



MLEAP

**MAINE LAW ENFORCEMENT
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM**

MLEAP Program Manual

Maine Law Enforcement Accreditation Program

Edition 4

Maine Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (MLEAP)

Administrative Program Manual

**Edition 4
November 4, 2021**

MAINE CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 - Program Introduction	5
The Accreditation Process	6
CALEA Agencies	6
CHAPTER 2 - Program Definitions	7
CHAPTER 3 - Application Process	10
Agency Preparation	10
Compliance Processes Available	11
Application	11
Submission of Application to the Committee	11
Expect Agency Change	11
CHAPTER 4 - Internal Review and Accreditation Process	13
Agency Initial Meeting	13
Internal Review Process	13
File Requirements	13
Compile Supportive Documentation	14
Train Agency Personnel in Policy Changes	15
Electronic Submission of Proofs of Compliance	15
Extensions	16
Assessment	16
Committee Review and Award	17
Accreditation Term	18
Official Accreditation	18
Certificate Presentation	18
Accredited Agency Logo	18
CHAPTER 5 - Standards Proof and Compliance	19
Standards	19
File Development (Electronic Filing system)	19
File Development (PowerDMS)	20
Numbering System	20
Electronic Submission Notation	21
Components of the Standards	21
Standards Containing the Word "If"	22
Critical Agency Functions performed for the Agency by Other Entities...	

Waiver from Standard Compliance	23
Proofs of Compliance	23
Minimization of Documentation	23
“Highlighting-Annotation”	23
CHAPTER 6 - Electronic Submission	24
Web Based Electronic Submission and Review of Proofs of Compliance	24
Electronic Submission Procedures	24
Viewing the Proofs Submitted	24
CHAPTER 7 - Maintaining Accredited Status	25
Annual Report and Review of Selected Standards	25
Renewing Accredited Status	25
Agency Re-Accreditation Process	26
CHAPTER 8 - New or Revised Standards	27
Reapplication for Accredited Status after Failure to Complete...	27
Interpretation of Standards and Appeal	27
CHAPTER 9 - Fees and Expenses	28
MCOPA Participation Required	28
Accreditation Program Annual Fees	28
CHAPTER 10 - MCOPA Accreditation Committee	29
Membership	29
Organization	29
Meetings	29
Voting	29
Appendix A – Travel Policy	31
Lodging	31
Meals	31
Other Expenses	31
Travel Expense Invoice	31

CHAPTER 1

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

The Maine Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (MLEAP) is a voluntary process where police agencies in Maine prove their compliance with Maine Law Enforcement's current Best Practices or Standards. These standards were carefully developed by Maine Law Enforcement professionals to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service and the protection of individual's rights.

The Maine Chiefs of Police Association (MCOPA) developed the Accreditation Program to assist Maine agencies in meeting their professional obligations to the citizens of Maine. An appointed Committee of CLEOs or other executive level sworn members who hold Active Membership in the MCOPA as well as other critical partners identified by the MCOPA Board of Directors from across the state developed the Accreditation Program and identified the Standards for Maine Law Enforcement. This committee now conducts reviews of an agency's efforts and awards "Accredited" status.

Being "Accredited" means that the agency meets or exceeds all the identified Standards for Maine Law Enforcement Agencies. These standards cover all aspects of law enforcement operations including use of force, protection of citizen rights, pursuits, property and evidence management, and patrol and investigative operations. While being "Accredited" does not guarantee an agency will not make a mistake, it does ensure that the agency has carefully thought about these critical issues, has developed policy and procedures to address them and has systems in place to identify and correct problems.

There are several benefits to becoming an "Accredited" police agency. Sworn members exercise government's most awesome powers – the power to stop and question a citizen, the power to arrest a citizen, to seize his person and property, and the power to use force in that process. Sworn members often operate alone without direct supervision. Law enforcement agencies direct and control their sworn members' activity through supervision, training, and written policies and procedures. Since supervisors cannot always be present, the training and the policies and procedures of an agency are critical to ensuring proper performance. Appropriate equipment is also necessary. The MLEAP ensures an agency has addressed the most critical of law enforcement issues in both policy as well as actual operation. MLEAP does not tell an agency what their policy must be, but rather it ensures that the policy, procedure, or operation addresses all the critical aspects of an issue.

MLEAP assures both governing bodies and citizens of a community that their law enforcement agency is operating in a manner that reflects the current best practices of law enforcement. It reduces sworn member and agency risks. It can provide citizens with reassurance and improve community cooperation – and can also lead to improved

performance of the department.

The Accreditation Process

An agency that has been awarded “Accredited” status has undertaken a careful internal review of all its policies and procedures, equipment, facilities, and operations and has then requested an outside review to prove their compliance with the standards. After an independent review of their written policies and proofs of compliance, a team of assessors is sent to the agency to review their operations, facilities, and to interview staff. A Final Report outlining the findings is sent to the Accreditation Committee. The committee reviews the findings and, if the agency meets all the standards, votes to award “Accredited” status.

