



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 52, ISSUE 8 DECEMBER 2025

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MAJOR NEWS

Dear Law Enforcement Friends:

As we transition into a new year we extend our deepest gratitude to all law enforcement agencies, academies and staff across the Commonwealth. Your dedication, professionalism, and commitment to public safety make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals, families and communities every day.

Whether serving in boroughs, cities, towns, or townships, you continue to uphold the values of service and integrity- often while sacrificing time with your own loved ones to protect others. Your courage and resilience do not go unnoticed.

In 2025 we saw an increase in cadet enrollments at our municipal academies throughout the Commonwealth. I would ask everyone to continue to recruit the next generation of municipal police officers for this noble profession of being a police officer. With upcoming retirements, now is the time to fill our academies to help all municipal police department throughout Pennsylvania with staffing.

It has been a pleasure for us at the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission to help support all of your agencies in 2025 and we will continue to support you in 2026. Thank you for all that you do to keep Pennsylvania safe and strong. We wish you and your families a safe, peaceful, and joyful holiday season, and a healthy and hopeful New Year.

Best Wishes,

Major William A. Brown

Executive Director

EDUCATOR'S EDGE

I hope this final Newsletter of 2025 finds you well as we wrap this year up. I am happy to report recruitment and academy enrollment for 2025 was up 18% overall which is a seven year high! Training the best and brightest to our profession continues to be key tasking for the MPOETC Training Team. To that end, we have initiated a total curriculum review for the basic academy curriculum. We are also reviewing and reimagining how we develop and conduct annual MIST training. If you have constructive ideas or want to be a part of this process, please email us at MPOTRNING@PA.GOV and let us know.

Have a safe and healthy holiday season!

Michael Corricelli, Director of Training



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIREARMS: Beginning January 1, 2026, any Act 120 officer who uses a patrol rifle **must** qualify with that weapon using the 2026 Mandatory Patrol Rifle Qualification Course. If an Act 120 officer uses a lethal shotgun, they must qualify using the 2026 Shotgun Qualification Course. Prior “Optional Courses” are no longer accepted. If you do not carry or use a rifle or a lethal shotgun, you do not need to qualify with that platform. Please see the MPOETC website for additional details.

CONTROL TACTICS: The CT program will be changing for 2026. Messages will go out to all Police Chiefs and approved CT instructors shortly. The new requirements will be based on an annual theme developed by a team of subject matter experts and based on patterns and trends identified around the Commonwealth. Look for these messages to come out shortly!

Commission Meeting Highlights

On December 10-11, 2025, the Municipal Police Officers’ Education and Training Commission held its regular quarterly meeting at the MPOETC office in Harrisburg, PA. On Wednesday afternoon, December 10, 2025, the Commissioners held committee meetings to discuss the business of the Commission. On Thursday morning, December 11, 2025, the Commissioners met in an Executive Committee meeting, which was followed by the normal meeting of the full Commission, where they took the following actions:

- The Commission approved a tuition increase for HACC from \$5,750 to \$6,300.
- The Commission approved the following motions regarding MIST reimbursements:
 - Reimburse \$25 per officer, per course for 2025 MIST from July through December 2025
 - Reimburse \$25 per officer, per course for 2026 MIST
 - Continue a \$100,000 annual maximum cap on MIST reimbursements to academies
- The Commission voted to revoke 7 officers for the following convictions:
 - Voluntary Manslaughter
 - Possessing an Instrument Crime
 - Reckless Endangerment
 - Corruption of Minors
 - Simple Assault
 - Obstruction of Administration of Law
 - Unsworn Falsification
 - Possession and Distribution of Child Pornography

NEXT MEETING:

MARCH 11 AND 12

WYNDHAM
GETTYSBURG HOTEL

95 PRESIDENTIAL CIR.
GETTYSBURG, PA
717-339-0020



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QUARTERLY LEGAL UPDATES



TYPE: Legal Update

TITLE: "High Crime Area"

CONTENT: Commonwealth v. Lewis 37 EAP 2024 (09/25/2025)

Facts: The case arose from police surveillance in Philadelphia: officers saw a group of men on the 1200 block of West Dauphin Street that "appeared to be gambling," which violates local ordinance. When officers approached, one of the men — Anthony Lewis — made eye contact with an officer, looked startled, and fled, discarding a black leather bag over a fence. Police recovered the bag and found a loaded firearm; DNA testing later linked the gun to Lewis. Lewis moved to suppress the firearm, arguing the police lacked reasonable suspicion to chase him.

At a suppression hearing, officers testified they patrolled the area frequently, had often observed gambling and other illicit activities there, and viewed the block as "high-crime." The trial court credited that testimony and denied suppression. A bench trial resulted in Lewis's conviction for multiple firearm-related offenses. The lower appellate court (the Superior Court) affirmed the conviction, upholding the denial of suppression.

