

BASIC PEACE OFFICER COURSE (BPOC)

Rules, Policies, and Procedures



LRGVDC Administrative location:



301 W. Railroad ST.
Weslaco, TX 78596



956-682-3481

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ACADEMY OVERVIEW:

The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) operates the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy with over 50 years of experience administering training resources and programs for the development of qualified law enforcement officers throughout the region.

The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) Governments pledges to provide support services and programs including quality of life projects benefiting the Rio Grande Valley and surrounding region. Formed in 1967 through a merger of the Texas Southmost Economic Development District and the Lower Rio Grande Valley Council of Governments, the LRGVDC is one of twenty-four (24) State Planning Regions codified pursuant to the Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 391. The designated geographical service area is comprised of the 3,643 square miles of Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties with a U.S. Census estimated population of 1,3 million. The LRGVDC is active in the fields of economic and industrial development, homeland security, criminal justice and law enforcement training, transportation planning and transit services, solid waste planning, water quality and quantity planning, services for the elderly, health, emergency communication, regional training, and disaster recovery. Funding to support these programs is obtained from local, state, and federal sources.

The Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy (Academy) Program within the Public Safety Department administers the Basic Peace Officer Certification (BPOC) course as stipulated by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE). Currently, the BPOC is determined by TCOLE at a minimum of 720 contact hours. The Basic Peace Officer Course program offers both licensing courses and continuing education courses.

The in-service is again being offered throughout the region in cooperation with various law enforcement agencies. As an example, between November 1, 2021, and November 1, 2022, 111 classes with total a of 24,203 contact hours were conducted with over 1,511 officers receiving training. The Academy continues its efforts to exceed the minimum standard required by the state and provides a high quality, comprehensive cadet academy as well as in-service training.

The Academy Program will continue to support existing law enforcement officers and public safety departments across the Rio Grande Valley with in-service training to ensure the ongoing continuing education courses mandated by the State of Texas are performed. These professional training and development courses feature courses such as Crime Scene Investigation, Interview and Interrogations, Human Trafficking, Crisis Intervention, and various Instructor Courses.

LRGVDC has partnerships with law enforcement agencies throughout the region such as the cities of Edinburg, Harlingen, Mission, and Weslaco at the LRGVDC Headquarters to provide instructors and training site locations that offer accessible day & night training locations across the Rio Grande Valley.

Our primary goal is to provide a premier, valuable training resource for citizens of the area and produce highly qualified, professional law enforcement officers to serve and protect the citizens of the Rio Grande Valley.

Introduction:

The LRGV Academy utilizes a wide variety of law enforcement instructors and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to provide a comprehensive and diverse academy to incorporate the expertise from some of the finest training officials in the region.

LRGVDC administers the Basic Peace Officer Course (BPOC) Academy to provide cadets with the essential knowledge and foundational skills necessary to begin a career in law enforcement in addition to preparing for the required State Peace Officer Licensing Exam. The LRGVDC – Academy’s goal is to provide a premium and valuable training resource for our citizens of the area to produce a highly qualified professional law enforcement officer to serve and protect our citizens of the Rio Grande Valley. The LRGVDC BPOC Rules Handbook represents the integrity, compliance, and commitment to learning all potential law enforcement officers.

Contained within this document are the rules, regulations, and expectations of BPOC Cadets, including the standards held by the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy in compliance with TCOLE Academy Training Provider Contract. This handbook will also include the appointment of an Advisory Board, appointment of a qualified training coordinator, the Commission’s minimum enrollment and training standards, instructor guides and lesson plans, and reporting.

The LRGV Academy BPOC Rules, Policy and Procedures Handbooks serves as the Basic Peace Officer Course rules, policies and procedures and all Cadets must abide by the policies set forth or may face the appropriate disciplinary action, including failure to successfully complete academy.

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PROCEDURE 1.0: BPOC CADET ELIGIBILITY

1.1 Citizenship:

Applicants must be a United States Citizen. Acceptable proof of Citizenship includes:

- a. Birth Certificate.
- b. Naturalization Certificate; or
- c. Active U.S. Passport

1.2 Minimum age requirements:

- a. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age prior to the “end of course” review date of the selected academy.
- b. Or 18 years of age.
 - If the applicant has received an associate degree or 60 semester hours of credit from an accredited college or university.
- c. Acceptance can be granted if the applicant has received an honorable discharge from the armed forces of the United States after at least two years of active service.

Note: Rules are subject to change, and it is the responsibility of the cadet to adhere and understand that TCOLE rules supersede the academy’s rule upon taking the state exam.

1.3 Minimum Educational Requirement:

Applicants must provide documentation for one of the following.

- a. High school diploma or High school transcripts.
- b. General educational development (GED) completion document.
- c. Or documentation of successful completion of a home school education to be equivalent to graduation from a public high school
- d. For enrollment purposes in a basic peace officer academy only, has an Honorable Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States after at least 24 months of active-duty service.

1.4 Criminal Background Requirements (FAST Fingerprints & DPS Driving Record)

Applicants must complete a fingerprint and DPS Driving Record to verify each of the following:

- a. Is not currently charged with any criminal offense for which conviction would be a bar to licensure.
- b. Has never been on court-ordered community supervision or probation for any criminal offense above the grade of Class B misdemeanor or a Class B misdemeanor within the last ten years (10) from the date of the court order.
- c. Has never been convicted of an offense above the grade of a Class B misdemeanor or a Class B misdemeanor within the last ten (10) years.
- d. Has never been convicted or placed on community supervision in any court of an offense involving family violence as defined under Chapter 71, Texas Family Code.
- e. Is not prohibited by state or federal law from operating a motor vehicle; (must possess a valid Texas Driver’s License).
- f. Is not prohibited by state or federal law from possessing firearms or ammunition.
- g. Has never received a dishonorable or other discharge based on misconduct with bars future

military service.

- h. Has not been subjected to a background investigation.

Fingerprint results are not decided by the academy and are solely based on the applicant's status on their criminal history records. Should a court document be needed, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact and provide the court documents to the TCOLE representative in a timely manner. The fingerprint results are final and cannot be altered in any way by the Academy.

1.5 Disqualifiers

Applicants will be disqualified for the following as it is related to their employment history.

1. Applicants must demonstrate maturity, dependability, integrity, good work ethic, and loyalty to their past and present employers.
2. The applicant's employment history from age seventeen (17) must not indicate instability in the applicant's employment history on more than three instances of: excessive tardiness or absenteeism; inefficiency; failure to follow directions, policies and procedures, and rules and regulations; poor working relationships; and/or negligent work habits.
3. Applicants disqualified under the above cause may reapply after One year from the date of disqualification.
4. Applicants must not have been terminated, asked to resign, or resigned from any previous employment for engaging in inappropriate or unlawful behavior, including but not limited to any of the following:
 - a. Assault
 - b. Discriminatory or Retaliatory Acts...
 - c. Disorderly Conduct or other breaches of the peace
 - d. Sex Crimes
 - e. Sexual Harassment
 - f. Theft
 - g. Threats
 - h. Any Felony Offense
 - i. Any offense involving acts of moral turpitude.
5. Applicants disqualified under the above may reapply two (2) years from the separation date of the most recent employer for which this cause was grounds for disqualification.
6. Applicants must not have been employed or engaged in any occupation deemed illegal by the state or federal law.
7. Applicants disqualified due to employment in an illegal occupation may reapply after three (3) years from the last date of their illegal employment.
8. Applicants who are under a current internal investigation by their employer will not be accepted until the internal investigation process by their employer is complete and the applicant is clear, in which case refer to # 4 and # 5 If applicable.

False Statements of Material Fact

Applicants will be disqualified for the following as it relates to false statements:

1. Applicants must be truthful and honest in their responses to all inquiries relative to their suitability for employment.