The “Accredited” status is awarded for a three-year period. During the three-year period the agency must submit an annual report and maintain compliance of all the applicable standards. The findings are submitted to the Accreditation Committee for consideration to approve “Accredited” status for the next three years.

CALEA Agencies

While MLEAP is a standalone accrediting body, CALEA agencies within the State of Maine are highly encouraged to participate in the MLEAP Accreditation program. CALEA agencies desiring to participate will: pay a two-hundred and fifty dollar (\$250) annual fee; submit proof of CALEA accreditation every three years, submit proof of compliance for any MLEAP standard identified by the MLEAP Committee as substantially different from CALEA standards; and submit annual reports required by the MLEAP Accreditation program.

CHAPTER 2

PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used throughout the program manual:

MCOPA Accreditation Committee – A Committee of CLEOs or other executive level sworn members who hold Active Membership in the MCOPA as well as other critical partners identified by the MCOPA Board of Directors appointed by the MCOPA Board of Directors who make the decisions regarding the Program process, modifications and additions to Standards, and vote to award “Accredited” status to agencies which have proven compliance with standards.

MLEAP Program Coordinator – An individual with overall management oversight of the program and reports directly to the Accreditation Committee.

Agency Program Manager (PM) –The person designated by the CLEO to administer and oversee the Accreditation program for the Candidate Agency. This may be a sworn or non- sworn member of the agency or may be a community volunteer. In some agencies the Program Manager may be the CLEO.

Assessment – When a Candidate Agency has determined it has completed compliance with all the applicable standards the MLEAP Program Coordinator is advised and a team of assessors are assigned to assess the proofs of compliance. The number of assessors and the length of time needed to conduct the assessment will be determined by the MLEAP Program Coordinator.

Assessment Team Leader – CLEO, Command Level Officer (Second In Command), or an experienced assessor that has conducted a minimum of five assessments.

Assessors – CLEOs of Police, Command level officers, an officer who has applied, attained and maintains the MCJA Law Enforcement Intermediate Certificate, or Program Managers that have been trained specifically in the Assessment Process and have been carefully selected by the Accreditation Program to conduct assessments of candidate agencies.

Board of Directors – The governing Board of Directors of the MCOPA.

Candidate Agency – A Maine law enforcement agency that has contracted with the

MCOPA to assess their compliance with MLEAP.

Chief Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO) – The duly authorized top administrator of the law enforcement agency and is the highest-ranking executive for the law enforcement agency who possesses ultimate command authority for the operation of the agency.

Compliance Files – Files created for each Standard which contains the Candidate Agency's Proofs of Compliance with that standard.

Contract – An agreement between a Candidate Agency and the MCOPA whereby the MCOPA provides initial and ongoing evaluation of a candidate agency's compliance with each Standard and grants "Accredited" status.

Document Submission Form (DSF) – A form designed to facilitate and document submission of proofs of compliance and explain the content of the proofs submitted.

Electronic Submission Process – The method of submitting required proofs of compliance via PowerDMS and having those proofs reviewed and accepted prior to the Final Compliance Review.

Initial Meeting – Is an optional meeting between the Candidate Agency and an Assessor to start the Internal Review Process. The Assessor conducting the Initial Meeting will conduct an inspection of the agency facility to identify any physical or equipment issues which would pose a problem in gaining recognized status.

Internal Review Process – The process where a Candidate Agency reviews its policies, procedures, and operations to ensure it meets the Standards. Proofs of Compliance are collected and placed in Compliance Files. Many of the Proofs may be submitted electronically to the MLEAP Program Coordinator for acceptance.

MOCK Review – An onsite evaluation conducted by individuals involved in accreditation to assist an agency in preparation for an assessment. This informal review is designed to be voluntary for an agency and is completely controlled by the Candidate Agency.

Off-Site Compliance Review – An offsite evaluation by the assigned assessment team not associated with the Candidate Agency. This Off-Site Review will ensure compliance with Standard which requires electronic submission for confirmation of compliance.

On-Site Compliance Review – An onsite evaluation by the assigned assessment team

not associated with the Candidate Agency. This On-Site Review will ensure compliance with Standard which requires visual confirmation of compliance. The Team Leader prepares a report of their findings from the offsite and onsite review which is submitted to the Accreditation Committee for their action.

Power DMS – is a software development company and application service provider which is contracted through MCOPA for the accreditation process.

Proofs of Compliance – Any written or visual evidence which proves the agency is complying with the Standard(s). This can be written documentation, copies of reports, logs, and internal memorandums, interviews with agency employees, visual observation of activities, operations, facilities, equipment, or any other evidence which tends to prove the agency follows the Standards.

Standards – a compilation of law enforcement practices and requirements determined by the Accreditation Committee to be the most appropriate for Maine Law Enforcement agencies.

CHAPTER 3

APPLICATION PROCESS

Agency Preparation

The CLEO of an Agency which is pursuing Accreditation is required to attend an Accreditation Program Familiarization Course offered periodically. This program is intended to ensure the CLEO is fully aware of the program requirements.