Issue: What constitutes a "high-crime area" for purposes of reasonable suspicion?

Ruling: The Pennsylvania Supreme Court granted review solely to answer the narrow question: **what evidence is required for a court to treat a location as a "high-crime area"** for purposes of assessing reasonable suspicion. The court declined to adopt a rigid, multi-element test for "high-crime area" status (e.g., requiring statistical crime data, defined geographic boundaries, temporal limits, and matching crime-type). Instead, the Court reaffirmed that labeling an area "high-crime" remains a permissible contextual factor under the totality-of-the-circumstances analysis used to evaluate reasonable suspicion. But the Court cautioned that "mere invocation of 'high-crime area' is never sufficient."

Significance: Applying those principles, the Court found the evidence here: officers' credible testimony about frequent street gambling, narcotics activity, and violent crimes in the area was sufficient to sustain a "high-crime area" designation. Combined with the observed flight, that gave the police reasonable suspicion to pursue Lewis. The Court therefore affirmed the denial of suppression.

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NEW AGENCY EXECUTIVES

Chief Brian Freysz

Manheim Township

Lancaster County

Chief Stephen D. Powell

Exeter Township

Berks County

Chief David Lantz

Towanda Borough

Bradford County

Chief Kenneth Ruckel

Cranberry Township

Allegheny County

Chief John C. Migatulski

Conewago Township

Lancaster County

Chief Eric Sims

Lebanon City

Lebanon County

Chief Charles Watson

Swissvale Baddock Hills Regional

Allegheny County

WHAT'S NEW AT MPOETC?



Tom Yeckley transferred to PennDOT in November to accept a promotion to Administrative Assistant 1. Tom was with MPOETC since 2014 and served in the Certification Unit as a Clerical Assistant 3. He will be missed. We wish Tom success in his new position!

Dan Viozzi recently joined MPOETC as a Clerical Assistant 3. For the past year Dan worked at DHQ in Records & Identification. Before joining PSP, Dan was with UPS for 18 years as a Security Investigator. When not working, Dan spends his free time traveling for his daughters (Morghan, 15 and McKenna, 10) sports events or watching Notre Dame. Welcome Dan!



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POLICE ACADEMY OF THE QUARTER



The Beaver County Municipal Police Training Academy was established in 1974 and is located on the campus of the Beaver County Community College in Monaca, Pennsylvania. The Beaver Academy is a part-time academy and is one of five police academies in Pennsylvania that currently operate a part time police academy. The Beaver academy typically runs from August through the following June. Approximately 2,000 cadets have graduated in the past 51 years. Cadets attending the Beaver Academy receive 35 credits towards a criminal justice degree.

The Beaver Academy has a Milo Simulator, which gives the cadets practical experience in decision making. The Theater 180 system offers a 3-screen configuration that provides enhanced field of view for even more realism and effectiveness. There are 1,000 branching scenarios that include options officers need to practice skills like communication, de-escalation, situational awareness, decision-making under pressure and force option proficiency.

Director William "Bill" Petures is set to start his ninth year as the academy Director in January 2026. He retired from the Monaca Borough Police Department in January 2017, after 39 years of service, with the last 11 years as the Chief of Police. Bill has served the citizens of Monaca in his roles as police officer, Chief of Police and as the Beaver Academy Director, and we salute him for his 48 years of service to the law enforcement community!



Director Bill Petures



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In Other News...



pennsylvania
STATE POLICE

PSP Bureau of Forensic Services

The PSP Bureau of Forensic Services has added Vacuum Metal Deposition (VMD) technology in the Latent Print Section of the Harrisburg Regional Laboratory. The VMD 1260 system from West Technology Systems Ltd is designed to accommodate a wide range of evidence. VMD is recognized as one of the most powerful latent print development techniques used on various porous, semi-porous, and non-porous substrates. VMD has been used to develop latent prints on evidence for cold cases and has provided results on items that have been submerged in water, buried underground, or subjected to very high temperatures.

If you have questions about how this technology may apply to your investigations—particularly in cold-case work, complex evidence, or non-traditional substrates, please feel free to contact the Bureau of Forensic Services, Latent Print Section.

OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

The Steelton Borough Police Department awarded **Officer CJ Reyes** its highest honor, the Medal of Valor, for his heroic actions during a shooting incident outside the Soul Lounge Cafe on July 6, 2025. The medal is reserved for rare cases where an officer risks their life under extremely dangerous circumstances while on duty.