2. Applicants found to have withheld material information, and/or practiced or attempted to practice any deception with fraud in their application or examination are disqualified.
3. Applicants disqualified under this cause are eligible to reapply after 1 year from their date of disqualification.
4. Applicants who fail to disclose or omit any information of previous convictions or arrests in their Personal history statement, whether Juvenile or adult section, will be disqualified for 1 year. There will be no exceptions.

Use of Illicit Substances

To be deemed suitable, applicants must show no trace of drug dependency or illegal drug use after a physical examination, urine test, blood test, or other medical test designed to detect the presence of controlled substances. Applicants are disqualified for the following as it relates to the use of illicit substances:

1. Used marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids or any other unprescribed illegal drug for the purpose of recreation or intoxication:
 - Any time during the twenty-four (24) months prior to submitting their application to the Academy.
2. Used paint, glue, or other inhalants for the purpose of intoxication:
 - Any time during the twenty-four (24) months prior to submitting their application to the Academy.
3. Any time during the twenty-four (24) months prior to submitting their application to the Academy, have used any hallucinogenic drugs, including, but not limited to LSD, STP, or Psilocybin.
4. Any time during the twenty-four (24) months prior to submitting their application to the Academy abused or illegally used prescription medicines for the purpose of intoxication or recreation, whether prescribed to them or another person or otherwise:
5. Any time during the twenty-four (24) months prior to submitting their application to the Academy, have used cocaine.
6. Any Applicant disqualified under these subchapters will be disqualified for one (1) year or depending on the severity, indefinitely.

Criminal Activity

Applicants will be disqualified if they:

1. Are under indictment for a felony offense.
2. Are currently under investigation for, or are considered a suspect in, any criminal offense which if convicted would be a disqualification.
3. Have an outstanding warrant for their arrest for any criminal offense to include traffic warrants.

Temperate Habits

Applicants/cadets reflect the high standards required of a professional police officer and must demonstrate moderation of self-restraint in their personal, social, and public affairs, to include social media. Additionally, Applicants / cadets must not exhibit violent outburst, partisanship, and lack of self-control. Should an applicant be under the influence of alcohol they must demonstrate extreme temperance and portray respect for others, dignity, and property.

Applicants will be disqualified under this cause and will not be eligible to reapply for a period of One year (1) from the date of disqualification.

- Cadets whose acts or omissions fail to obey the above standards and such attitudes represent a lack of good morals character and/ or a violation of moral turpitude can be dismissed from the Police academy and will be restricted from reapplying for a period of 1 year.
- Cadets who have made any contact with law enforcement officers are required to inform their immediate instructor in addition to the LRGVDC Academy Chairperson of the reason contact was made. No Exceptions. Cadets are required to provide a memorandum with outlined details of the interaction. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary actions up to dismissal from the academy.
- Cadets must adhere to Uniform policy Appendix B of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy Rules and regulations. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary actions up to dismissal from the academy.

Applicants/cadets will be held to the appearance of a befitting professional police officer, in which cadet should demonstrate moderation and good judgement. To that end, body art should not detract from an applicant's personal appearance. Inappropriate body art is a permanent disqualifier.

Applicants may reapply when their appearance is no longer in violation of this disqualification.

- Cadets are required to abstain from getting any tattoo or inappropriate body art that meet the above classification for the duration of the Police Academy period, failure to follow this rule could result in dismissal from the Police academy and allow to reapply until their appearance is no longer in violation.
1. Inappropriate body art shall be defined as:
 - a. Body art that is obscene or offensive
 - b. Body art that depicts or advocates discrimination based on sex, age, race, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.
 - c. Body art that depicts or advocates gang affiliation, supremacist or extremist groups, or illegal drug use
 - d. Body art that undermines the professional appearance of a Police Cadet. [example: nudity or offensive]
 - e. Body Modifications that place an unnecessary safety risk to the police Applicant, such as, but not limited to: Piercings, Ear elongation, implants, etc.
 - f. Tattoos that are visible or cannot be covered on the head, face, neck, and hand area.

1.6 Medical Requirements (L-2)

Applicants must be examined by a physician, approved by LRGVDC, who is licensed by the Texas Medical Board. The appointee must be declared by that professional, on a form prescribed by the commission, within 180 days before the academy start date to be:

- a. Applicants must be physically sound and free from any defect which may adversely affect the performance and essential functions of a peace officer, including:
 - Vision must be sufficient to perform functions such as apprehending suspects, obtaining information about disturbances, service, accident calls, and to read and review written communication.
 - Hearing and speech sufficient to communicate clearly and distinctly face-to-face as well as over the radio in normal and adverse conditions.
 - Arm and hand steadiness and manual dexterity sufficient to use weapons necessary to prevent injury or to protect self and others.
 - Stamina and tolerance sufficient to remain physically and mentally alert for short bursts of extremely intense physical and/or mental activity separated by extended periods of physical and/or mental inactivity.
- b. Applicant's drug screen results must show no trace of drug dependency or illegal drug use after a blood test or other medical test. L-2 results are conducted as a requirement of the basic licensing course. Results are valid for 180 days of the applicant's date of graduation from the BPOC Academy.
- c. Failure to receive medical clearance will result in a one-year disqualification for admission to the BPOC Academy.

1.7 Psychological Requirements (L-3)

- a. Applicants must be examined face-to-face by a psychologist that is approved by the LRGVDC and is licensed by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists or Texas Medical Board. The individual must be declared by that professional, on a L-3 form prescribed by the commission, within 180 days before the start date of academy. To be in satisfactory psychological and emotional health to serve as the type of officer for which the license is sought measuring suitable personality traits and psychopathology.
- b. Applicants for uniformity satisfactory psychological exam (L-3) results that are conducted as a requirement of a basic licensing course may remain valid for 180 days from the individual's date of graduation from the academy.
- c. In the event of failure to receive the psychological endorsement, the applicant must wait a minimum of one year before being eligible for admission to the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy.

In addition to the admission standards set forth, all applicants must exhibit no history or indication of a pattern of behavior that is unethical, violent, or criminal in nature.

1.8 Academic Failure

In the event of academic failure from the LRGVDC or another provider's BPOC, the applicant must wait a minimum of one year before being eligible for admission to the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy's Basic Peace Officer Course.

PROCEDURE 2.0: APPLICATION PROCESS

2.1 Entrance Examination Enrollment

Applicants must pass a general aptitude examination measuring cognitive ability. Refer to the following for instructions to apply.

- a. BPOC Entrance Exam dates will be posted at <https://www.lrgvdc.org/academy.html> and will be administered periodically in accordance with scheduled BPOC Academy start dates.
- b. **Register for Exam.**
 - Registration form link: <https://forms.office.com/g/mRUhiyn6E9>
 - Academy page: <https://www.lrgvdc.org/academy.html>
 - All phone calls received regarding entrance exams will be referred to the Academy page to complete the registration link.

(Entrance Exam dates are only posted while they are being offered.)

- c. **Print out** and complete the BPOC Application. (Found at <https://www.lrgvdc.org/academy.html>)
- d. BPOC Entrance Examination fee is established at \$25.00 payable by debit, credit card (a processing fee will be applied), check or money order made out to the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council at testing site prior to being admitted for exam.
- e. If applicant is honorably discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States, they may have the BPOC Entrance Examination fee of \$25.00 waived or be given 5 additional points on entrance exam's overall score, on their first attempt (for either option listed).

2.2 Entrance Examination Requirements

- a. **Applicants must receive a passing score of 70.00% or greater on the administered pre-entrance exam.**
- b. Applicants will be allowed two re-tests for the examination. Applicants who are unable to pass the examination on the third attempt will not be eligible for admission into the Academy and may not test again until a year from the date of the third attempt.
- c. The pre-enrollment testing scores are valid for one year after the date of examination for applicants who wish to defer admission into the Academy. **MUST** notify Academy administrative staff of deferment to maintain file. As applicant files are disposed when no contact is established.