Initially the CLEO should designate a Program Manager (PM). The Program Manager can be any sworn or non-sworn member of the department. The more familiar the Program Manager is with departmental operations, the easier the task will be. There are several factors to consider when choosing a PM. The CLEO should appoint an individual who:

- Has an interest in doing the job,
- Is computer literate,
- Is organized and efficient,
- Is capable of writing clearly and concisely,
- Is capable of formulating drafts of agency policy statements,
- Can deal effectively with all levels of agency management,
- In some cases, such as smaller agencies, the CLEO may be the Program Manager.

In addition to the CLEO attending the Accreditation Program Familiarization Course outlined above, the Program Manager must attend both the Accreditation Program Familiarization Course and the Program Manager/Assessor Course. It is recommended that the CLEO also attend this training, however it is not required unless the CLEO is the Program Manager. If the CLEO wishes to become an Assessor, this training is required.

This training is provided at the winter and fall conferences and occasional regional training programs around the state. Listings of upcoming training programs as well as the standards are maintained on the MCOPA website at www.mainechiefs.com under the tab "MLEAP".

The agency should thoroughly review the standards to ensure they will be able to meet all the requirements. The most current standards manual was provided to all Maine agencies at no charge on the MCOPA website.

Compliance Processes

The Electronic Submission Process is a method which allows agencies to submit over two-thirds of their proofs of compliance electronically (those designated as “E” or “EV”) and the MLEAP Program Coordinator will direct the agency when to submit the PDF electronic submission, the PowerDMS access will be coordinated at the time of the Off-Site Review. This provides the opportunity for the agency to reduce the time needed for the On-Site Review, thereby saving the department additional travel expense.

Application

Agencies that have attended the Familiarization program and have had their Program Manager attend Manager/Facilitator training may make formal application. The agency should download an MLEAP Application from the MCOPA website. The completed application should then be sent to the Maine Chiefs of Police Association at the address listed on the bottom of the application.

Submission of Application to the Committee

The MCOPA will review the applications received and will submit the applications to the MCOPA Accreditation Committee. If the agency has already completed its Internal Review Process and has all files ready for inspection, the Accreditation Committee will approve the application and direct the MLEAP Program Coordinator to select an assessment team for the agency.

As soon as the agency is approved for entry, the MLEAP Program Coordinator will have a contract mailed to the agency. The contract should be completed and signed by both the governmental entity CEO and the department CLEO. As soon as the contract is completed and returned with the first-year program fees, the MLEAP Program Coordinator will contact the agency and provide submission instructions and arrange for scheduling an initial meeting if requested.

Expect Agency Change

The Program Manager (PM) is a key change agent. The CLEO should also be aware that accreditation is a task in which the entire agency participates. CLEOs cannot simply assign this task to someone in the organization and forget about it. Because the CLEO makes final policy decisions, and presumably knows more about the department than most, their active participation is essential.

CLEOs are encouraged to hold regular briefings on accreditation status. The PM will also serve as an information liaison. The CLEO may also want to schedule time at regular staff meetings for the PM to bring staff up to date on progress and address problem areas.

Some agencies may find it useful to assign agency staff to conduct policy reviews in certain areas to assist the PM.

The PM should make every effort to visit other accredited agencies. The information gathered will prove to be invaluable.

The standards developed by the Accreditation Committee should serve as a blueprint for agency policy. They are not, however, the only resource the agency should explore. Maine law enforcement agencies have an excellent reputation regarding the sharing of information, especially in policy development. Law enforcement agencies that have a long-term commitment to accreditation efforts can serve as a tremendous resource to those departments just starting the process. New PM's seeking advice should never hesitate to contact other agencies involved in the accreditation process or the accreditation staff.

CHAPTER 4

INTERNAL REVIEW AND ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Agency Initial Meeting

Because some of the standards require specific facility and equipment standards to be met, an Initial Meeting is recommended to ensure the agency is aware of their needs in these areas. Facility and equipment issues can be costly, and agencies should know well in advance if any standard requirements will require additional budgeting efforts. A local trained assessor conducts the initial visit to ensure the agency is aware of the documentation process and conduct a facility inspection.

Internal Review Process

Once an agency has been accepted into the program, they begin reviewing and developing policy and collecting documentation as proof of compliance. There is no reason an agency cannot begin development of policies and procedures that meet the standards prior to their official application or acceptance into the program. Submission or review can then be completed quickly once an agency is accepted into the program and the overall review process shortened significantly.

Agencies accepted into the program are expected to complete their internal review and have their assessment within two years from their date of acceptance.

File Requirements

The MLEAP Standards are available on-line at no charge. Candidate agencies must develop an electronic filing system using PowerDMS electronic standards manual for each standard and will maintain Proof of Compliance for each standard in the respective file for each year. The details of the file construction and maintenance process are covered in Chapter 5 of this manual.

An agency may request that a standard, originally designed to be submitted electronically (E or EV), be viewed on site instead if the documentation is voluminous or part of the proof cannot be submitted electronically. File copies of all submissions are maintained by the agency even if reviewed and accepted electronically.

The self-assessment will typically begin as an exercise in comparison. The Program

Manager (PM) starts comparing current agency policy to the accreditation standards. Many managers will quickly conclude that the agency is closer to compliance than anticipated. Law enforcement typically adapts to the ebb and flow of legislative changes and most agencies quickly adopt policy that is consistent with the law. As the PM compares what must be covered for the accreditation purposes, he/she will probably find that some fine-tuning is necessary.

Compile Supportive Documentation

There are several ways to prove compliance on most standards. If a standard requires a Written Directive, the agency's directive must cover all aspects or requirements of the standard. Other proofs of compliance with the directive (items that prove the agency is complying with their own directive) must be included to show full compliance with the standard.

Written Directives — Usually a policy or general order of the department issued by the CLEO, generally codified in the department's Operating Manual. It can also be local ordinances, state laws, civil service rules, collective bargaining agreements, city personnel rules or other written material that requires employee compliance.

Written Documentation — Examples of written documents include, but are not limited to lesson plans, memos, logbooks, emails, state law sections, or judicial policies and law. Agency policy is usually considered a written directive and will most often be the first item the PM has available to prove compliance.

Other Documentation — May include photographs, log sheets, agency forms, training rosters, evidence bags or any number of other items.

Interviews — Interviews may be conducted by the assessment team. For example, the director of personnel for the jurisdiction may be listed as a potential interview to prove compliance with certain personnel standards. The lead dispatcher may be listed as the best source of information on dispatch responsibilities during high-speed pursuits. Listing the names of individuals does not ensure that the assessment team will interview the person. However, if the team does choose to interview the suggested person, the PM has already supplied them with the name (and proper spelling) of the person to be interviewed. This makes the assessor's job easier and that makes the assessment go faster.

Observation — This type of proof is the easiest for the assessor and probably the least utilized. There are several standards where simply observing the action or a piece of equipment is proof that the agency follows the standard. PM's should be aware that assessors are not required to settle for a single proof of compliance unless it is

overwhelming in nature. The wise PM will list proofs in at least two categories, and in some cases, all four categories. The more ways a PM can show the agency is truly doing what they say they are doing, the better. The assessors will be looking to find compliance with the first few items they look at in the folder. Having additional proofs will never hurt, but not having enough is a common shortcoming.

Train Agency Personnel in Policy Changes

If policy changes are necessary, it is imperative that all members of the department receive a copy and be trained in those changes. This receipt of a copy of a directive or training should always be documented and maintained by the agency. The PM may want to have other agency personnel present the changes (including the CLEO or other high-ranking officer) or may simply coordinate with shift commanders. The important point is that agency personnel know about newly adopted policy as soon as possible. Any new policy should include a training component for those it affects. Depending on the type of policy change, training may be formal classroom training, Roll Call Training, or even Roll Call Training Bulletins if there is documentation that the individuals received the training. The PM should remember that the assessment team may desire to interview agency rank and file on the issue addressed.

Electronic Submission of Proofs of Compliance

The notation next to the standard title (E, EV, or V) indicates which standards are approved for electronic submission. An “E” indicates the standard may be submitted electronically. An “EV” indicates the standard may be submitted electronically, but it will also be reviewed on-site by the On-Site Review Team. A “V” notation indicates the file will be reviewed by the On-Site Team. An agency may request an electronic submission standard be reviewed on-site due to the amount of proof required to show compliance. If electronic submission is allowed, the following process is used.

Each proof of compliance will be uploaded into PowerDMS electronic standards manual. If a standard has multiple parts or requirements, the candidate agency must show compliance with each part of the standard. The Proofs of Compliance may be listed as Item 1, 2, 3, etc. within the “Attach Compliance Documents” within the PowerDMS Assessment portal.

Proofs of Compliance for some standards will be clear and obvious. However, if the agency has any question concerning the documentation or the level of proof required, they should review the “Discussion” section of the standard for clarification. The MLEAP Program Coordinator may also be contacted for clarification of what might be required. Participation in the User’s Group can also assist Program Managers in the understanding what is required for proof of compliance.

If the documentation submitted is believed to be insufficient in proving compliance, the Off-Site Review Team shall contact the Program Manager and discuss the issue. The team may suggest other documentation or other adjustments that would prove compliance. If compliance cannot be determined the team leader will document the finding in the final report.

Extensions

Once the application is made the Candidate agency should have performed an internal review and be somewhat ready for the assessment. Along with the initial Application the first-year fee is due and will be due annually on the same date. Therefore, with this understanding and the number of new agencies and re-accreditation MLEAP will have to perform each year, extensions following the two-year deadline of Accreditation will not typically be accepted.

