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## FISCAL TOPICS

Fiscal Services Division

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# Law Enforcement Officer Training

## Background

All law enforcement training in the State of Iowa is performed or overseen by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA). The ILEA, created in 1967, is located at Camp Dodge and provides training for law enforcement officers, [correctional officers](#), [telecommunicators](#), and [reserve law enforcement officers](#). According to Iowa Code section [80B.2](#), the purpose of the ILEA is to “maximize training opportunities for law enforcement officers, to coordinate training and to set standards for the law enforcement service.” Additional information related to funding for ILEA training is available [here](#).

## Law Enforcement Officer Qualifications

An individual seeking to become a law enforcement officer must meet certain minimum standards as presented in [501 IAC 2](#). These standards include the following:

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Be a resident of Iowa.
- Have a valid Iowa driver's license or chauffeur's license.
- Do not have an addiction to drugs or alcohol.
- Be of good moral character and have not committed certain crimes.
- Have passed a [physical fitness test](#).
- Do not oppose the use of force, by reason of conscience or belief, when necessary to fulfill law enforcement duties.
- Meet hearing and eyesight standards specified in [501 IAC 2.1\(10\)](#).
- Possess a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Meet the physical requirements necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of a law enforcement officer as determined by a licensed physician or surgeon.
- Have not been previously decertified in another jurisdiction and have not committed any act that could result in decertification.
- Have performed satisfactorily in preemployment psychological tests.

An individual elected or appointed as sheriff may choose to be exempted from the physical fitness minimum standards and, as a result, receive a certification limited to the sheriff's current position. Law enforcement agencies and Regional Academies may establish additional training standards.

## Training Courses

Depending on an individual's experience, law enforcement training may be conducted through a short course pursuant to [501 IAC 3.6](#), or a long course pursuant to [501 IAC 3.5](#). Each long course must consist of at least 620 hours to be completed within a 25-week period and is required for most recruits. Each short course consists of at least 400 hours to be completed within a 20-week period and is available if the individual has completed any of the following:

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## More Information

Iowa Law Enforcement Academy: [ilea.iowa.gov](http://ilea.iowa.gov)  
LSA Staff Contact: Evan Johnson (515.281.6301) [evan.johnson@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:evan.johnson@legis.iowa.gov)

- A two-year or four-year degree in police science or criminal justice with at least 20 credit hours dedicated to those subjects.
- Law enforcement training in another state in accordance with the ILEA basic training requirements.
- Military police training.
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) new agent training course or a similar course of instruction.

### **ILEA Training**

The ILEA Basic Academy is a 630-hour-long course over a 16-week period. Recruits attend the Basic Academy after being hired or sponsored by an Iowa law enforcement agency. At the completion of training, recruits are certified as law enforcement officers. The Basic Academy trains new recruits in the following eight focus areas based on the current [curriculum](#):

#### Foundations of American Policing (21 hours)

This includes training on unbiased policing practices, court organization, and ethics.

#### Communication Skills (39 hours)

This includes training on report writing and investigative note taking, verbal defense and influence, and interviews and interrogations.

#### Life Skills (124 hours)

This includes physical, emergency care provider, and crisis intervention training.

#### Legal Topics (67 hours)

This includes training on searches and seizures, criminal law, and motor vehicle law.

#### Patrol Procedures (55 hours)

This includes training on hazardous materials, felony calls in progress, and Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT).

#### Investigations (113 hours)

This includes training on collision investigations, domestic violence, and operating while intoxicated (OWI) enforcement.

#### Tactical Skills (188 hours)

This includes training on firearms, defensive tactics, and vehicle operations.

#### Administrative (21 hours)

This includes orientation, examinations, and graduation.

### **Regional Academies**

Law enforcement training may also take place at one of the five Regional Academies in the State. The ILEA is responsible for approving the training curriculum for each of the following academies:

- [Department of Public Safety \(DPS\) Academy](#)
- [Cedar Rapids Police Academy](#)
- [Des Moines Police Academy](#)
- [Hawkeye Community College Police Academy](#)
- [Western Iowa Technical Community College Police Academy](#)

The DPS, Cedar Rapids, and Des Moines academies offer long courses that range from 17 to 22 weeks in length. After graduating from an academy, cadets begin serving as law enforcement officers in their respective police departments. The DPS Academy graduates also complete field training, which ranges from approximately 1 to 12 months depending on the officer's position. The Hawkeye Community College and Western Iowa Technical Community College academies offer short courses in conjunction with degrees in criminal justice and police science.

## Certification Through Examination (CTE)

A law enforcement officer certified in another state can become certified in Iowa if the requirements of the CTE program are met pursuant to [501 IAC 3.8](#). In order to obtain Iowa certification, an out-of-state officer must complete all of the following:

- Be employed by a recognized Iowa law enforcement agency.
- Submit an application for the CTE program. Applications received after the first 120 days may result in needing to attend an ILEA training course.
- Submit documents showing out-of-state certification as a peace officer.
- Complete the following training courses:
  - Operating While Intoxicated/Standard Field Sobriety Training.
  - Iowa Law Enforcement Emergency Care Provider (ILEECP) Training. The ILEECP course is not required if the applicant is certified as an Emergency Medical Responder.
- Pass the firearms qualification.
- Pass the CTE examination. The CTE examination is a comprehensive written examination based on common law enforcement practices and rules. The long examination, focusing on all phases of law enforcement, consists of 33 tests administered to those with less than five years of experience as a certified officer. The short examination, primarily used to test the officer's knowledge of Iowa law, consists of 17 tests administered to those with five or more years of experience as a certified officer.

An applicant who fails to pass the CTE examination must retest within 60 days. An applicant who fails a second time must complete training at the ILEA covering the failed areas. An Iowa certification will not be granted if an applicant's out-of-state certification has been revoked or suspended or the applicant is under disciplinary review.

## Mandatory In-Service and Specialty Training

In-service training is required after becoming certified as a law enforcement officer. All regular law enforcement officers must receive the following [in-service training](#) approved by the ILEA:

- Annual firearms qualification training.
- Annual hazard communications training in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.
- Annual bloodborne pathogens training in accordance with OSHA standards.
- Annual implicit bias and de-escalation training pursuant to Iowa Code section [80B.11G](#).
- Annual mental health training pursuant to Iowa Code section [80B.11\(1\)\(c\)\(3\)](#).
- National Crime Information Center (NCIC) certification by the FBI every two years.
- Hazardous materials training in accordance with OSHA standards every three years.
- Mandatory reporter training on child and dependent adult abuse every three years.
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), automated external defibrillator (AED), and foreign body airway obstruction training for all age groups in accordance with standards defined by the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation upon expiration of the officer's certification.

In addition to those listed above, all regular law enforcement officers must receive a minimum of 12 hours of law enforcement-related in-service training per year. Further training is provided to officers who conduct or supervise an investigation into a complaint of another law enforcement officer pursuant to [501 IAC 8.5](#).

Any law enforcement officer who leaves law enforcement for more than 12 months and returns must complete additional in-service training pursuant to [501 IAC 8.3](#). The time frame requirements for mandatory training are tolled during the period a law enforcement officer is called to active military service.

## Related Statutes

Iowa Code chapter [80B](#)

Iowa Administrative Code chapter [501](#)

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