try to work through this issue. In order to assist, we would like to supply the following information:

1. TCOLE offices are closed to walk-in traffic. Mail deliveries will still be accepted. All call-in and email services will still be available for customers, but waiting times may increase.
2. We will still be accepting and processing all electronic and hard-mailed forms, applications, and training rosters. There may be slight delays in approval of non-essential applications
3. Basic licensing courses- academies are free to modify timelines and schedules to accommodate their immediate needs. Use of remote, video, or online training to replace the cognitive portions of classroom training may be considered, but only after the academy has submitted their plan of action to TCOLE for approval. Requests can be initiated by sending an email to chris.varady@tcole.texas.gov.
4. With more than a year left until the end of the 2019- 21 Training Unit and the 2017-2021 Training Cycle, TCOLE has not yet made a decision as to an extension resulting from COVID-19. We will continue to monitor the situation and make a determination closer to that date.
5. Any mandated training which falls due during the crisis period will be extended, but NOT WAIVED. Extension timelines cannot be predicted at this time.

(continued on page 3)

Upcoming Events

Quarterly Commission Meetings

June 18th, 2020
September 3, 2020
December 3, 2020

Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony

May 4, 2020– **CANCELED**

Achievement Awards Ceremony

June 19, 2020

Commission Meeting Notes

Executive Director's Report:

Director Vickers started his report by giving thanks to all those who gave feedback during the Tour of Texas, and hopes that the line of communication will improve and remain open. The Tour of Texas included 7 stops and generated a total of 437 people in attendance. Director Vickers then went on with hopes for the future of TCOLE in regards to accreditation; the hope is to provide an additional accrediting body to the regional accrediting body that is in place now. The second future hope for TCOLE is that a certificate for time served as a peace officer will begin to be issued to those who have dedicated a long duration of time in protecting the citizens of Texas. Both of these items will be brought to the next commission meeting for discussion.

Director of Enforcement and Special Services:

Director Antu began his report with the approvals of three new training providers since the last commission meeting in December 2019. Further, non-compliance cases have been transferred from the Credentialing Division to the Enforcement Division, which is currently just over 800 cases. As far as MyTCOLE being back up and running, Director Antu comments that the learning management system in the program is in the process of being upgraded. Also, code is still being developed in making MyTCOLE accounts the one-stop shop for certificate requirements as well as unit requirements for appointments. The feature of being able to purchase certificates through the MyTCOLE account is also being worked on so that licensees will be able to purchase certificates more easily.

Director of Credentialing and Field Services:

Director Merchant began by discussing that the Credentialing Division has been pushing for licensees to create a new MyTCOLE account. Due to the system being newly upgraded, data transfer from the other system is non-existent and licensees will need to create a new account in the new system. These accounts will better help TCOLE be able to reach out to licensees. The hope with this new system for the credentialing side is that communication will begin integrating to a more electronic form of communication, such as sending out electronic notices and updates. However, this change will occur slowly and will not happen any time soon. Director Merchant then went on to discuss the 2195 course (school-based law enforcement active shooter course), was released on February 7th. This course came out of the 86th Legislature as a statutory requirement. Those school based law enforcement officers hired before the date the statute went into effect (September 1, 2019) have until August 31, 2020 to complete the course. Those hired after the effective date have 180 days from the day the course was released. The military service conversion form has been released and since its release date, there have been an abundant amount of applications coming in. The process for those applications does take time and TCOLE asks that those applicants please be patient as these applications are processed manually. The notices of non-compliance for the mandatory CITP course have gone out, and the next notice to go out will be licensees who are in violation.

For more information

Meeting Minutes: Other items, including line of duty deaths, waiver requests, proceedings for revocation, suspension, and other disciplinary actions, and previous meeting minutes, can be found under the Who We Are/The Commission section on our website at: www.tcole.texas.gov.

Live Recordings: Live and archived video recordings of the meetings can be found on our website on the Who We Are/The Commission page at: www.tcole.texas.gov.

Public Comment: Anyone wishing to make a public comment may do so at the following email address: public_comment@tcole.texas.gov.

These violations include reprimands and possible suspensions of licenses, and the number of non-compliant active officers for the state is 1,482. Licensees wanting more information on mandated courses can go to the TCOLE website under the [Licensee Training Mandate Guide](#).

Director of Government Relations:

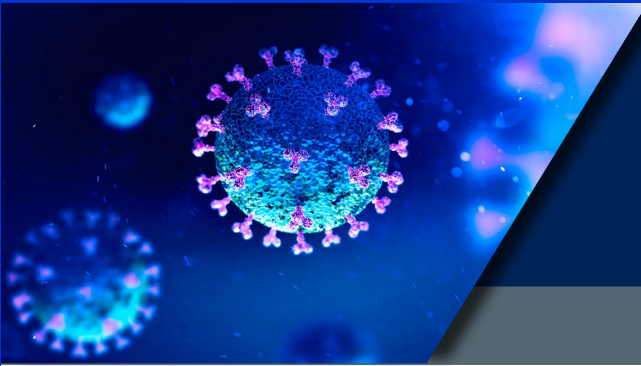
Director Grigsby began her report on the upcoming Peace Officer Memorial ceremony that will be taking place on May 4th, along with Sunday night candlelight vigil on May 3rd** . Both of these events will be on the capitol grounds, and more information on this event can be found at the Texas Peace Officer Memorial [website](#). Director Grigsby also commented on the memorial itself, with the addition of names the memorial is running out of room and will soon need renovations. Discussions on these renovations have been made as well as possible future fundraising strategies. The next phase in the Sunset Review process will be to look into TCOLE's budget documentation. *For those wanting to know more about the Sunset process, more information is provided on page 9 of this newsletter.* Further, preparations are underway for the upcoming legislative session.

