



## EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES & LITIGATION: NEW POLICIES AVAILABLE SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL POLICING

Policies governing employment practices are a critical component of effective and professional police leadership. They establish clear expectations for employee conduct, reinforce organizational culture, and serve as a primary safeguard against legal and regulatory exposure for both the agency and the Chief of Police.

To ensure policies remain current and defensible, it is essential that Chiefs of Police work collaboratively with municipal attorneys, human resources professionals, and governing authorities to regularly review and update employment-related policies. Early in the year is an ideal time to conduct this review, particularly given the continually evolving legal, regulatory, and workplace environments impacting law enforcement agencies.

Several new employment practices policies have recently been added to the Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal to assist Chiefs of Police in developing, revising, and finalizing agency policies addressing employment liability. These resources are comprehensive, practical, and aligned with the profession's highest standards, supporting informed decision-making at the executive level.

The newly added policies—along with other resources available through the Accreditation Plus Portal—meet and exceed accreditation requirements and incorporate key considerations relevant to today's policing environment. Collectively, they are designed to help Chiefs of Police strengthen organizational professionalism, promote a positive and respectful workplace culture, and assist the Chief of Police in developing agency-specific strategies to mitigate employment practices liability risks while also promoting officer safety and wellness.

Chiefs of Police are encouraged to review the following policies available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#):

- **Initial Background Investigation and Licensing:** Exceeds accreditation by including processes required for New Jersey Police Licensing, a sample Personal History Questionnaire for New Jersey Police Licensing Applicants, and more. (Added February 2026)
- **Police Licensing Sustainment and Renewals:** Exceeds accreditation by including processes required for maintaining and renewing New Jersey Police Licenses, a sample Personal History Questionnaire, and more. (Added February 2026)
- **Conscientious Employee Protection (Whistleblower):** Exceeds accreditation by including provisions protecting employees from retaliation, outlining complaint and investigation procedures, and sample forms. (Added February 2026)
- **Duty to Intervene (All Constitutional Violations):** Exceeds accreditation by requiring intervention when an officer observes any constitutional violation. (Added February 2026)
- **Use of Force:** This comprehensive policy includes the requirements of Addendum A (CED/Less Lethal) and

Addendum B (Barricaded Individuals) as well as references to “CAD Flags,” the need to define “Safety Officer,” references to the agency’s Medical Care Policy (Sample available), and numerous sample forms in Word format for easy modification. (Added February 2026)

- **Selection and Appointment** (Civil Service and Non-Civil Service Samples): Exceeds accreditation by including processes required for New Jersey Police Licensing, lateral transfers, and the alternate route hiring program. (Added February 2026)
- **Promotion and Assignment Process** (Civil Service and Non-Civil Service Samples): Exceeds accreditation by including standardized definitions, references to New Jersey Police Licensing, and procedure considerations for selection and assignment to non-promotion specialized units such as Traffic Safety, SWAT, Community Oriented Policing, SRO, FTO, etc.). (Updated February 2026 to include references to potential employee promotional impacts for violations of the Prison Rape Elimination Act and includes references to newly enacted legislation concerning New Jersey Family Medical Leave and Temporary Disability.)
- **Drug Testing:** Exceeds accreditation by including provisions required by the New Jersey Attorney General’s Directive. (Updated February 2026 to include essential considerations for the Chief of Police to consult with the municipal attorney concerning establishing policy provisions addressing when an officer is randomly selected but not available due to long-term leave.)
- **Recruitment, Retention, and Career Opportunities:** Exceeds accreditation by including considerations for the employment inquiry process, application receiving and retention, supervisor responsibilities, officer retention considerations, actions to support officer retention, exit interview procedures, and training considerations.
- **Oath of Office and Code of Ethics:** Exceeds accreditation by including the 2024 IACP New Oath of Officer Resource and a sample Oath of Office for civilian agency personnel.
- **Rules and Regulations:** Exceeds accreditation by including sample ethics and mission statements, considerations concerning New Jersey Police Licensing, cannabis, gambling, pornography, and more.
- **Internal Affairs:** Exceeds accreditation by including the provisions of the applicable New Jersey Attorney General Directives.
- **Workplace Misconduct and Sexual Harassment:** Exceeds accreditation by including standardized definitions, compliance with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), the safe treatment of minors, employee/juvenile interactions, and more.
- **Performance Evaluations:** Exceeds accreditation by including training guidance, supervisor responsibilities, critical timetable considerations to guard against accusations of unfairness, and sample forms.
- **Employee Professional Standards Process/Early Warning System:** Exceeds accreditation by including standardized definitions, supervisor responsibilities, positive performance procedures, a sample positive performance notice form, a focus on training and remedial training to identify needed improvement to prevent the activation of the Early Warning System when possible, and more.
- **Career Development and Succession Planning:** Exceeds accreditation by including standardized definitions, mentorship strategies, and training considerations.
- **Fatigue Management:** Exceeds accreditation by including standardized definitions, references to sleep hygiene, safety considerations for tactical napping, employee and supervisor responsibilities, signs of fatigue, and no-cost fatigue training resources.

- **Employee and Family Wellness:** Exceeds accreditation by including standardized definitions, leadership and management considerations, equipment and safety considerations, fatigue factors, adherence to the New Jersey Attorney General RPO Directive, safety and wellness committee establishment, new officer mentorship considerations, stress debriefing and confidentiality resources, retired member inclusion, and more.)

Chiefs of Police are reminded that the MEL Employment Practices Helpline remains available as a resource and may contact their Law Enforcement Risk Consultant for details.

Chiefs of Police are encouraged to also review the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#), as numerous additional policies were added or recently updated, which include:

#### **New February 2026:**

- DNA Collection
- After Action Reviews
- Defensive Tactics
- Consular Notification and Access
- Prison Rape Elimination Act
- Interaction with Transgender
- Strip and Body Cavity Searches
- Strengthening Trust Between Law Enforcement and Immigrant Communities

#### **Updated for 2026:**

- **Weapons and Ammunition** (Updated to include guidance to place weapons out of service, maintain proper purchasing records, and steps to reduce lead exposure.)
- **Animal Control** (Updated to include guidance concerning proper use of force documentation in certain circumstances.)
- **Departmental Training** (Updated to include references to the New Jersey Public Safety Professional Institute (PDI) established by New Jersey Attorney General Directive 2025-03.)
- **Mutual Aid Response** (Updated to reflect definitions concerning special events)
- **Incident Command System** (Updated to reflect definitions concerning special events)

Please contact your Law Enforcement Risk Control Consultant with any questions or assistance with accessing the Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal.