

The Vermont Criminal Justice Council, through delivery by the Vermont Police Academy staff, is committed to making Vermont a model for the country in the training, facilitation and monitoring of fair and impartial policing by Vermont law enforcement.

The Vermont Police Academy (VPA) is the only agency responsible for the delivery of certification training that certifies all Vermont law enforcement officers. All training of the roughly 1300 certified law enforcement officers happens initially through academy training. Ongoing (in-service) training also occurs continually and includes statutorily mandated training.

The VPA is directly overseen by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council (VCJC), a group of 24 members that includes not only law enforcement, but community members, advocacy groups, and gubernatorial appointees to provide oversight and guidance of law enforcement training. The VCJC is statutorily responsible for providing mandated training in Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP). This FIP training includes a mandate to collect race data during traffic stops, report the data, analyze the data, post the data for public consumption and transparency, and review of FIP policies. Currently, the VCJC does not have an FIP instructor and provides FIP training to all Vermont law enforcement officers created through contracts.

While the VPA has the responsibility of training and monitoring in-service training of every Vermont law enforcement officer, it is inadequately staffed to meet these legislative responsibilities. Of the staff related to training, 3 of the 5 training positions directly instruct high liability skills such as firearms, use of force, driving, de-escalation practices, and all scenario-based training to level II and level III candidates. Of the remaining two positions, one coordinates all highway safety initiatives including DUI training, Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) and Drug Recognition Expert training (DRE). This position is fully funded through federal monies and specific to just those training initiatives. The last position is partially funded through the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (CCVC) and coordinates Domestic Violence training (DV) as well as FIP training.

The above are the limited positions responsible for the state-wide responsibilities of certification training for all of Vermont law enforcement officers. This is the reason the VPA relies on volunteer, subject matter experts and practitioners from within the field to deliver a majority of other critical training at the academy to include Criminal Law, Accident investigation, Officer Wellness, Motor Vehicle Law, Interviewing, and other critical training.

It is crucial to note - there is no VPA position to train Fair and Impartial Policing for Vermont law enforcement.

The VCJC by early March of 2023 will have a finalized report on the status of Vermont's race data collection. We believe this report will continue to show concerns around data collection, and data quality. While there will be quantitative data, it will lack information received through observations, interviews and surveys (qualitative data).

While the data is reported to the VPA, the data is not analyzed to the point it is informative to the general public. FIP positions 1-3 identified below will greatly increase our ability to provide meaningful and impactful training to all law enforcement, provide a substantial benefit to all Vermonters. Additionally, these positions will allow for meaningful progress with accountability around training, tracking, legitimacy, and verification of training, a need identified in the 2022 Vermont State Auditor's report.

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) works towards common goals that impact our communities. The VCJC however serves all law enforcement agencies, departments, and investigators throughout the state with stakeholders ranging from non-profits to community organizations, and individuals. These positions would have a direct impact not only in delivery of training at the VPA, but would allow for offsite regional training, education, and outreach to agencies and communities to actually deliver the mission of the VCJC statewide. Public Safety is a strong partner in our goal towards full equity and inclusion efforts within the state, as are our Council stakeholders. One of the biggest strengths of the Council is its mission to synthesize the 24 voices into a single voice of action that positively impacts all of Vermont

Positions 1-3 (Fair and Impartial Positions)

Position 1: FIP Inclusion Director

The position will report directly to the Executive Director on all matters related to building a comprehensive academy program, including community development and engagement, as well as equity and inclusion curriculum advancement. The FIP Director would assist in developing the website for recruitment and attracting diverse candidates to the profession and potentially providing a resource center for marginalized populations. This includes process development and ACT 56 reporting (Unprofessional Conduct), embracing holistic processes for victims in the investigation process.

The position would embed Race Equity and Inclusion principles and practices into the VPA operations and entry standards. The Director will work directly with the IADLEST (International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training) project manager to ensure FIP principles and practices are represented in the full job task analysis and curriculum development.

The position would support the Executive Director in Council and Academy activities with the Vermont Social Equity Caucus, RDAP (Racial Disparities in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice System Advisory Panel) and implicit and explicit bias training. The FIP Director would also facilitate, monitor, and review the VCJC Fair and Impartial Policing Model Policy annually.

The position will work with training and operations to ensure a fair and equitable workplace and the development of equitable training and policies. It will also include work on the exploration and creation of alternate pathways to certification for marginalized communities.

The position would ensure compliance with legislative mandates as it relates to Fair and Impartial policing, and work closely with the Vermont State Office of Race and Equity in the development of practices, processes, and training to promote all of Vermont law enforcement.

Position 2: FIP Instructor (Law Enforcement Community and Inclusion Specialist)

The training instructor will be a full-time trainer that is concentrated in the area of development and accreditation of the VPA competencies addressing bias, mental health interventions, outreach, and law enforcement community relationships. The instructor will also assist with the development of intervention training for in-service competencies which would include training for Academy staff, instructors, and training assistants. The instructor will focus largely on integrating principles of prevention, and intervention, in law enforcement practices. Increasing the magnitude of FIP principles taught through Basic training and in-service training would include language learning opportunities for pre-basic and post-basic law enforcement partners, especially those that impact refugee populations on a daily basis. The instructor works directly with the Director of Training, Director of Community Inclusion, FIP (Fair and Impartial) committees, TAC (Training Advisory Committee), and the Community.

The instructor would travel throughout the state to provide cross-training to partners of law enforcement and communities to understand resource pathways and how to holistically work together through community engagement. Areas of focus would include work with committees on FIP (Fair and Impartial Policing), CEW (Conducted Electrical Weapons), Mental Health, Equity and Inclusion, LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans Gender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual), and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).

Position 3: FIP Instructor (Data Analyst and Compliance)

Through 20 VSA 2366, the Criminal Justice Council is responsible for reporting on FIP training, and roadside stop data. Currently, there is a contracted position that offers a limited-scope view into race data reporting. This position would offer yearly quantitative analyses of all race-stop data reporting from law enforcement partners. These analyses would include integrating the community through focus groups and community surveys into advancements in data collection and reporting that would facilitate better law enforcement performance (Qualitative data).

The position would offer First-line Supervisory training on data collection and improvements, and would also concurrently work with a proposed compliance officer in supporting 20 VSA 2359 and agency compliance on collecting roadside stop data. The position would gather data from professional regulation to inform training components integrated into community policing interactions. With data that is provided to the VCJC through race data, and Act 56 officer misconduct reports, the data analyst could synthesize and report on pattern identification and adjustments to inform training within law enforcement.

Regarding Domestic Violence Training position and funding:

The VPA currently employs a Domestic Violence Coordinator. Half of the position cost is borne by the VPA and the other half by the Center for Crime Victims Services as defined by T20 V.S.A. § 2365. The VPA has been involved in conversation with the CCVS on the advantages of the VPA taking on the full funding of this position and the impacts associated to both agencies.

Glossary

VPA	Vermont Police Academy
VCJC	Vermont Criminal Justice Council
DPS	Department of Public Safety
FIP	Fair and Impartial Policing
Act 56	Unprofessional Conduct of Law Enforcement
IADLEST	International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training
RDAP	Racial Disparities in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice System Advisory Panel
TAC	Training Advisory Committee
CEW	Conducted Electrical Weapon