Assessment

When the agency has submitted and received acceptance of all standards recommended for electronic submission and believes it has all on site review requirements completed, they should schedule their assessment. The MLEAP Program Coordinator will identify the number needed to conduct the assessment and select the team members. A team leader will be identified and determine the assignments for the members. The Off-Site Review will begin, and the Program Coordinator will schedule the On-Site Review with the team members and the candidate agency.

The MLEAP Program Coordinator will select a Team Leader (TL) Assessor and other Assessor's from another area in Maine that has no personal connection with the Candidate Agency. The team will travel to the agency and conduct the On-Site Review by visually confirming the compliance with the remaining Standards where documentation has not been previously submitted. The Team may be required to reconfirm compliance with standards where documentation has previously been submitted.

The TL will be the contact person for the team and shall moderate all discussions regarding compliance issues. The PM will be expected to be available to discuss issues anytime the team is working.

If the agency has electronically submitted all standards allowed, the On-Site Review may require two assessors for one or two days. The team will meet agency personnel and begin their tour and review of the agency. The team will conclude their review with an exit interview with department leadership, and the team then travels back to their respective agencies.

The assessment team will need a room or office to conduct their work. Preferably this room would need to have internet access, power, and easy access to the PM. Members of the team may want to attend shift change, ride along with officers, and/or interview members of the agency not scheduled for interview. This means the entire agency needs to be prepared for these possibilities. The team is instructed to weigh all responses to queries. The PM should arrange to attend shift briefings prior to the assessment and brief the department members on the upcoming assessment and what to expect.

Program Managers should be aware that the on-site team may not be restricted in their access to department facilities or personnel, nor are they required to use only the means recommended by the agency to determine compliance.

The team will conduct an exit interview prior to departure. The CLEO of the agency will determine who should attend this exit interview. At this meeting, the agency will be advised of the final recommendation the team will give the committee.

If the agency failed to meet standards, the committee can grant up to a ninety (90) day extension. If there are disputed compliance issues, the agency has the option of presenting their case to the committee.

The Team Leader assigned to the Assessment will prepare a report to the MLEAP Program Coordinator within 10 business days from the On-Site Review visit.

The expense of the Assessment Team, including any necessary overnight accommodations, is the responsibility of the candidate agency. The MCOPA will invoice the candidate agency afterward.

Committee Review and Award

Upon receipt of the final report from the Team Leader, the MLEAP Program Coordinator will prepare a summary report of the agency's status and readiness for committee review. The MLEAP Program Coordinator will electronically forward the summary report and the final review report to the committee chairperson. A copy of the report will also be forwarded to the candidate agency.

The candidate agency will be advised by the MLEAP Program Coordinator of the date the agency will be required to appear at the hearing before the accreditation committee. The CLEO and Program Manager are expected to attend the hearing. The accreditation committee may have questions for the candidate agency to answer. The accreditation committee will meet after the hearing and determine the accreditation status for the agency. Agencies which are nationally accredited with CALEA will not be required to attend a

hearing.

NOW WHAT?

You have done it — congratulations! Now enjoy the benefits.

Accreditation Term

Accredited status is awarded for a three (3) year term. Requirements for maintaining accredited status is provided in Chapter 7.

Official Accreditation

The agency will be identified and introduced as an “Accredited” agency at the Maine Chiefs of Police Association Winter and Fall Conferences. The agency will also be listed on the Maine Chiefs of Police Association website as an accredited agency.

Certificate Presentation

The agency will receive a framed Certificate of Accreditation. Additional certificates are available at the agency cost should an agency have more than one facility.

Local awards can be made within the agency’s city at either a city council meeting or dinner if requested. Local awards would be presented by a member of the accreditation committee or MLEAP Program Coordinator depending upon scheduling. Expenses for the individual making the presentation are the responsibility of the candidate agency.

Accredited Agency Logo

MLEAP Program Coordinator will provide the program manager with camera-ready copies of the official “Accredited Agency” seal. This logo may be displayed on agency letterhead, web pages or any other official manner.

CHAPTER 5

STANDARDS PROOF AND COMPLIANCE

Standards

The standards are compiled in a separate document for ease of review and study. The standards are reviewed annually and updated as necessary. New or revised standards must be complied with as indicated in Chapter 8 of this manual.

File Development (PowerDMS)

File construction will be taught during PowerDMS training.

Numbering System

Standards are numbered according to their placement within the chapter and section to which they apply. For example, in the standard number 1.02, the “1” refers to the chapter, Administration and Organization, and the “.02” corresponds to the chronological order of the standard within this chapter, Budget.

Proofs of Compliance number(s) are located below each Proof of Compliance section. Numbers beside each Proof - (1), (2), (3) etc. - correspond to the Proof of Compliance of which each number must be met. Tabbed below some numbers are small letter(s) which are options to the Proof of Compliance - (a), (b), (c). One of these must be met (but as stated previously all these proofs would add more weight to the Standard being met above and beyond.)