2.3 Testing Day

The expected time frame for testing is 1-3 hours and may exceed the 3-hour mark. Applicants should plan accordingly. Required documents for testing are as follows:

- **Proof of Citizenship**
- **Texas Driver's License**
- **Social Security Card**
- **Birth Certificate**
- **High School Diploma or GEG**
- **Payment of \$25 (Refer to 2.1.C.)**
- **Vehicle Insurance**

Upon passing the Entrance Exam with a minimum score of 70.00%. Applicants will receive preliminary acceptance and will submit BPOC Application to Academy staff. Examination scores are available on the same day as testing. Pre- enrollment documents for the BPOC Academy will be issued on the same day as testing if applicant passes the exam.

Final entry paperwork: The Applicants that passed the entrance exam will receive a copy and instruction for the following documents:

1. Personal History Statement
2. L2 Form –Medical Exam and Drug Screen
3. L3 Form – Psychological and Emotional Health Declaration
4. FAST Fingerprint Background Check
5. Type 1 Driving Record (must clear all pending Violations)
6. (For Veterans Only) must turn in a copy of a DD214, Joint Service Transcripts, All Post Secondary transcripts, and C.O.E. - Certificate of Eligibility.

2.4 Application Packet Deadline

Final entry paperwork is due no later than 15 calendar days prior to the Academy start day. Exceptions apply at the discretion of the RPA training coordinator.

PROCEDURE 3.0: TUITION

3.1 Tuition Fees

Basic Peace Officer Course tuition total cost is \$2,500.00. **Additional cost for entry paperwork and transaction/processing service fees will be applied.** Applicants are responsible for coordinating with each facility to determine the cost for required documents.

3.2 Method of Payment

Credit or Debit Card, *Cashier's Check or *Money Orders must be made payable to LRGVDC (Refer to 2.1.C.):

LRGVDC or Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
301 W. Railroad St.

Weslaco, Texas 78596

*Notes/Memo: LRGV Police Academy

3.3 Payment Deadlines

Tuition payment is due on the first day of orientation for the BPOC Academy. Payment extension is available if approved by the RPA training coordinator or Chief Administrator (Executive Director of the LRGVDC).

3.4 Payment guidelines & payment arrangements

No less than 50% of the tuition must be paid on the first day of the Academy with the remaining tuition balance due on or before the 30th calendar day.

- a. Failure to pay tuition balance in full by the 30th calendar day payment deadline will result in dismissal from the academy.
- b. Cadets who utilize the payment plan option must sign a tuition agreement via Adobe Signs.
- c. Failure to sign or comply with the written agreement is automatic grounds for dismissal from the academy.
- d. Veteran Cadets must sign a tuition agreement for the total out of pocket cost, should the VA benefits entitlement be less than 100%. (Refer to Procedure 3.6)
- e. Should a veteran cadet fail to complete the full Basic Peace Officer Course, they incur the total monetary VA debt management calculation of the hours not completed and must clear the debt balance with the LRGVDC.
- f. In the event of separation from the academy (for any reason) the previous balance must be paid in full, or the individual will be denied reentry to the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy until the debt is settled.
- g. Cadets, who are sponsored by any entity not directly in agreement with the Academy are obligated to follow the entry process, provide information to the appropriate parties, and ensure that the tuition balance is settled.

3.5 Refund Policy

The LRGVDC policy applies to cadets who voluntarily drop or are terminated from the Basic Peace Officer Course (BPOC).

- a. BPOC Cadets who voluntarily drop before the 5th calendar day of scheduled class will be refunded 50% of the course fee only if the cadet has paid 100% tuition in full.
- b. BPOC Cadets who voluntarily drop after 5 days from the first day of scheduled class will receive no refund of course fees.

Cadets who are separated from the academy due to violation of Academy rules and regulations, disciplinary actions, or violations of statute shall not receive any refund of fees. Cadets are required to return all assigned equipment relating to Academy training purposes. Failure to return RPA equipment is subject to charges of theft.

3.6 Veterans Educational Benefits

Qualifying Chapters:

- Chapter 30 - Montgomery GI Bill® Active Duty (MGIB-AD)
- Chapter 33 - Post-9/11 GI Bill®
- Chapter 35 - Survivors and Dependent Assistance
- Chapter 1606 - Montgomery GI Bill ® Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)
- Chapter 1607 - Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)

Benefits may be certified for the Edinburg, Mission, Weslaco and Harlingen Academy sites.

- a. Veterans who may be eligible for VA Benefits must provide a copy of the following.
 - Educational Certificate of Eligibility (C.O.E.)
 - DD214
 - Joint Service (Military) Transcripts
 - All Post-Secondary Transcripts (anything above high school)
 - Other items that may be required by the academy.
- b. The C.O.E. will state the months and days of remaining benefits and the total percentage of payable entitlement. The cadet will have out of pocket cost for any percentage under 100% entitlement.
- c. The cadet is responsible for creating and signing a tuition agreement for the percentage of the tuition not covered by the benefits entitlement.
- d. Should a veteran cadet fail to complete the full Basic Peace Officer Course, they incur the total monetary VA debt management calculation of the hours not completed and must clear the debt balance with the LRGVDC.
- e. In the event of separation from the academy (for any reason) the previous balance must be paid in full, or the veteran will be denied reentry to the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy until the debt is settled.

Education Call Center at 1-888-GI-BILL-1 or 1-888-442-4551 (*Requesting C.O.E.*)

GI Bill Comparison Tool: www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool (*Benefits Tool*)

3.7 Training Location Assignment

LRGVDC BPOC Academy utilizes multiple training site locations across the region. Each BPOC Academy is run concurrently at all authorized locations. Cadets may be initially assigned to their preferred training location in application packet; however, LRGVDC BPOC academy retains the authorization to reassign the Academy location based on logistics, classroom size, or other circumstances deemed necessary.

PROCEDURE 4.0: REQUIRED SUPPLIES

4.1 Cadet Uniform & Equipment list

Each cadet shall maintain the responsibility of purchasing his/her own equipment **no later than 30 calendar days** after the Academy start date. All supplies must be in accordance with academy specifications, new, or “like new” condition and free from defects.

- a. Academy uniform shirt Cobalt Blue – Proper (Embroidery at LRGVDC’s discretion)
- b. BDU/cargo pants Khaki in color – recommended Proper
- c. Belt keepers
- d. Duty Gun Belt (leather or nylon)
- e. Expandable Baton and Case
- f. Flashlight and Flashlight ring, holder or pouch
- g. Footwear (Black in color & must be able to hold a shine)
- h. Handcuffs & Handcuff Case (No off brands allowed)
- i. Holster (preferably level 2 or higher)
- j. Inner Belt (black in color)
- k. Magazine Pouch (Must hold 2 magazines)
- l. OC Spray case (Small)
- m. Outer/duty belt with Velcro (if applicable)
- n. Physical training gear which will consist of:
 - T-shirt in one of the following colors (navy blue, gray, black, or military green)
The class will vote on the actual color that everyone will wear.
 - Black athletic shorts with no strips or designs.
 - Athletic shoes
- o. Training Replica Gun (Glock model 17 / 9mm **ORANGE in color**)

Ammo is recommended to be purchased after Chapter 29.

- p. 500rds Pistol Ammo 9mm (NO steel, reloaded or hollow point ammo allowed)
- q. 15rds Shotgun Ammo – 00 buck 9 pellet
- r. 10rds Shotgun Ammo - Slugs
- s. 50rds Shotgun Ammo – Field/Bird load
- t. 100rds Rifle Ammo – 5.56 or .223

Note: Ammo requirements may vary to accommodate any changes to the firearms training. Cadets will be advised of the required rounds needed prior to attending the range. Live firearms will be provided during firearm qualification training (Chapter 41). Cadet may purchase their own handgun if they choose to do so at their own discretion.

During the first 30 days of class cadets are required to wear business casual; polo, button, or collared shirt (must have sleeves), slacks and closed toed footwear. The following items are prohibited to wear, graphic tees, tight or revealing clothes, jeans, skirts, pumps, or sandals.

PROCEDURE 5.0: ATTENDANCE POLICY

5.1 General BPOC Scheduled Time & Hours

In compliance with the regulations set forth by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE), the Basic Peace Officer Course (BPOC) must encompass a minimum of 720 classroom hours. This requirement extends to any additional courses that may be introduced based on the advisory committee's recommendations. Please note that certain courses may necessitate evening or weekend sessions, which will be noted on the monthly Class BPOC calendar furnished to cadets. It's essential to acknowledge that occasional date adjustments may occur due to unforeseen circumstances.

Hours of operation:

- Day Academies (estimated 6 months)
Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Night Academies (estimated 9 months)
Monday through Thursday from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM &
Saturday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

5.2 BPOC Calendar

Cadets will receive a BPOC calendar outlining dates, times, and the scheduled topics of instruction. It's important to understand that the BPOC calendar is subject to potential changes. In the event of any schedule adjustments, cadets will be promptly notified. However, it is the responsibility of each cadet to take note of these changes and make the necessary preparations accordingly.

5.3 Class Start Time

Class will begin promptly at the assigned date, time, location, and hour defined by the BPOC Calendar. The Academy reserves the right to alter the start time to accommodate the training objectives of the topic, as well as the availability of off-site training facilities.

5.4 Tardiness

Tardiness of more than 15 minutes will count as 1 missed hour towards attendance standards. Frequent or habitual tardiness of any amount of time may result in appropriate disciplinary actions.

5.5 Mandatory In-Person Attendance Requirement – TCOLE Compliance

The LRGV Academy adheres to the guidelines set forth by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) Region 3, which mandates 100% in-person instructional training throughout the entire active BPOC Academy session as a prerequisite for eligibility to take the state licensing examination.

5.1 Reporting Absence

It is the responsibility of the cadet to report any anticipated absence due to medical emergencies, court appearances, or other exceptional or unforeseen circumstances to the LRGV Academy staff and Training Coordinator as soon as possible. A medical certificate or relevant documentation may be required for verification.

5.2 Authorized Absence

Absence due to exceptional or unforeseen circumstances may be granted by the LRGV Academy Training Coordinator. In such cases, the cadet will be required to complete an absence form, which will outline the plan for making up the anticipated missed hours.

5.3 Attendance Records and Reporting

LRGV Academy staff are required to maintain precise attendance records for all trainees. These records must be submitted to TCOLE as mandated and should be readily accessible for inspection during audits. Cadets bear the responsibility of ensuring that any missed hours are compensated for through in-person classroom and instructional training, supported by appropriate documentation. Failure to adhere to TCOLE regulations may result in the cadet not receiving final endorsement at the conclusion of the active BPOC session.

5.4 Financial Responsibility

In the event of an authorized absence due to exceptional circumstances, the staff at LRGV Academy will work with the cadet and site instructor to coordinate and approve an alternative arrangement for making up the in-person instructional training. If the cadet fails to attend and complete the alternative opportunity, it will become the cadet's responsibility to secure the necessary instruction and documents at their own expense before final endorsement can be granted.

PROCEDURE 6.0: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

The LRGVDC Regional Police Academy demands a high standard of achievement. The profession of law enforcement requires a high level of individual knowledge, ability and skills that will serve to maintain the officer's sense of pride, proficiency, and personal safety throughout his or her career. Failure to achieve the minimum acceptable performance standards in any area will serve as grounds for termination of the BPOC Academy.

6.1 Grade Point Average

To remain in the Academy cadets must achieve a score of an 80 or higher on all their examinations in order to maintain the academic standard.

Content proficiency will be graded by:

- Individual Chapter Examinations.
- One (1) Mid-term Examination.
- One (1) Comprehensive Final Examination
- Physical Training Participation.
- Reality-Based Training.
- Firearms Proficiency.

6.2 Chapter Examinations

Each topic included in the BPOC is an independent, functional area. An examination will be given at the conclusion of each chapter that will cover all functional areas within that chapter. This may include a written exam, practical exam, and/or combination.

6.3 Mid-Term & Final Examination

Mid Term Exam (1) will include cadets' knowledge at the midpoint academy course content. And a Comprehensive Final Examination (1) will be administered at the end of the Academy to include topics from the duration of the Academy content.

6.4 Retest Policy

- a. All exams are graded on a scale of 1-100. Cadet must receive no less than 80% on each exam to be considered a passing grade. The Academy will not round up scores.
- b. Cadet will only be allowed a total of three (3) retests that may be used for Individual Chapter Exams.
- c. Should a cadet exhaust all retest attempts, on the fourth failed Individual Chapter Exam the cadet will be immediately dismissed due to academic failure.
- d. Cadet will only be allowed one (1) retest opportunity for the Comprehensive Final Exam.
- e. Should the cadet fail the retest opportunity for the Comprehensive Final Exam, the cadet will be immediately dismissed due to academic failure.

6.5 Physical Training Participation

Physical fitness tests are required by many law enforcement agencies. Throughout the Academy physical fitness will be in place to assist cadets in lowering stress levels, enhance endurance and strength training, build on the concept of teamwork, and help reach law enforcement agencies requirement for employment. Physical training is mandatory all cadets are required to participate. Cadets will be required to pass physical examination benchmarks and a final P.T. examination.

Cadets with preexisting conditions or impairment which will prevent the completion of Physical Activity should immediately notify police academy staff and supply a doctor's release form.

6.6 Reality Based Training

Practical skill problems will be conducted to determine the cadet's ability to demonstrate newly acquired skills during the course. Cadets will be required to perform in a variety of simulated situations during which they will be closely observed and evaluated. A cadet who fails to demonstrate a level of acceptable proficiency may not meet minimum standards for graduation.

6.7 Performance Test

1. *TxDot Accident Reports/Investigation:*

The ability of a cadet to perform under the controlled conditions of an accident scene simulation is crucial. Vehicle accident scenes offer cadets an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities of performing at a police acceptable level.

Failure to perform in this manner during an accident simulation predicts the inability to perform the required police task. Any cadet who fails to complete the simulation will be given an opportunity to make up work by participating in an additional accident simulation scene. Additional failure of the accident simulation will result in dismissal of the police academy.

Each cadet will complete investigation of a vehicle accident scene. During this time, qualified personnel will evaluate the performance of cadets individually, in the following areas:

- a) Approaching the scene including the proper use of the police radio.
- b) Safety awareness and reactions.
- c) Taking control of the entire accident scene including complainants, suspects, and witnesses.
- d) Conformance to Academy policies and procedures.
- e) Cooperation, support, and coordination with partners.
- f) The acceptance and implementation of constructive criticism.
- g) Filing the appropriate charges, if necessary.
- h) Successful completion of all necessary forms.

Crash paperwork content will be reviewed for accuracy, and neatness.

2. *Vehicle Traffic Stops*

Cadets will be tested on their ability to perform properly under controlled conditions of vehicle traffic stops. Traffic Stops offer the cadet the opportunity to demonstrate their capability of performing police tasks to an acceptable level.

Cadets who are unable to perform the mandated regulations during a vehicle stop will be given the opportunity to make up the vehicle stop tactics drill. Failure to perform in the makeup simulation will result in the dismissal of the police academy.

3. *Defensive Tactics:*

The ability of a cadet to perform properly under the controlled conditions of defensive tactics is very important. Defensive Tactics offers the cadet the opportunity to demonstrate their capability of defending themselves and others against unarmed assailants. Failure to perform in an acceptable manner during an unarmed confrontation indicates that the cadet is unable to perform police tasks in an acceptable manner. Those cadets who fail defensive tactics will be given an opportunity to make up for the failure by participating in an additional defensive tactics drill. It is the policy of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy that continued failure of defensive tactics is an indication that the cadet cannot or will not properly perform police tasks and constitutes grounds for dismissal of that cadet from the Police Academy.