***The 2020 Peace Officers' Memorial ceremony has been canceled due to COVID-19.*

TCOLE's COVID-19 Response, Continued

6. Any currently held TCOLE license or certification due to expire during the designated crisis period will be considered by TCOLE to still be valid. At the end of the crisis, definite end dates for those licenses and certifications will be addressed. Examples include Temporary Licenses, Firearms Certifications, Specialty Certificates (School Based LE, Courtroom Security, etc.). Caution- TCOLE cannot control how outside agencies will view an expired license/certification.
7. Appointments (L1s) which would normally be rejected due to missing training will be approved, if the missing training is required to be taken in a classroom. There will be a process in place to hold the licensee/agency responsible for completing the missing training within 90 days- the training will not be waived. This will also include any reactivation/reinstatements/out-of-state/federal/military applications, where an agency head will provide written notice that the application and subsequent appointment are immediately necessary. Contact Credentialing for further information.
8. State Licensing Exams will continue to be conducted at our Austin Headquarters, but time and seating are limited, so call and plan ahead. Walk-ins for exams are not accepted.

We know this is an unprecedented time for everyone, and we will continue to work through any unforeseen issues that arise. As the situation evolves, this information will be continuously updated on our website under [Technical Assistance Bulletins](#). Please stay safe and healthy, and contact us if we can be of assistance..



COVID-19 Information for Law Enforcement: General Fact Sheet

Educate Yourself. Stay Informed. Be Safe.

What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is the name given by the World Health Organization for a new respiratory disease first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has now been identified in more than 90 countries. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses found in people and animals causing a range of illnesses from the common cold to severe respiratory infection. Due to the increased availability of testing, more COVID-19 infections are being identified every day. As it is a newly-identified virus, this is an emerging and rapidly-evolving situation and new information becomes available daily. Stay updated.

How does the COVID-19 Virus Spread?

The virus is thought to spread mainly by “person-to-person” contact. This means close contact within six feet and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.¹ While humans are thought to be most contagious when symptomatic, the virus can spread even when an infected person is not showing symptoms.² It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching his/her mouth, nose, or possibly eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.^{3,4}

What are COVID-19 Symptoms?

Symptoms of a COVID-19 infection may appear 2-14 days after being exposed to the virus. Symptoms range from mild to severe respiratory illness.⁵ The most common symptoms include:^{6,7}



- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath or difficulty in breathing
- Tiredness/fatigue

While less common, individuals with COVID-19 may also experience⁸:

- Aches and pains
- Sore throat
- Nasal Congestion
- Chills
- Nausea and vomiting

Vulnerable Populations

Current COVID-19 cases and prior coronavirus infections suggest that the most vulnerable populations include⁹:

- Older persons
- Individuals with pre-existing medical conditions, such as:
 - Heart disease
 - Lung disease
 - Diabetes
 - Pregnant women

Treatment and Recovery

- The overwhelming majority of people infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover from the disease without needing special treatment.^{10,11}
- There is no specific antiviral treatment or vaccine for COVID-19.¹²
- Individuals with COVID-19 typically successfully receive treatment to relieve systems.¹³

Live Update of Global Cases of COVID-19

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

COVID-19 Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen>

1 <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>
 2 <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruses/who-china-joint-mission-on-covid-19-final-report.pdf>
 3 <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
 4 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>
 5 <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruses/who-china-joint-mission-on-covid-19-final-report.pdf>
 6 <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>
 7 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-symptoms.pdf>

8 <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>
 9 <https://www.who.int/images/default-source/health-topics/coronavirus/myth-busters/mythbuster-2.png>
 10 <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>
 11 <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>
 12 <https://www.who.int/images/default-source/health-topics/coronavirus/myth-busters/mythbuster-4.png>
 13 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

MyTCOLE 3.0 is here!

The new MyTCOLE system has been rolled out. A few important things to know:

-You will need to register for a brand new account. The login for your TCOLE online training does not carry over.

-Your TCOLE PID will be required at each log in.

-With this account, you can pull up your own personal status report, which shows work and training history, as well as keep your contact information up to date with the Commission.

-Credentials used for the current TCOLE online training system are separate- for now. The link to that current system is inside the MyTCOLE account.

-We are in the process of integrating the new learning management system, which will allow for one username/password to be used for all applications.

-We recommend you use your personal email as the primary email so you can continue to access your account if you leave your current agency.