Examples on how to label a Standard Proof of Compliance within the department's electronic filing system is below:

1.01(1) Copy of Organizational Chart.

1.01 is the Standard number. (1) Is the first (chronological) proof that must be met:

1.02(1) Copy of directive Budget responsibility

1.02 is the Standard number. (1) Is the first (chronological) proof that must be met:

2.06(3a) Copy of IA investigation.

2.06 is the Standard number. (3a) is an option proof listed under "3".

Electronic Submission Notation

Immediately adjacent to the Standard number and Title is a notation indicating whether the standard is authorized for electronic submission (E), is authorized for electronic submission and on-site review (EV), or an on-site standard (V).

Components of the Standards

Standards Statement - The standards are identified by its specific number, such as 1.02. The Standards statement then presents the requirements of the standard. The standard may contain several separate requirements. Each of the separate requirements must be addressed in the agency's directive (policy statement) or operations and proof of compliance is needed for each requirement.

Standards Containing the Word "If"

Some standards are conditional or "if" standards. For instance, if the law enforcement agency does not have a Special Response Team, then the agency is not required to develop a detailed policy regarding the selection of members. The agency must, however, create a file folder and a Document Submission Form under the appropriate standard number, indicating that the agency does not have a Special Response Team.

Critical Agency Functions performed for the Agency by Other Entities Must Still Meet Standards

If Communications or Property and Evidence functions are performed by agencies other than the candidate agency, the agency performing those functions must meet the standards for those functions. Because these functions provide critical services to both the officers of the candidate agency and the citizens of the community, these standards must still be met. The candidate agency must provide the appropriate evidence of compliance and the Final

Review Team may need to make site visits to those providing agencies during the Final Review.

If a candidate agency does not have a holding facility, where prisoners are booked in and kept without constant supervision, and instead uses another agency facility, they may show most of Chapter 10 as Not Applicable, IF the holding facility used is subject to the Maine State Jail Standards Act. Several standards within Chapter 10 will still apply to the agency.

Standards 10.01, 10.02, 10.03 and 10.22 still apply to the candidate agency. Standard 10.10 still applies to the candidate agency to the extent that the prisoner's property is cared for until released to the holding agency. Standard 10.12 still applies to the candidate agency to the extent that officers are instructed on how and when to obtain medical aid for a prisoner prior to release to the holding agency. The agency must also comply with 10.14 and 10.15 regarding strip or body cavity searches. If these actual searches are performed for the candidate agency by another agency at the jail, the candidate agency must still have a policy on when and how requested and if they are to be performed prior to arrival at the jail.

If the agency used by the candidate agency to hold prisoners is not subject to the Maine State Jail Standards Act, the Candidate Agency must comply with all of Chapter 10.

Waiver from Standard Compliance

Waivers of Standards are not granted by the committee. The standards were designed to be minimum requirements for agencies in Maine. Agencies should carefully review the standards manual and resolve any questions before making application.

Proofs of Compliance

Proofs of Compliance are those methods used by the candidate agency to prove they comply with the standards and their own policies. Proofs can be written documentation, copies of logs, sign-off sheets, photographs, visual inspections or interviews with agency staff. Most of the standards can have documentation submitted electronically, but some will require visual inspection during the onsite Final Review. The electronic submission process is outlined in the following chapter. This chapter addresses the content and construction of Proofs of Compliance.

Minimization of Documentation

While each part of a standard must be proven individually and completely, the minimum

number and number of documents should be submitted which accomplishes that purpose. If submitting a part of a document such as a policy, the agency should submit a copy of at least one complete page and not cut and paste only the two sentences which apply. This allows the reviewers to see that it is part of a larger policy and the context for the statements. If a standard requires proof of training, a sample of two or three certificates or a departmental sign in sheet showing training may be submitted as acceptable proof. The agency should be aware that the Final Review team may request to see proof of entire agency training on any issue (all members) when on site.

“Highlighting-Annotation” Matching Proof within a Policy, Directive, Memo, etc.

Microsoft Word and Adobe allows for yellow highlighting to be used on any text. Agencies are expected to highlight the specific sections (sentences, paragraphs, pages) of a document which specifically proves compliance. If an entire document is needed to prove compliance, highlighting is unnecessary.

CHAPTER 6

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Web Based Electronic Submission and Review of Proofs of Compliance

The Accreditation Program maintains a web-based system of submitting and reviewing most proofs of compliance, PowerDMS®. Training on the use of the system is provided in the Program Manager/ Assessor Training Program and the agency receives access information when it contracts with PowerDMS®.

Proofs are submitted using the software package which has been customized to allow submitting agencies to review all the proofs they have submitted, to determine if they have been accepted, and to review information posted about the program.

The Accreditation Program's web-based system was designed for ease of administration and to reduce the amount of on-site time necessary to observe compliance. This saves the agency money by reducing on-site expenses. While most proofs of compliance may be submitted and accepted electronically, the on-site proofs (and possibly some proofs already accepted electronically) may still require physical examination to confirm compliance. The electronic submission process, therefore, does not relieve the agency of keeping complete files on all standards. Agencies must maintain electronic files on all standards while participating in the program. These files need to be maintained throughout the three-year period in order to facilitate re- accredited.