4. *Crime Scene Program:*

Crime Scene Simulations are frequently practiced in the Academy. Cadets will be required to participate to determine their ability to react in a stressful environment. Crime scenes are designed to present the cadet with a realistic recreation of a crime. During crime scene simulations cadets will learn how to make quick decisions under pressure, provide quality control over the crime scene, proper patrol procedures, create an offense report for the offense, fill out the appropriate forms pertaining to the offense level, and file appropriate charges for each crime. Cadets who are unable to complete or pass the initial crime scene

simulation will be given an opportunity to make up the simulation. Failure to perform or pass the second simulation will result in the dismissal of the police academy.

During this time, qualified personnel will evaluate the performance of cadets individually, in each of the following areas:

- a) Approach to the scene including the proper use of the police radio.
- b) Safety reactions and awareness.
- c) Control of the entire crime scene area including complainants, witnesses, and suspects.
- d) Conformance to departmental policies and procedures.
- e) Conformance to the Texas Penal Code and Academy Policy concerning the use of deadly force.
- f) Cooperation, support, and coordination with partners.
- g) The acceptance and implementation of constructive criticism.

5. *Patrol Procedures*

Patrol Procedures is designed to present the cadet with realistic recreations of a crime in progress, to determine the cadet's ability to react to a stressful situation. Cadets will be expected to demonstrate an ability to make quick and accurate decisions under stressful circumstances similar to daily patrol encounters.

Patrol Procedures offers each cadet an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to perform police tasks at an acceptable level. Failure to perform in an acceptable manner during a patrol procedure enactment indicates that a cadet is unable to perform police tasks in an acceptable manner. Those cadets who fail a patrol practical will be given an opportunity to make up for the failure by participating in an additional practical. Cadets who are unable to perform in the make up the patrol procedures is an indication that the cadet cannot or will not properly perform police tasks and constitutes grounds for dismissal of that cadet from the Academy.

Each cadet may be required to complete an offense report along with necessary forms to file the appropriate charge. All paperwork will be graded as to content, accuracy, and neatness. During this time, qualified personnel, in each of the following areas, will evaluate the performance of cadets individually:

- a) Approach to the scene including the proper use of the police radio.
- b) Safety reactions and awareness.
- c) Control of the entire crime scene area including complainants, witnesses, and suspects.
- d) Conformance to departmental policies and procedures.
- e) Conformance to the Texas Penal Code and Academy Policy concerning the use of deadly force.
- f) Cooperation, support, and coordination with partners.
- g) The acceptance and implementation of constructive criticism.

6. *CPR/ First Aid*

Cadets are required to hold their CPR/First Aid certification. The academy will provide the initial opportunity to obtain their certification. Failure to pass the first CPS/First Aid class will result in the Cadets financial responsibility to take a second class. Failure to obtain a CPR/First Aid certification will be considered grounds for dismissal from the police academy.

6.8 Exposures

Cadets will be required to hold multiple certifications for authorized lethal weapons. Cadets will be certified in the use of OC Spray, ASP Baton, and a Taser. It is imperative that cadets are properly trained in the use and maintenance of all authorized weapons. Cadets must demonstrate the ability to properly use, maintain and meet safety qualifications for each weapon. Those cadets who fail the OC Spray Certification, ASP Baton Certification or the Taser Certification will be given an opportunity to make up the failure by participating in an additional practical. Failure to meet standards for the OC Spray Certification, ASP Baton Certification or the Taser will constitute grounds for dismissal from the Academy. Cadets who refuse to complete OC Spray Certification, ASP Baton Certification or the Taser Certification will be an indication of the cadet's ability to properly perform police tasks and will constitutes grounds for dismissal from the Academy.

6.9 Firearms Proficiency

Firearms proficiency requires good hand, finger, arm and shoulder strength and control. The hours of training devoted to this vital aspect are intended to provide the cadet with the skill necessary to attain the requisite proficiency. Cadets shall agree in writing to all range safety rules prior to range training. All safety rules given by the range officer, the firearms instructor and the Academy Staff must be followed. Grounds for dismissal include violation of the safety rules and failure to meet the terms of the training. **A cadet must achieve a minimum score of 80% on the qualification course and pass the firearms written examination to successfully complete the training program.**

No firearms will be brought onto the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy by any cadet unless first authorized by the firearms instructor or the Academy Staff.

Acceptable firearms for the firearms training program include:

- A 9 or 40 Caliber Semi-automatic pistol with 3 magazines
- Recommended barrel length is 4 inches, however barrel length of 2 to 6 inches is acceptable.
- All firearms must be certified safe by the firearms instructor of the Staff prior to using on the range.

Cadets are required to qualify for firearms training with a semi-automatic handgun which will be provided by the Police Academy. Cadets who wish to qualify with a larger caliber must provide his or her own ammunition and weapon. Prior approval must be requested through the firearm instructor and/or the Academy staff.

6.10 Injuries

The Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy does not carry medical insurance for Cadet Trainees attending the academy. The Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy will not be held responsible for any injuries sustained by the Cadet Trainees. Training with the Academy will expose the student to hands-on defensive tactics, driving vehicles at speeds exceeding 45 mph, rigorous training exercised, use of real firearms shooting blanks, and live ammunition exposure at the firing range.

Although the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy has an excellent record for avoiding Cadet Trainee injuries it is the academy recommendation to seek short term medical coverage should a cadet not have a medical policy. Cadets are required to report all injuries, regardless of how minor, to the classroom chain of command. Example: Cadet will report injury to class president who will then advise the Academy instructor who will lastly advise the Academy Coordinator.

6.11 Administration Testing Procedures

The Academy practices academic integrity through maintenance and security of testing material and exam documents. Each exam site will be designated a testing proctor who will be present in its entirety for all exams including retest exams. Retests exams are given at a time and place convenient for academy staff and must be coordinated with advanced notice. Cadets will be given one (1) hour to complete chapter exams and three (3) hours to complete each Mid-Term exam and Final Exam.

To prevent academic dishonesty, the following procedures have been put in place for the day of the exam:

- a. Cadets will follow a normal daily formation routine in assigned uniforms. [Inspection, pledge and citing of the Code of Ethics]
- b. Cadets will not be allowed to take personal gear into the classroom during the administration of the exam.
- c. Cadets will occupy their assigned seating once they are instructed to enter the classroom.
- d. Cadets will not be allowed to leave the classroom for any reason once the exam has started.
- e. Cadets will be allowed to leave the classroom once they've completed the exam and they have placed the testing materials down on the test or turned in as instructed by the exam proctor.
- f. Cadets will be given a short break, to be determined by the exam proctor, and will be instructed to re-enter the classroom for grading.

6.12 Classroom Participation & Notetaking

Cadets are required to be fully engaged in all lessons and encouraged to ask questions when necessary. Cadets should exercise good judgment in the privilege of inquiry but stay on subject. Study groups may be assigned to assist in improving knowledge of chapter material and/ or academic grades. Good study habits must be maintained; therefore, non-academy time must be devoted to review of class material or reference materials.

Cadets shall take careful notes during all lectures unless the instructor notifies the students otherwise. **Students are required to maintain a permanent notebook** (three-ring binder) for the purpose of maintaining handout materials and notes.

