

Vermont Criminal Justice Council (VCJC) Sub-Committees January 19, 2021

Committees will utilize the mechanisms identified in *'Roberts Rules of Order'* for conducting business and when making official recommendations to the Executive Director.

One or more Vermont Police Academy staff are assigned to a given committee and are responsible for attending and coordinating committee meetings, offering guidance, recording committee minutes, and acting as liaison between the committee and the Executive Director. All committee meetings are open to the public, except for the Professional Regulation sub-committee, and their schedule and meeting location shall be posted on the VCJC website.

Note: This is in draft format. This draft does represent where the 24 members and/or proxies of the Vermont Criminal Justice Council (VCJC) have been assigned. The VCJC members are highlighted in yellow. Please note that some members have been assigned to multiple sub-committees and/or working groups based upon their request.

All sub-committees and working groups will be required to hold their first meeting no later than February 1st. The Chair of each sub-committee will be tasked with updating the brief description of each committee based upon legislative mandates.

This draft has been sent to the House Government Operations Committee of the Vermont Legislature following testimony at 1000 hours on January 21, 2021.

Domestic Violence Sub-Committee:

The VCJC Domestic Violence Committee was originally formed in 2008 to create an eight-hour domestic violence and VCJC approved curriculum to meet training demands required through Act - 174, which added mandated domestic violence training for all Vermont law enforcement officers. Per 20 VSA §2365(a)... “to remain certified, law enforcement officers shall receive by 2011 at least eight hours of domestic violence training in a program approved by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council and the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.” Hereafter, the Domestic Violence Committee was charged with developing new domestic violence related trainings that continue to meet the Act’s statutory requirements. Vermont law enforcement officers must receive domestic violence training every two years to maintain certification and this training is required during even number years.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: Jennifer Firpo

Members

- (Chair) Robbie Blish, Chief, Woodstock Police Department
- Carolyn Hanson, Attorney General’s Office
- Sam Hill, Sheriff, Washington County Sheriff’s Department
- Heather Holter, Vermont Council on Domestic Violence
- Ingrid Jonas, Major, Vermont State Police
- Sarah Kunz-Robinson, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Elaine Boyce, Center for Crime Victims Services
- Cassandra Burdyshaw, Human Rights Commission

Canine Sub-Committee:

The VCJC Canine Committee is charged with oversight of the Vermont Police Canine Training Program. The Program's mission is to develop canine teams that are useful and effective for their respective law enforcement agencies. The program provides basic and in-service level courses which are certified by the VCJC. All training provided is based on practical, realistic, and field-related circumstances. Performance is monitored through formal training sessions and field observations to ensure remedial training is available when needed. The expertise of the instructional staff is available to all law enforcement agencies seeking development or improvements to canine programs. The committee ensures best practices consistent with current statute and caselaw are implemented within Vermont's law enforcement canine community. Committee members assist with the evaluation, certification, re-certification, and other program needs as identified.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: [Robert Ryan](#)

Members

- (Chair) Cpl. David Dewey Colchester Police Department Committee
- LT. Robert Giolito Vermont Dept of Motor Vehicles
- Sgt. Mark Redmond South Burlington Police Department
- Michael Carifio U.S. Forest Service
- Sgt. Richard Slusser Vermont State Police
- Chief Richard Cloud Chester Police Department
- Robert Sterling Vermont Fish & Wildlife
- Capt. Scott Dunlap Vermont State Police
- Chief William Dodge Barre Town Police
- Cpl. Trent Martin Burlington Police Department
- Sgt. Thomas Radford Burlington Police Department (retired)

Use-of-Force Sub-Committee:

The Use-of-force Committee is composed of law enforcement professionals representing agencies from throughout Vermont, committee members range in rank from Officer to Chief. Members are appointed by the Executive Director. Committee members are advanced in their field and extremely knowledgeable in their arena of training, which includes the use of law enforcement firearms of all types and non-deadly use-of-force techniques and equipment. The committee has a myriad of responsibilities within its purview. Responsibilities include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Reviewing and recommending curriculum(s) for use-of-force classes related to Level – I, Level – II, Level – III, and in-service law enforcement training.
- Providing guidance to instructors throughout the state relative to use-of-force training
- Recommending changes and improvements for the facility regarding use-of-force training
- Recommending standards for use-of-force instructors of all levels and disciplines
- Providing input for the implementation of programs related to use-of-force.
- Reviewing special requests (*i.e.* – *advanced levels of certification, time extensions, etc.*) relative to use-of-force instructor certifications and re-certifications