Electronic Submission Procedures

Agencies submit proofs electronically by first ensuring their documents showing compliance (such as a General Order or Policy) are in electronic format and have the appropriate areas highlighted. Each requirement of a standard must be clearly met and a different document showing proof of compliance may be necessary for each. PDF files or photographs submitted as proofs can be submitted as an additional attachment when submitting the file on-line.

Viewing the Proofs Submitted

Under the PowerDMS® Assessment tab, the Program Manager can review the proofs of compliance previously submitted by clicking on Status. The status of each proof indicated whether it has been Accepted, Rejected, or Request more info.

CHAPTER 7

MAINTAINING ACCREDITED STATUS

Annual Report and Review of Selected Standards

Accredited status is awarded for a three (3) year period. During this period the agency must continue to comply with the standards.

Most program files will not need any updating during the three-year period; however, agencies are required to keep up with the activities required by the program and by their own policies. In other words, if the agency created a policy to conduct quarterly inspections of specialized equipment, then the agency must follow through with those inspections. Proof that they were done does not have to be placed in accreditation files but are usually filed in the department's administrative files after review by the CLEO.

Should an agency fail to submit these proofs in a timely manner, the MLEAP Program Coordinator will query the agency. Failure to promptly submit the required proofs, annual fees, or other issues which provide proof that an agency is not complying with standards will result in the MLEAP Program Coordinator notifying the members of the Accreditation Committee. Action of the Committee may revoke accredited status.

Renewing Accredited Status

During the last twelve months of the three-year cycle, if the agency wishes to renew their accredited status, the agency is required to provide documentation and Proofs of Compliance for all standards as they did during initial accreditation.

Since all re-accredited agencies have been through the process at least once already, they should be familiar with the file requirements and proofs of compliance.

The agency must apply for re-accreditation using the application form found on the Program Website and a new contract will be executed for the next three-year period. The MLEAP Program Coordinator is the primary contact for the agency during this re-accreditation renewal process. An assessment and committee review will be conducted in the same manner as in the initial process.

Agency Re-Accreditation Process

Agencies should first begin with a review of each file. The following steps should be taken to ensure a complete review and compliance with the standards.

1. Review the most current Standards Manual and compare the standard and proof of compliance requirements with those already in the file. Be aware that several standards have changed, new standards have been added, and minimum requirements for acceptance may have been modified since the last time the agency was reviewed.
2. Collect any new proofs of compliance needed. Make sure the proofs required for showing compliance are present and are within the assessment period prior to the anticipated on-site.
3. If desired, the agency may submit the following files for review through the electronic web- based submission system prior to the assessment:
 - a. Any new standard not previously reviewed,
 - b. Standards 3.02; 3.04; 3.09; 6.01; 6.02; 6.10; 7.13; 7.14; and 12.08.
 - c. Any standard where the agency has changed their directive since the last review.
4. Agencies are encouraged to conduct a Mock Assessment with other area Program Managers prior to the Final Review.
5. Program managers should note that many files may already contain proofs that will be required for this and subsequent reviews. For instance, a Charter provision designating the creation of the agency may already be present in the file. However, where training or periodic activity is required, the agency must show that these activities have occurred within the previous 12-month period. (New employees trained in required policies or provided copies, etc.)

Agencies wishing to renew their Accredited Status must schedule their assessment at least 30 days prior to the expiration date of their accredited status. All proofs of compliance for this review must be dated within the assessment period.

CHAPTER 8

NEW OR REVISED STANDARDS

Law enforcement is an ever-changing process. As such, it is anticipated that modifications and additions will be made to the standards over time. The accreditation committee is charged with the responsibility of keeping the standards up to date and consistent with best law enforcement practices. The committee may consider at their periodic meetings, any change, modification, or additions to the standards. Any CLEO, Assessor, MLEAP Program Coordinator, or accredited agency may suggest or recommend modifications or additions.

When additions or modifications to the standards are made, the committee will decide an effective date for the addition or modification. The committee will also determine if the currently accredited agencies must meet the new or modified standard. If currently accredited agencies are required to meet the new or modified standard, the committee will establish a time frame for compliance and the agencies notified. Otherwise, agencies already in accredited status must comply with the revision or modification at their next accreditation renewal.

Reapplication for Accredited Status after Failure to Complete Review Process or After Revocation

Agencies which fail to complete the initial review process within the 24 months allowed, or who have lost their accredited status due to any other action of the accreditation committee can reapply after six months from the date of the action. The committee will again act upon the application without prejudice as in any other application action.

Interpretation of Standards and Appeal

The MLEAP Program Coordinator is charged with the interpretation of standards and the determination of enough proof of compliance. From time to time, different interpretations may be raised by candidate agencies. The final authority on the interpretation of standards and proofs of compliance is the accreditation committee. If an agency requests, the MLEAP Program Coordinator will request an interpretation of a standard or proof of compliance from the accreditation committee.