6.13 Academic Achievement Recognition

The LRGVDC BPOC Academy and profession of law enforcement demands a high standard of achievement, knowledge, ability, and skills. In recognition of those members which excel at each training site location, the following recognitions will be honored during graduation ceremonies:

- a. **Honor Graduate:** This certificate is based upon an overall G.P.A., attendance, disciplinary actions and includes the scores from the functional skills areas of training including Firearms and Driving and demonstrates behavior that exemplifies the mission and values of the LRGV BPOC Academy. At graduation, the cadet with the highest overall score will receive a certificate for excellence as the honor graduate of the class.
- b. **Leadership:** This certificate is based upon an overall **courage, decisiveness, passion, support, humility, empathy, and honesty** demonstrated by the mission and values of the LRGVDC BPOC Academy. At graduation, the cadet with the highest overall score will receive a certificate for excellence as the honor graduate of the class.
- c. **Wheels:** The cadet with the highest driving score will receive a certificate in recognition of his/her skill level with a vehicle. This applies only to driving score.
- d. **Marksmanship:** The cadet with the highest marksmanship score will receive a certificate in recognition of his/her skill level with a weapon. This applies only to handgun scores.
- e. **Reproduction of Certificates:** The reproduction of original or copies of certificates will not be able to be reproduced if a cadet's graduation took place outside the Chief Administrator/LRGVDC Executive Directors tenure or signing authority. The LRGV Academy does not keep records or copies of any graduation certificate as it's not required to do so.

6.14 Licensing Examination Endorsement

Cadets who have maintained the minimum grade point average (80% on all examination and applicable retests), attended the minimum classroom hours, and participate in all required practical, physical, and reality-based training shall receive endorsement to take the State Peace Officer Licensing Examination.

Endorsement for the State Peace Officer Licensing Examination will be extended to the following:

- Cadets who maintain an 80% grade average
- Cadets who attend the minimum classroom hours
- Cadets who participate in the required practical, physical, and reality-based training.

Cadets who have met the previously stated standards will not receive graduation status from the Academy or be allowed to participate in Academy graduation ceremonies.

PROCEDURE 7.0: CADET PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The Academy regulates disciplinary action for failure to comply with cadet personal appearance policy. Cadets who have failed to meet the daily inspection standards more than five occasions will result in termination from the academy. Cadets are required to follow the below dress code policies.

7.1 Dress Code

- a. Cadets are required to be in full uniform by the date specified by the Academy Instructor.
- b. Cadets are required to wear uniforms through the academy unless instructed otherwise by Academy staff or instructors.
- c. Authorization for cadet head gear use will be instructed by the BPOC Training Coordination. Headgear is not to be worn indoors unless instructed by the Training Coordinator or is identified as a requirement of the curriculum.
- d. Cadets are required to keep uniforms clean and organized.
- e. Cadets are not allowed to wear uniform or duty gear outside of the academy to conduct personal business or other non-academy activities.

7.2 Personal Grooming & Hygiene

All cadets must exercise respectable body hygiene, personal grooming, and cleanliness. See requirements below.

- a. **Male Students.** Hair must be of a natural color and presented in a neat and conservative appearance. Hair length must not exceed three inches on top. Hair at the base of the scalp must be trimmed so it will not extend below the top end of the collar of the uniform. No eccentric haircuts are allowed, i.e., Mohawks, spikes, horseshoe, etc. Earrings and other visible body piercings are not permitted. Cadets will be required to shave daily no beards, or sideburns allowed. Mustaches, when worn, must not exceed the corners of the lips and the length must not exceed 1/4 of an inch. Facial hair must be neatly trimmed and presented in a conservative manner. Male cadets will be allowed to wear their wedding ring, but no other rings are allowed.
- b. **Female Students.** Hair must be of a natural color and presented in a neat fashion. Hair shall be put up in a hair tie and shall not extend below the cap headband on the forehead or extend below the lower end of the color. When headgear is worn, the hair must not interfere with the fit and appearance of the headgear. Earrings, necklaces, visible body piercings, hair ornaments or other decorative jewelry are prohibited. An engagement or wedding ring may be worn. No other rings are permitted. Minimal make-up will be allowed, no eyelashes, lipstick or eyeshadow is permitted.

7.3 Jewelry & Personal Accessories

Standard wristwatches may be worn; smartwatches are not allowed in the classroom. Individuals with wristwatches with alarm tones or other sounds are not permitted. Cadets shall ensure devices are silent or vibrate during class instruction hours.

PROCEDURE 8.0: PERSONAL CONDUCT

As a cadet of the LRGVDC BPOC Academy, you are considered a public servant. Cadets are subject to public scrutiny and are to refrain from questionable activity on or off duty. Cadets are required to hold the same ethical standard as a law enforcement professional. Violations of the cadet personal conduct policy may result in disciplinary action or severe violations to include termination.

8.1 Cadet Standards of Conduct [reorganized]

- a. Cadets will be expected to address all instructors as “Sir/Ma’am” or as instructor/rank/last name, as appropriate. Cadets will address staff and supervisory officers by appropriate title and name.
- b. Cadets may enter an Instructors Office only after knocking on the door and receiving permission to enter.
- c. Cadets are not permitted to speak or answer in class unless recognized by the instructor.
- d. Cadets will promptly comply with instructions, directions, orders, and assignments given to them by Academy staff members and instructors. Failure to do so will be considered insubordination and will be grounds for termination.
- e. Cellular phones or personal communication devices of any kind are expressly prohibited within the classroom.
- f. Cadets are to remain alert and awake for the duration of class. Cadets will occupy themselves only with Academy business and refrain from non-related reading material or activity.
- g. Cadets will be expected to come to the position of attention whenever an instructor, Academy staff member, or official visitor enters the classroom for the first time during each training day. Cadets will remain at attention until given the order “as you were” by the official.
- h. Cadets are expected to attend and fully participate in every assigned practical training exercise, field training exercise, physical fitness training session, and homework assignment. All homework assignments must be completed and turned into the instructor at the designated time and date.
- i. Any cadet who becomes physically ill, injured, or who requires medical attention during training is required to notify the on-site instructor and Academy Training Coordinator as soon as practical.
- j. The BPOC Training Coordinator or designee has the authority to determine reparations for certain violations. Reparations may be in the form of writing assignments, physical exercise, additional physical training, or any combination.
- k. Cadets shall refrain from loitering in the hallways or working areas of an assigned building. Unnecessary distractions inside and outside the classroom and/or conversations will not be tolerated.
- l. Improper or negligent use of any Academy property is prohibited. The use of any classroom facilities or equipment is permissible only with an instructor’s approval.
- m. Improper demeanor while in cadet uniform is prohibited. Cadets are prohibited from wearing LRGVDV related attire when engaging in conduct or activity which discredits or violates the integrity of the Academy.
- n. Cadets have no authorized powers other than those of any citizen. Cadets are expected to assist peace officers only when called upon or when the need is apparent.
- o. Cadets involved in, or witness to a police officer related incident will file a written report with the BPOC Training Coordinator within 24 hours of the event.
- p. Cadets shall always conduct themselves with courtesy and professional dignity. Discourtesy, rudeness, and/or vulgarity by trainees toward other cadets, citizens, staff,

external agencies, or police officers will not be tolerated and such conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action.

- q. Cadets may be requested to participate in civil and community engagement activities. While no minimum requirements will be determined for this criterion, each cadet shall volunteer at their availability and represent the Academy with respect, service, and honor.
- r. Cadets shall not engage in fundraising activities and/or solicit donations aimed to create revenue associated with, or on behalf of the LRGVDC BPOC Academy training; this includes, but is not limited to graduation ceremonies, social events, etc.
- s. Cadets shall not post videos, images, photos, or official Academy training activities to social media outlets. Cadets and/or training site locations are not allowed to create a social media “page”.
- t. Cadet shall not comment or represent on behalf of the LRGVDC BPOC Academy to media outlets.
- u. Use or possession of any items used as weapons, including but not limited to, handguns, firearms, ammunition, fireworks, pellet guns, paintball guns, bb guns, knives, or explosive or noxious materials are prohibited on the Academy premises. Listed weapons are strictly forbidden and will result in a Class III offense. Exceptions include the issued firearms provided by the Academy or other approved Academy tactical training at the designated time.
- v. Cadets shall not consume intoxicants to the extent of intoxication or have the odor of intoxicants on their breath while on duty, or while in uniform on or off duty.