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: Jacob Hansell

Members

- Chair: Michael Akerlind, Sgt., Colchester PD
- Vice Chair: Russell Shopland, Spl. Warden, VT Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- Robbie Blish, Chief, Woodstock PD
- Paul Sokolowski, Sergeant, VSP
- Matthew Murano, Chief, Wilmington PD
- Randy Lopes, Cpl., Burlington PD
- Eugene Duplissis Sgt., Vermont State Police
- Jason Williams, Cpl., Rutland City PD
- Robert Currier, Senior Warden, VT Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- Eugene Cote, Lt, Vt Dept of Motor Vehicles
- David Scherr, Attorney General's Office
- Erica Marthage, States Attorney & Sheriff's
- Karim Chapman, Governor Appointed VCJC Member

Training Advisory Sub-Committee:

The Training Advisory Committee (TAC) is comprised of representatives from throughout the Vermont Criminal Justice System. The TAC's primary charge is to conduct comprehensive reviews of new and updated curriculums for basic training and in-service academy programs (*excluding those specifically charged to other VCJC sub-committees*). The TAC recommends acceptance or denial of training programs to the Executive Director and in addition to these reviews, the TAC periodically conducts scheduled reviews of Level – II and Level – III training to ensure they are reflective of the current needs, legalities and best recommended practices encompassing modern policing. The TAC is responsible for review of academy instructor certification and re-certification requests in instances where extenuating circumstances arise causing staff to seek their counsel. In addition to these responsibilities, the TAC may undertake special assignments as tasked by the Executive Director.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: [Cindy Taylor-Patch](#)

Members

- Chair: Lt. Steve Coote, Vermont State Police
- Vice Chair: Sgt. Jason Covey, Middlebury Police Department
- Chief Derrick Tienken, Winhall Police
- Sgt. Fred Whitcomb, Stowe Police
- Sgt. Chad Barrett, Vermont Fish & Wildlife
- Sheriff. Jennifer Harlow, Orange CSD
- Sgt. Andrew Bent, Washington CSD
- Cpl. Adam Murach, Brandon Police
- Chief Skyler Genest, Vermont Department of Liquor Control
- Chief George Merkel, Vergennes Police
- Lt. Bob Giolito, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles
- Commander Greg Sheldon, Rutland Police
- Sgt. Dan Delgado, Burlington Police
- Maira Tungatarova, Governor Appointed VCJC Member
- Christopher Louras, Governor Appointed VCJC Member
- Michael Schirling, Department of Public Safety
- Tammy Boudah, Governor Appointed VCJC Member
- Justin Stedman, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife
- John Federico, Vermont State Employees Association
- Heather Simons, Vermont Department of Corrections
- Brian Searles, Governor Appointed VCJC Member

VCJC Entrance Requirements Working Group (Part of the TAC)

The time has come to be able to deliver an online written examination that is relevant, contemporary and with as few biases as humanly possible. This test should be able to be administered by an outside vendor who can ensure that it is being proctored properly and securely. The same goes for the psychological profile assessment. The Council should approve three or more tests that are deemed credible and allow agencies to administer this test directly, online. The agency would be responsible for ensuring this has been completed. Although not a part of S. 124 this same committee should look at PT standards for the entrance exam, as the test is being reevaluated based upon national best practices.

This committee and the VCJC should also be aware of and discuss physical fitness testing requirements for all level II certified officers. Level II certification currently does not require an officer to pass a physical fitness test. However, these same officers perform several of the same law enforcement responsibilities as those who are level 3 certified.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: [Cindy Taylor-Patch & Leslie Bodette](#)

Members:

Justin Stedman, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife
John Federico, Vermont State Employees Association
Heather Simons, Vermont Department of Corrections

*Others assigned from the larger TAC, TBD.

Comprehensive Training/Curriculum Review Working Group (As part of the TAC)

This area is so critically important and appears to be enough of a lift to review all existing curriculum through the collective lens of Council members and subject matter experts. The staff from the Vermont Police Academy would likely be the same as the existing Training Advisory Committee, but with a more specific focus. Areas of focus will immediately include several areas identified within S. 124. It may be determined that this function be the responsibility of the Training Advisory Committee and this becomes the responsibility of that sub-committee.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: [Cindy Taylor-Patch & Andrew Graham](#)

Members:

Christopher Louras, Governor Appointed VCJC Member

Michael Schirling, Department of Public Safety

Tammy Boudah, Governor Appointed VCJC Member

*Others assigned from the larger TAC, TBD.