CHAPTER 9

FEES AND EXPENSES

MCOPA Participation Required

To participate in the program, the agency CLEO must be a member of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. Membership also provides numerous other benefits including legal updates, legislative representation on law enforcement issues, training, and access to CLEOs around the state to assist in solving problems.

Accreditation Program Annual Fees

Accreditation Program annual fee is \$500.00, this is a set fee regardless on the size of the agency. CALEA agencies the annual fee is \$250.00.

After acceptance of the contract by the committee, the agency will be billed for their first year's fees. These annual costs will subsequently be billed each year.

The agency is also responsible for the expenses of the assessor initial visit and the assessment team. (This expense is incurred every three years.) Assessors are generally located close by and seldom result in any expense.

Travel expenses for the Facilitator and Assessment Team are controlled by the Program Travel Expense Policy and will be reimbursed immediately upon final approval of the expense report. The candidate agency will subsequently be billed with a single itemized invoice after the assessment.

CHAPTER 10

MCOPA ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Membership

The MCOPA Accreditation Committee manages the overall operation of the MLEAP Program and presents awards to qualifying agencies. The committee is under the direct supervision of the MCOPA Board of Directors. The committee establishes and approves standards of best business practices for Maine Law Enforcement; develops and manages a system for accepting applications for accreditation; develops and manages a system for evaluating candidate agency's compliance with the established standards; and awards accredited status to agencies that have adequately proven compliance with the established standards of best business practices.

Organization

The Committee is composed of a body of members appointed by the MCOPA Board of Directors. Committee members consists of five Chiefs of Police, one of whom shall serve as chairperson, a sheriff, a representative of state law enforcement who is a command level sworn law enforcement officers, and a representative of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. Non-voting members of the committee shall include the Executive Director of the Association, two program managers who are not CLEO's and the MLEAP Program Coordinator. Recording duties are performed by the MLEAP Program Coordinator. The Chair is appointed each year by the Board.

Meetings

The committee will meet as needed to consider the business of the committee. The committee may act electronically if approved by the Chairperson.

Voting

A quorum exists when at least five (5) voting members of the committee are present. Decisions are made based on a simple majority of those present and voting.

When issues are submitted to the committee members for electronic vote, a time limit shall be established by the chairperson, and most of those voting within the time limit shall decide the issue. A minimum of five committee members voting within the time period is required for a quorum and decision.

Committee members who have a personal relationship with the candidate agency or the candidate agency CLEO will abstain from voting on accreditation for that agency. If a tie vote occurs, the decision is postponed until all committee members can vote. If a member cannot vote for any reason, the tie is broken by the President of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association.

APPENDIX A

TRAVEL POLICY

Accreditation Committee Members, MLEAP Program Coordinator, and Assessment Team members will adhere to the following travel policies.

Travel

Travel to and from an agency or event under this program will be at the lowest possible expense. If travelers use a personal vehicle, they will be reimbursed at the current state rate for total mileage. Airfare and car rental must be approved in advance by the Executive Director for the MCOPA.

Lodging

Every effort should be made to select lodging at the current state rate. Anticipated lodging rates at more than state rate must have prior approval of the MLEAP Program Coordinator. Receipts for lodging must be submitted. The program will not reimburse exceptional expenses such as in room movies.

Meals

Members will receive the following stipend for meals during performing Committee business (no receipts required); Breakfast - \$15.00, Lunch - \$18.00, and Dinner - \$25.00. *These amounts are subject to adjustment by Program Director to align with Federal Per Diem rates.

Other Expenses

Other necessary and required expenses may be reimbursed with prior approval of the MLEAP Program Coordinator.

Travel Expense Invoice

Upon completion of travel, a Travel Expense Invoice should be prepared and submitted to the MCOPA Executive Director along with all required receipts within five business days of

return from travel. Director will then pay the assessor and bill the candidate agency for the travel amounts.

APPENDIX D: Standard Change History

December 2020 – Release of Edition 3

Approved by the MLEAP Committee and the Maine Chiefs of Police Executive Board.

Language change to the definition of Assessors

ASSESSORS – CLEOs of Police, Command level officers, an officer who has applied, attained and maintains the MCJA Law Enforcement Intermediate Certificate, or Program Managers that have been trained specifically in the Assessment Process and have been carefully selected by the Accreditation Program to conduct assessments of candidate agencies.

Definition Added -

ASSESSMENT TEAM LEADER – CLEO, Command Level Officer (Second In Command), or an experienced assessor that has conducted a minimum of five assessments.

November 4, 2021- Release of Edition 4

1. **Removed** PDF electronic files as proofs, requiring participating agencies to utilize PowerDMS Electronic Standards Manual for assessment.
2. **Removed** the requirement for agencies to submit an annual report to the MLEAP Committee regarding staying in compliance.