8.2 Ethical Conduct Policy

The commission of peace officer is one of public trust. A peace officer is a public servant who derives his/her authority from the people of the community the cadet is sworn to serve. In the United States, only the peace officer has been given the legal right under strict circumstances to deprive citizens of their life or liberty in the course of their duties. With the authority given to peace officers comes the burden of great responsibility. As cadets who endeavor to achieve the commission of peace officer, cadets are expected to maintain a posture that is above reproach. Behavior that is unethical, illegal, and/or immoral will not be tolerated.

All cadets of the LRGVDC BPOC Academy must be committed to our key guiding values:

- We treat everyone with respect.
- We are committed to honesty, integrity, and professionalism.
- We serve our community and organization as innovative and creative problem solvers.
- We strive for excellence as a team.

The Law Enforcement Code of Ethics recital is located at Appendix 1.0 at the end of this Handbook. It is the expectation of all cadets to recite this statement from memory at any given time throughout the duration of the Academy BPOC.

8.3 Harassment, Bias, & Intimidation

The Academy provides and maintains an educational environment that is free of harassment, bias, or intimidation. This policy includes but is not limited to any form of harassment that is directed to an individual due to their: gender, sexual preference, race, national origin, religion, age, or disability. All cadets are

expected to comply with this policy. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action. Any cadet who feels they are subject to harassment, bias or intimidation shall report this activity to their instructor, the BPOC Training Coordinator, the Director of Public Safety, or the Executive Director of the LRGVDC. If the harassment involves the supervisor, the cadet should contact the Executive Director of the LRGVDC, and the Director will investigate the matter promptly and take corrective action as appropriate. Retaliation or reprisal against any cadet for complaining of harassment or discrimination is illegal and will not be tolerated.

8.4 Non-fraternization Policy

Cadets are forbidden from having an intimate relationship with Academy staff, instructors, employees of the LRGVDC, or other fellow cadets while enrolled in the BPOC Academy. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action and the consequent dismissal from the Academy.

PROCEDURE 9.0: DISCIPLINARY POLICY

It is the intent of the Academy staff to protect the rights of each cadet, and to adhere to a system of discipline that provides notice, fairness, equity, and due process. The cadet can thereby be assured of reasonable expectations concerning this procedure. The disposition of disciplinary incidents will conform to the following guidelines as closely as is practical.

The LRGVDC BPOC Academy classifies offenses into Class I or II categories. Each category has specific and individualized disciplinary procedures.

9.1 Class I Offenses

Consist of offenses that are minor to moderate in nature and may lend themselves as opportunities for learning and corrective behavior. Examples of Class I offenses include, but are not limited to:

- a. Tardiness (Fewer than 5 times).
- b. Failure to meet personal appearance standards (Fewer than 5 times).
- c. Failure to meet certain cadet behavior standards (Fewer than 5 times).
- d. Financial irresponsibility.
- e. Insubordination (1st offense).
- f. Minor act of negligence or inefficiency.
- g. Possession of cellular phones or personal paging devices in the classroom.
- h. Other acts or omissions that meet the above description.

9.2 Class II Offenses

Consist of offenses that are serious in nature and may preclude the possibility of continued participation in the program. Class II Offenses are grounds for immediate termination from the program. Examples of Class II offenses include, but are not limited to:

- a. Repetition of a Class I offense.
- b. Act of gross negligence in efficiency or competence.
- c. Criminal Actions that lead to charges that are classified as Class B Misdemeanors or above.
- d. Consumption of alcohol while in uniform on or off duty.
- e. Committing Assault, Theft, or Terroristic Threats.
- f. Dishonesty. *
- g. Failure to meet personal appearance standards more than 5 times.

- h. Failure to meet certain cadet behavior standards more than 5 times.
- i. Fraternalization
- j. Gross Discourteous Conduct. *
- k. Gross Insubordination (1st offense).
- l. Insubordination (2nd offense). *
- m. Improper use of authority.
- n. Intentional or reckless conduct which endangers the health or safety of self or others.
- o. Failure to report incidents or offenses or behavior not reflective of the values, policies, and procedures of the LRGVDC BPOC Academy.
- p. Violation of safety rules (range, tactical driving, defensive tactics, other).
- q. Patterns of misconduct
- r. Tardiness (Greater than 5 times).
- s. Use of illegal controlled substances at any time or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty.
- t. Use or possession of any items used as weapons, including, but not limited to, handguns, firearms, ammunition, fireworks, pellet guns, paintball guns, bb guns, knives, or explosive or noxious materials on Academy premises, except for equipment issued or required by the Academy for firearms training or other Academy tactical training at the designated time.
- u. Other acts or omissions that meet the above description.

* Definition Provided

Definition of Class II Offenses:

Dishonesty: any deceptive act or an act that may bring embarrassment, distrust, or discredit to the LRGVDC Regional Police Academy, or the law enforcement profession. Acts of dishonesty include but are not limited to cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery or acceptance of bribes, destruction of property, theft, or concealment. Cheating includes assisting others to cheat or failing to report observing a cheating incident, and includes cheating on quizzes or retests that have no effect on a cadet's G.P.A.

Gross Discourteous Conduct: conduct by either action or omission that is disrespectful in nature and has the potential of negatively impacting the learning environment. Examples of gross discourteous conduct include but are not limited to sleeping or otherwise disruptive behavior during class, abusive or obscene language, gestures, or behavior.

Insubordination: the willful disregard or disobedience of a lawful and ethical order or directive issued by any person with authority over the student to include but not limited to all Academy staff such as the BPOC Training Coordinator, Training-site Supervisor, Administrative Personal, Staff Instructors, Adjunct Instructors, and or designees of the Academy's authority.

9.3 Disciplinary Procedures

The following process provides a fair and equitable course of progressive action that insures a clear understanding of the remedies to unacceptable behavior. Because not every possible scenario can be addressed in these rules, where disciplinary cases are not specifically addressed, it shall be at the discretion of the BPOC Training Coordinator, Director of Public Safety and/or Executive Director as to the manner in which the situation will be resolved.

9.4 Disciplinary Process for Class I Offenses

1. Academy Instructor and/or other Academy personnel will immediately address any and all violations with a cadet once observed and/or notified.
2. The Academy Instructor and/or other Academy personnel will address the violation with cadet and conduct a one-on-one performance coaching session addressing the disciplinary issue(s) and appropriate corrective action.
3. Following the performance coaching session and acknowledgment of corrective action, cadet will submit a corrective action written report to LRGVDC Training Coordinator to be place in cadet file.

9.5 Disciplinary Process for Class II Offenses (or repeat Class I Offense)

1. Academy Instructor and/or other Academy personnel will immediately report any and all Class II violations to LRGVDC BPOC Training Coordinator once observed and/or notified.
2. The BPOC Training Coordinator and/or Director of Public Safety will conduct a thorough investigation into the offense including full disclosure and inquiry into the facts and circumstances of the violation.

Note: During an investigation into a Class II offense, the cadet in question may be temporarily removed from BPOC Academy training activities for no more than three (3) full class days while the investigation is ongoing and final action and/or determination is made.

3. **Should it be determined that the cadet may continue the Academy**, the BPOC Training Coordinator will address the violation with the cadet and conduct a one-on-one performance coaching session addressing the disciplinary issue(s) and appropriate corrective action.
Note: If reinstated, any absence due to temporary removal will be addressed as per attendance policy.
4. Following the performance coaching session and acknowledgment of corrective action, the cadet will submit a corrective action written report to LRGVDC Training Coordinator to be place in cadet file and be placed on probationary status.
5. Once a cadet is classified as on probationary status, any further Class II (and certain Class I) infractions will result in immediate dismissal from the BPOC Academy.
6. **Should the violation be determined appropriate for dismissal from the Academy**, the cadet (and sponsoring agency, if applicable) will be notified of dismissal in writing.