The new MyTCOLE 3.0 can be found at <https://tcledds.tcole.texas.gov/mytcole/>

Returning Texas Peace Officers (from other States) or “The grass isn’t always greener!”

We’ve all heard the old saying “the grass is always greener on the other side,” and the Commission is well aware that in order for “greener grass” and other reasons, Texas peace officers sometimes leave our beloved state to pursue careers in other states. However, they may, upon realizing that the grass is NOT always greener, return to Texas and their law enforcement career. For those who did not go into law enforcement in another state while they were gone AND allowed their Texas peace officer license to go inactive, the standard reactivation requirements on the [Peace Officer Reactivation Packet](#) apply.

For those who did go into law enforcement in another state, then returned to Texas, there may be a better and easier option. If an active Texas peace officer gets licensed in another state as a peace officer and continuously keeps either the Texas PO license, or the out-of-state license active (and without disciplinary action against the license); the Commission will allow a quicker reactivation of the Texas license, WITHOUT REPEATING THE STATE EXAM OR COMPLETING A NEW BASIC LICENSING COURSE, as was required in the past. The key is that the applicant has at least one license active at all times. The applicant will still be required to get caught up on any Training Unit/Cycle or other legislatively mandated requirements, submit fingerprints, and provide the required documents.

The applicant may also apply to have service time and total training hours from the other state added to his or her Personal Status Report. The training will be accepted as a lump sum total, without recognition of individual courses.

License Actions

The following proceedings for revocation, suspension and other disciplinary actions took place at the March 2020 Commission Meeting. For a complete listing of these license actions, including names, departments, and case numbers, see the meeting agenda found on our website under Who We Are/The Commission/Meeting Minutes at www.tcole.texas.gov.

Type of Action	Number of Licenses
Default Suspension Orders	9
Default Cancellation Orders	0
Default Revocation Orders	2
Proposal for Decision Order	0
Agreed Suspension Waivers	2
Agreed Suspension Orders	2
Statutory Revocations	6
Statutory Suspensions	1
Permanent Surrenders	20
Reprimands for Administrative Violations	6
Suspensions for Failing to Complete Legislatively Required Continuing Education	0
Reprimands for Failing to Complete Legislatively Required Continuing Education	52

Update to Exam Endorsement

Effective immediately, the TCOLE Rules Overview (Courses 1033 and 1305) are no longer required for exam endorsement for the basic peace officer, jailer, and telecommunicator courses. That material has been incorporated into the basic jailer and peace officer courses, and will be included with the basic telecommunicator course when it is released.

The rules overview is still required for out-of-state and federal applicants who are obtaining a Texas license.

This only applies to the eligibility for an exam endorsement, and does not change any licensing requirement.

Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony 2020 Canceled

Due to ongoing concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony Committee has made the decision to cancel this year's ceremony and its surrounding events. Fallen officers and their loved ones who would have been recognized during this ceremony will be honored during the 2021 ceremony.

This decision was not made lightly and we want to assure the law enforcement community and their families that the 2019 line of duty deaths will be recognized with the honor they deserve. Please stay home and be healthy during this time of uncertainty.



2020 TCOLE
CONFERENCE

November 9 - 12



Corpus Christi

REGISTRATION COMING SOON

Please continue to check the website for additional information.

www.tcole.texas.gov

AMERICAN BANK CENTER

1901 North Shoreline Blvd.
Corpus Christi, TX 78401

Achievement Award Nominations

TCOLE hosts an annual Achievement Award ceremony to honor licensees who have excelled in three different categories: Professional Achievement, Public Service, and Valor. The ceremony is usually held in June following our June commission meeting. If you wish to nominate a licensee that you feel has shown exemplary behavior in any of these categories, please fill out a nomination form; the link can be found below.

When submitting your nominations, please **email** them to recognitions@tcole.texas.gov

Application [Link](#)

****Nominations for the 2020 Achievement Awards Ceremony are closed at this time.**



TCOLE is under Sunset Review

The Sunset review process occurs for each state agency every 12 years, and TCOLE is part of the current review cycle. The Sunset Advisory Commission provides the following information on this process:

In government, “Sunset” reviews regularly assess the need for a state agency or program to exist. In Texas, the Sunset process works by setting an expiration (Sunset) date in law for state agencies. An agency will automatically be abolished on its Sunset date unless the Legislature passes a bill to continue it, typically for another 12 years. A rigorous evaluation process before the Sunset date provides the Legislature a unique opportunity and a strong incentive to closely examine an agency’s mission, priorities, and performance and take action to address problems identified.



Our regulated community and public stakeholders have an opportunity to provide input on TCOLE and its functions and processes. If you would like to offer public feedback or comments on TCOLE, click on the hyperlink below which will take you to the Sunset Commission website.

We thank you for taking part in our [agency review](#).

Commissioners

Chief Kim Lemaux
Presiding Officer

Major Jason D. Hester
Assistant Presiding Officer

Patricia Burruss
Secretary

Constable Ron E. Hood
Sheriff Mike Griffis
Jack W. Taylor
Sharon Breckenridge Thomas
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