At approximately 3:40 a.m., while conducting a traffic stop across the street, Officer Reyes encountered 32-year-old Kenneth Lamar Cox of Harrisburg firing a 9mm handgun at another individual near a large crowd. Cox fired 13 rounds; when Reyes confronted him, Cox turned the gun toward the officer, prompting Reyes to shoot Cox in the groin, stopping the threat.

Reyes and another officer quickly located and arrested the wounded suspect. The department praised Reyes for using his training to neutralize the danger, preventing further harm to the public. Cox faces multiple charges, including aggravated assault and illegal firearms possession.



OFFICER CAYETANO "CJ" REYES

Officer Reyes is a graduate of the Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) Police Academy class 124, June 2024, and was hired by Steelton PD in July of that same year. **Congrats Officer Reyes!**



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LOOKING FOR NEW HIRES?



Below is a list of Academies and the number of pre-hire officers available for hire.

Allegheny County Police Training Academy- 7

Allentown Police Academy- 7

Delaware County Community College- 22

Harrisburg Area Community College- 2

Indiana University of Pennsylvania- 3

Lackawanna College- 27

Mansfield University- 3

Mercyhurst University Police Academy- 15

Pennsylvania Highlands Community College- 18

Temple University- 14

Westmoreland County Community College- 13

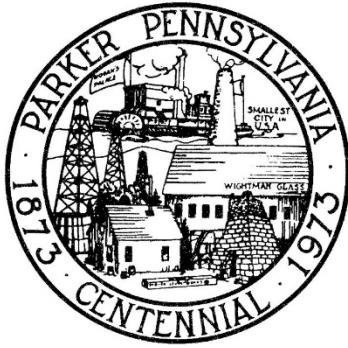
131 Cadets are available for hire. Please reach out to any of these academies for more information about available cadets!



Did you know?



The smallest *city* in Pennsylvania by population is **Parker**, in Armstrong County, with only 695 residents as of the 2020 census, is less than 1 square mile and known as the "Smallest City in the U.S.A."



Parker was incorporated as a city on March 1, 1873, by special state legislation in the midst of the northwestern Pennsylvania oil boom. The new municipality was called "Parker" and made up the earlier villages of Parker's Landing (on the Allegheny River) and Lawrenceburg (on the bluff above the river). Residents assumed that Parker would quickly become a major population center, and at the height of the oil boom, the population of Parker grew to over 20,000.

The boom quickly went bust, however, and by the 1880s the "city" returned to its historic small village size—a population of approximately 1,000.

A post office called Parker's Landing was established in 1871. In 1894, its name was changed to Parkers Landing and in 1950, the name was changed to Parker. It remains in operation to the present. Parker appears in the 1876 Atlas of Armstrong County, Pennsylvania.

The City of Parker Police Department currently has 1 part-time police officer. Kerrick Caldwell has served in Parker since 2019.



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ADMINISTRATIONS/CERTIFICATION

ACT 120 APPLICATIONS AND CERTIFICATION,
ACT 120 INSTRUCTOR APPLICATION AND
CERTIFICATION

EMAIL: MPOCERTIFICATION@PA.GOV

TELEPHONE: (717) 346-4086

FAX: (717) 346-7781 OR (717) 346-7782

TRAINING

BASIC TRAINING CURRICULUM, MANDATORY IN-SERVICE TRAINING, RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT IDENTIFICATION ACT

EMAIL: MPOTRAINING@PA.GOV

TELEPHONE: (717) 346-4086

FAX: (717) 346-7781 OR (717) 346-7782

GRANT REIMBURSEMENT

CONTINUING LAW ENFORCEMENT EDUCATION REIMBURSEMENT (MIST) BASIC TRAINING TUITION/SALARY

EMAIL: RA-SPMPOFSS@PA.GOV

TELEPHONE: (717) 346-4086

FAX: (717) 346-7781 OR (717) 346-7782

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS/INSPECTIONS

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE/SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

EMAIL: MPOSTANDARDS@PA.GOV

TELEPHONE: (717) 346-4086

FAX: (717) 346-7781 OR (717) 346-7782

MPOETC WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PUBLIC BUSINESS:

DECEMBER 25, 2025 (CHRISTMAS)

JANUARY 1, 2026 (NEW YEARS)

JANUARY 19, 2026 (MLK DAY)

FEBRUARY 16, 2026 (PRESIDENTS DAY)

The Municipal Police Officers' Education & Training Commission was established in 1974 to set hiring and training standards for police departments in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through strict certification procedures and standardized basic and continuing professional in-service training for police officers. The Commission needs the support of the entire law enforcement community, state and local government officials, and the public to be successful. Please circulate this *Newsletter* throughout your agency and to the government officials in your municipality. The quarterly newsletter is also available on the MPOETC website at <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/mpoetc/resources/newsletters-and-annual-reports.html>