9.6 Disciplinary Action Appeal

Any cadet wishing to file an appeal to a disciplinary action, must submit the request in writing directly to the LRGVDC BPOC Training Coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than three (3) calendar days after notification of disciplinary action.

Written appeal request must include:

- a. Facts of the incident;
- b. Witness accounts (if applicable);
- c. Issues of substantive or procedural errors; and/or,
- d. Newly discovered or relevant information that was not available to staff determining disciplinary action.

Appeal response by the LRGVDC BPOC Training Coordinator shall be provided to the cadet, in writing, within three (3) calendar days after receipt.

9.7 Request for Administrative Hearing

The last and final course of action would include a request for an administrative hearing directly to the LRGVDC Director of Public Safety or LRGVDC Executive Director. Any cadet wishing to request an administrative hearing, must submit the request in writing as soon as possible, but no later than three (3) calendar days after appeal response notification.

Written administrative hearing request must include:

- a. Facts of the incident;
- b. Witness testimonies, in writing (if applicable);
- c. Issues of substantive or procedural errors;
- d. Why the appeal response was not satisfactory; and/or,
- e. Newly discovered or relevant information that was not available to staff issuing appeal response.

Based on the statements of the written request, an administrative hearing may be scheduled, or final decision response letter will be issued within three (3) calendar days after administrative hearing written request receipt.

Note: If reinstated, any absence due to temporary removal will be addressed as per attendance policy.

PROCEDURE 10.0 BPOC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Regional Police Academy BPOC is a division of LRGVDC's Public Safety Department and will follow LRGVDC's organizational chain-of-command and that of its partnership law enforcement agencies for communication, incident reporting, feedback, etc. When submitting an inquiry, reporting an incident, or providing feedback, we request all individuals follow the appropriate chain of command. Should there be a conflict of interest or distrust, the complainant should then move to the next level within the chain of command. When there is an issue or conflict with one of the following listed below be sure to address your formal complaint with the individual directly above that position.

10.1 Academy Personnel Organizational Flow-chart

a. Training-Site Instructor

The assigned training-site instructor will serve as the first line supervisor for the cadet's day- to-day activities.

b. Training-Site Liaison (*Site Training Coordinator individual is usually a Sgt. or Lt. of training within that department or agency.*)

The training-site liaison is identified as the lead representative of the partnering law enforcement agency.

c. LRGVDC Staff (*Administrative and/or direct instruction staff members*)

LRGVDC administrative and/or instructors may serve as a resource for coordination and curriculum matters of the LRGVDC BPOC Academy.

d. LRGVDC Training Coordinator (*Assistant Director and/or Director*)

The LRGVDC Academy Training Coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with all state rules, guidelines, maintenance of training files, development of course objectives, lesson plans and the enforcement of all established BPOC rules. The Academy Training Coordinator is a TCOLE-mandated requirement and must be a full-time staff member of the Academy and hold a valid instructor license.

e. LRGVDC Executive Director

The LRGVDC Executive Director is the chief administrator of all operations and staff of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy. The Executive Director establishes training agreements with Police Chiefs of the region and directly appoints members to serve on the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy Advisory Committee. Under contract with TCOLE as a regional training provider, the Executive Director upholds compliance and reporting agreements to the state agency.

10.2 Classroom Elected Leadership

Each Cadet training-site class will conduct elections under the direction of the Academy Training Coordinator between the second and fourth week of the Academy. The elected positions are that of President, Vice President, and up to two (2) additional squad leaders. No other class leadership is authorized or recognized.

- a. Any class leader that fails to demonstrate the ability and/or willingness to execute their respective duties will be removed from their position. The BPOC Academy Supervisor will appoint a replacement. All elected or appointed leadership will assist in the coordination of the Academy graduation.
- b. Any class leader that is placed on academic probation will be removed from their position. The BPOC Academy Supervisor will appoint a replacement.

10.3 Class President

Duties: The class president will serve as the primary liaison between the class and Academy staff. All cadet daily task assignments, rosters, etc. will be assigned from Academy staff to the President who may delegate those duties and responsibilities on to his/her squad leaders. The class president will organize the class in up to four (4) operations squads, which will be under supervision of four (4) squad leaders. He or she is ultimately responsible for the actions of his/her class. The class president will maintain a class telephone notification roster. The duties of the class president may be delegated to the vice president who will act in place of the president and shall assist in class management where needed.

10.4 Vice President (Squad Leader 1)

Duties: 1st squad leader will serve as class **vice president**. The class vice president will perform the same duties as the class president in his/her absence. The class may be divided up to four (4) sections. Each squad leader will have 1/4 of the class assigned to them. The squad leader and his/her squad will complete all assignments given to them by Academy staff or the class president. Cadets will receive training assignments in the skill's functional areas by squads. The squad leaders will report to Academy staff through the class president. Squad leaders may delegate assignments to his or her subordinates within each squad.

10.5 Squad Leader 2

Duties: 2nd squad leader will serve as class **Sergeant (Sgt) of Arms**. The Sgt of Arms will take lead in Physical fitness, motivating fellow cadets with work out plans, inspections, hygiene (shaving) and uniform inspection, and oversee administering a class wide disciplinary action in a formation setting for accountability. The class will be divided into four (4) sections. Each squad leader will have 1/4 of the class assigned to them. The squad leader and his/her squad will complete all assignments made to them by Academy staff or the class president. Cadets will receive training assignments in the skill's functional areas by squads. The squad leaders will report to Academy staff through the class president. Squad leaders may delegate assignments to his or her subordinates within each squad.

10.6 Squad Leader 3

Duties: 3rd squad leader will serve as class **secretary/treasurer**. The secretary/treasurer will keep records as required for the class in session. The class will be divided into four (4) sections. Each squad leader will have 1/4 of the class assigned to them. The squad leader and his/her squad will complete all assignments made to them by Academy staff or the class president. Cadets will receive training assignments in the skill's functional areas by squads. The squad leaders will report to Academy staff through the class president. Squad leaders may delegate assignments to his or her subordinates within each squad.

10.7 Squad Leader 4

Duties: 4th squad leader will serve as class **historian**. The historian will document anything of historical significance to the class. This may include written or **photographic information** obtained in corroboration with the instructor that may be shared at graduation. The historian is responsible for leaving historical documentation, plaques, etc. with the Academy upon graduation. The class will be divided into four (4) sections. Each squad leader will have 1/4 of the class assigned to them. The squad leader and his/her squad will complete all assignments made to them by Academy staff or the class president. Cadets will receive training assignments in the skill's functional areas by squads. The squad leaders will report to Academy staff through the class president. Squad leaders may delegate assignments to his or her subordinates within each squad.

10.8 Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy Advisory Committee

LRGVDC utilizes the collective knowledge and experience of local law enforcement personnel to serve on the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy Advisory Committee.

- a. Committee meetings are held annually at a minimum; however, generally the committee will meet once a quarter. All members are appointed by the LRGVDC Executive Director, and the composition of the committee includes law enforcement agency chief executives, law enforcement instructors and at least 1/3 general public.
- b. The primary function of the advisory committee is to advise on the development of curriculum, provide input into the development of policies and procedures, advise on the need to study, evaluate, and identify specific training needs, advise on the determination of the types, frequency, and location of courses to be offered, advise on the establishment of the standards for admission, prerequisites, minimum and maximum class size, attendance, and retention; and advise on the order of preference among employees or prospective appointees of the sponsoring organization and other persons, if any.
- c. Advisory committee members do not have the authority to make determinations for cadet disciplinary actions, including cadet appeals.

10.9 Report of Non-Compliance Violation

LRGVDC also is committed to investigating and taking appropriate action into reports of non-compliance violations and prohibits retaliation against any person making a report. To submit an identified or anonymous report, please visit the main page of www.lrgvdc.org.



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