

PROGRAM BENEFITS

The benefits of certification and accreditation are many and will vary among participating agencies based on the state of the agency when it enters the process. In other words, the benefits will be more fully known when the agency quantifies the changes that were made to meet program standards. Generally, these changes involve policy writing, minor facility improvements, and in some cases, equipment purchases.

Below are some of the more common benefits of **Certification and Accreditation**. They:

- Provide a norm for an agency to judge its performance.
- Provide a basis to correct deficiencies in an agency's operations before they become public problems.
- Require agencies to commit policies and procedures to writing.
- Promote accountability among agency personnel and the evenhanded application of policies.
- Provide a means of independent evaluation of agency operations.
- Provide a quality assurance review of the agency.
- Enhance the reputation of the agency and promote public confidence in it.

They are also effective **risk management tools** for preventing and reducing loss in professional liability claims.

CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION

*Accomplishments
highly regarded
by the law enforcement
community.*



07/22/17

MASSACHUSETTS POLICE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION, INC.

Per the by-laws, the Commission consists of an eleven member Board of Directors. Six members are appointed by the **Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association**, one by the **Massachusetts Municipal Association**, and one by the **Massachusetts Police Association**. Three members are elected by the Board; all must have demonstrated expertise in law enforcement and public safety initiatives, and one must be affiliated with an academic institution.

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Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program

The prestigious status of...

Law Enforcement Accreditation

A Badge of Honor

Recognizing Professional Excellence



Police Departments striving to meet and maintain standards that have been established for the profession

Program Overview

- The Commission
- Program Awards
- The Standards
- The Process
- The Application and Fee
- Program Benefits

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THE COMMISSION

ORIGIN

The Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program originated in October of 1996 through the combined efforts of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Coalition and the Executive Office of Public Safety. Through Executive Order No. 392, a new state agency within the Executive Office of Public Safety had been established to oversee *police accreditation*. That agency was the **Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission**.

In February of 2004, the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission transitioned from a state agency to a private, non-profit organization. With the Articles of Organization for the new **Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission, Inc.** having been accepted by the Secretary of the Commonwealth, today, the Commission is a non-profit corporation organized under Chapter 180 of the Massachusetts General Laws and is an organization described in 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Commission offers an accreditation process for police departments in Massachusetts. Like other accreditation programs, the process consists of two major components: (1) establishing professional standards for police departments to meet; and (2) administering a voluntary assessment process by which police departments can be publicly recognized for meeting best practices.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission: To ensure that the delivery of police services within the Commonwealth is at the highest level of professionalism and integrity.

PROGRAM AWARDS

The Commission offers two professional credentialing programs: **Certification and Accreditation**.

Accreditation is the higher of the two program awards consisting of 382 standards: 257 are mandatory; 125 are optional. Mandatory standards that do not apply to the agency are waived. Only a *percentage* of the optional standards must be met; the percentage is based on agency size.

The Certification Program consists of 159 standards, all of which are mandatory. Since these 159 standards are part of the 257 mandatory standards for accreditation, certification is a significant milestone towards accreditation. It is the policy of the Commission that agencies must successfully achieve certification before being assessed for accreditation.

THE STANDARDS

The standards for the **Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program** are based upon national standards established by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). These standards reflect the best professional practices in police management, administration, operations, and support services. The standards prescribe "what" agencies should be doing but not "how" they should be doing it. That decision is left up to each agency to make.

The Standards address areas such as:

- Agency Authority, Jurisdiction and Use of Force
- Recruitment, Selection, and Promotion of Personnel
- Training, Discipline and Internal Affairs
- Patrol, Traffic Operations and Criminal Investigations
- Victim/Witness Assistance
- Emergency Response Planning
- Prisoner Transportation and Holding Facilities
- Records and Communications
- Collection and Preservation of Evidence
- Property and Evidence Control

THE PROCESS

Participation in the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program is strictly voluntary. Program participants may withdraw from the process at any time without prejudice.

The process consists of six phases:

**Information
Application
Self-assessment
Pre-assessment
On-site Assessment
Commission Review**

Information Phase: Agencies usually begin the process with a simple request for information about certification and accreditation. In response, information to help the agency decide whether or not to participate is provided. The information generally includes an overview of the six phases, the costs (actual and potential), the standards, the benefits and the availability of support services from the Commission.

Application Phase: Once the agency decides to participate in the program, it completes the application form. Upon receipt of the application and fee, instructional material and individualized training are provided to prepare the agency for the next phase of the process: Self-assessment.

Self-Assessment Phase: This phase involves a thorough examination of the agency, by the agency. It is the most labor-intensive and time-consuming phase of the process because the activities in this phase initially begin with a comprehensive review of the standards and include all of the activities associated with preparing for the agency's on-site assessment. The major activities in this phase include: (1) analyzing each standard to determine agency compliance; (2) achieving agency compliance where noncompliance is determined and (3) documenting and centralizing agency compliance for the on-site assessors to review.

Pre-Assessment Phase: This phase of the process involves two preliminary reviews: one by the agency's peers, the other by Commission staff. Both pre-assessments give the applicant agency an indication of its readiness for an on-site assessment by Commission-appointed assessors.

On-Site Assessment Phase: The evaluation process for certification consists of a two-day assessment in the agency's facility verifying compliance with all applicable standards. Compliance is verified by reviewing written directives and documentation, interviewing employees, and observing various aspects of the agency's facility. The assessment for *accreditation* is conducted in three days by three assessors and includes some assessment notification requirements.

Commission Review Phase: Based on the findings and recommendations of the Assessment Team (i.e. after all program requirements have been met), the Commission grants certification or accreditation for a three-year period. Upon achieving initial certification, agencies work towards re-certification or pursue accreditation. Accredited agencies work towards re-accreditation. Mid-point contact with the agency's Accreditation Manager monitors ongoing compliance with program standards in between assessments.

THE APPLICATION AND FEE

The Program Application and Invoice consists of three parts. Part I requests some information about the agency, Part II deals with the agency's eligibility to participate in the program, and Part III is the Invoice for the annual fee.

The annual fee for FY2018 is \$1,250. To continue in the program, fees will be invoiced annually (July 1– June 30). The pro-rated fee for partial year enrollment is \$100 per month. Agencies with 10 or fewer full-time officers pay 50% of the annual fee (\$625).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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