Highway Safety Sub- Committee:

The Highway Safety Committee's membership is comprised of individuals with a range of expertise surrounding highway safety issues as related to law enforcement training. This committee is tasked with the review, implementation and oversight of law enforcement training matters related to highway safety. The committee reviews instructor certification requirements as required and addresses specific charges assigned by the Executive Director. The Highway Safety Committee's mission is to address law enforcement training relative to the following:

- Law enforcement vehicle operations
- Impaired driving enforcement to include alcohol and drugged driving, Drug Recognition Experts (*DRE*) and Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (*ARIDE*)
- Crash investigation
- Motor vehicle law
- Other issues tasked to the committee by the Executive Director relative to highway safety.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinators: Christopher Conway & Kenneth Hawkins

Members:

- Chair: Lt. Kevin Geno, Rutland County, Sheriff's Office
- Sgt. Jay Riggen, Vermont State Police
- Lt. Camillo Grande Bennington Police Department
- LEL Paul White, State Highway Safety Office Behavioral Safety Unit
- LEL Bill Jenkins, State Highway Safety Office Behavioral Safety Unit
- Mandy White, Vermont Highway Safety Alliance
- Glen Button, Public Member
- Anthony Facos, Department of Motor Vehicles
- Michael Major, Vermont Police Association

Fair and Impartial Policing Sub-Committee:

The Fair and Impartial Policing Sub-Committee is comprised of law enforcement professionals representing agencies from throughout Vermont, as well as invested community stakeholders. One of this sub-committee's charges is to collaborate and disseminate mandatory biennial training as set forth in 20 VSA 2358(e)(3). This statute requires all law enforcement officers to receive Vermont Criminal Justice Council approved training relative to Fair and Impartial Policing during odd-numbered years. The Fair and Impartial Policing Sub-Committee is also tasked to review and update basic Fair and Impartial Policing Curriculum, to ensure relevance and alignment with current best practices.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: [Jennifer Firpo](#)

Members

- Chair: Major Justin Stedman, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Vice Chair: Dr. Etan Nasreddin-Longo, RDAP Chairperson, Co-Director of Vermont State Police Fair & Impartial Policing and Community Affairs
- Tabitha Moore, Founding President, Rutland Area Branch of the NAACP
- Captain Julie Scribner, Vermont State Police
- Amanda Garces, Human Rights Commission
- Lt. Gregg Jager, South Burlington Police
- Xusana Davis, Director of Racial Equity
- Karen Tronsgard-Scott, Vermont Network DOMV/Sexual Violence
- Christopher Louras, Governor Appointed VCJC Member

VCJC Professional Regulation Sub-Committee

Act 56 of 2017, relating to the Professional Regulation of Law Enforcement Officers by the VCJC became effective July 1, 2018. To help navigate this responsibility a VCJC sub-committee should be considered. This committee should consist of no more than five VCJC members. Members will assist the Executive Director with the guidance and investigation of professional regulation matters. This sub-committee will take the lead on the creation of procedural ground rules that will eventually become part of newly created Council rules.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: [Lindsay Thivierge](#)

Members:

Chair: Christopher Brickell, Vermont Chiefs Association
Shawn Pratt, Governor Appointed VCJC Member
Trevor Whipple, Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Mourning Fox, Mental Health Commission
Heather Simons, Vermont Department of Corrections

Waiver Sub-Committee

This is a complex area with no way of standardization as each case presented for a level III waiver differs. This should be considered as a separate committee. In fact, a waiver sub-committee existed in the past and there are enough annual requests to keep a standing committee busy. The sub-committee should determine the scope of work once established but the suggestion is that this committee focus on the more complex out-of-state waiver process, the level II to III waiver discussion and the appeal of any Rule 13 waiver issue. The Executive Director or the Director of Administration grant routine Rule 13 waivers on a consistent basis. For example, an Officer on maternity leave might need a waiver as she would be unable to qualify on firearms until returning to duty in the next calendar year. This committee would be provided with a list of those routine waivers but should provide resources to address the more complex reviews.

Vermont Police Academy Coordinator: [Lindsay Thivierge](#)

Members:

Chair: Brian Searles, Governor Appointed VCJC Member
Mark Anderson, Vermont Sheriff's Association
Jason Batchelder, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife
Erin Hodges, Vermont Troopers Association
Chiefs of Police representative, TBD