



# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 53, ISSUE 9 MARCH 2026

MAJOR WILLIAM A. BROWN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUZANNE M. WILLIAMS- EDITOR & D.J. KEISER- DESIGNER

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Dauphin County
- William C. Barrett**  
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Luzerne County
- Richard M. Bosco**  
Chief, Latrobe Borough PD  
Westmoreland County
- Bart E. Burne, Ed.D.**  
Law Enforcement Educator  
Luzerne County
- Justin P. Butler**  
Non-Commissioned Police Officer  
Scranton City PD, Lackawanna County
- Vincent J. DiCenzo, Jr.**  
FOP Representative  
Allegheny County
- Matthew D. Gillespie**  
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Philadelphia County
- John Kitzinger**  
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Dauphin County
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Dept. of Community & Economic Dev.  
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N. Huntingdon Twp, Westmoreland County
- Vacant**  
Borough Official
- Vacant**  
City Police Chief
- Vacant**  
Non-Commissioned Police Officer
- Vacant**  
Township Official of the Second Class

## EDUCATOR'S EDGE

In over three decades of law enforcement, one of the things I've come to learn is cops generally dislike two things: change and when things don't change that should. Since MPOETC rolled out the new 2026 Control Tactics (CT) course, we've received a lot of positive feedback, but also a lot of questions. I'm using this quarter's message to address these questions and hopefully provide some clarification.

Pennsylvania passed Act 59 of 2020 which among other things, mandated annual training in the use of force, de-escalation techniques, and harm reduction techniques. In response, MPOETC collaborated with a team of highly skilled subject matter experts (SME) to create a two-part MIST course and started providing this training in 2022. At that time, MPOETC approved a group of Temporary MIST instructors to deliver this training throughout the Commonwealth. The instructors had to meet the minimum standards to be a CT instructor which included completion of a MPOETC-approved CT Instructor Development Course (IDC). The idea was being a boxer or martial arts black belt was impressive but insufficient. We wanted people to have quality instruction and understand the fundamentals of training police officers.

To identify who was conducting department level CT training, MPOETC requested all previously approved "Temporary" instructors resubmit an application in 2025. We sent multiple messages on TACS, included it in two newsletters, and had it posted on the front page of our website for over six months. We approved over 500 applications before our end date of June 1, 2025.

During that time, we routinely heard from officers asking when we were updating the training and coming out with something new. They were sick of doing the same thing year after year. Well, MPOETC does listen! We convened a group of 12 CT SMEs and decided to take a slightly different approach than years' past. We looked at what are the most common things officers are facing in terms of threats, and our team recognized many physical confrontations are going to the ground. More concerning, many officers don't know how to fall safely, get up without exposing their heads, or know how to operate from their backs. With that, we developed a theme-based approach to training with this year being "Surviving the Ground." Our goal is not to make MMA fighters but to give officers fundamentals skills if they do find themselves going to the ground.

So how do we make sure all MPOETC approved CT instructors can teach this material? First, we developed step-by-step videos that not only explains the techniques but shows them in a simple, easy to learn method. These videos are available to both instructors and any officer who wants to see and are available free through a collaboration with the PA Chief's Association on their PAVTN network. If you don't have an account, you can get one by simply emailing their administrator. Additionally, MPOETC is holding free four-hour train-the-trainer sessions around the state starting March 31. *(Continued on next page)*



# EDUCATORS EDGE CONTINUED...

So, what about the Use of Force course, is that the same thing? The easy answer is No! To maintain your municipal officer certification, you must complete both the Use of Force course which is offered on both PAVTN or the MPOETC website. This is a PowerPoint® presentation regarding the legal and ethical decision making related to your use of force. You must also complete the hands-on portion of the Control Tactics portion. This is mandatory participation, and you must complete all six portions of the evaluation checklist to pass this course. We have heard and witnessed officers saying they were just going to watch the training and that would count. Sorry, but it doesn't! If you have a health issue that prohibits you from doing these activities, reschedule your training for another time when you can. There is nothing so physically taxing that any fit for duty officer cannot do. As of March 13, 2026, over 750 officers have completed this training without issue.

Effective immediately, when your department TACS administrator enters your training in the TACS system, you must select the instructor from the dropdown menu. If your department instructor isn't listed, he/she is not approved by MPOETC. They can easily apply through TACS by going through their profile and selecting the tab "Request for CT instructor application".

In closing, we understand change is hard for some but MPOETC's goals are to reduce injuries to officers and the public we're entrusted to protect and reduce liability for officers and departments. For more information on Mandatory In-Service and to learn how to register your department level instructor(s) see pages 7-8.

Michael Corricelli, Director of Training

## Commission Meeting Highlights

On March 11 & 12, 2026, the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission held its regular quarterly meeting at the Wyndham Gettysburg Hotel in Gettysburg, PA. On Wednesday afternoon, March 11, 2026, the Commissioners held committee meetings to discuss the business of the Commission. On Thursday morning, March 12, 2026, 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 deviation to the current Mandatory shotgun qualification course for officers that use lethal shotguns. If the department only deploys slug ammunition, that department may qualify using slugs only for the entire qualification course. For departments that deploy both buckshot and slugs, they must continue to qualify using both loads.
- The Commission approved an update regarding Act 89 reimbursements which limits the number of reimbursements to no more than five (5) officers per department per fiscal year. This relates to tuition and salary and not MIST reimbursements.
- The Commission also approved the MPOETC Executive Director the discretion to increase the number of officers a single department can submit reimbursement for from five (5) to a maximum of ten (10) if Act 89 funds are available at the end of the fiscal year.
- The Commission rescinded the Medical Marijuana policy previously approved June 18, 2020. In brief, the federal definition of "unlawful user of or addicted to a controlled substance as it applies to a federal firearms prohibition under 18 U.S.C. 922(g)(3)" changed to no longer include an inference to use by the mere possession of a medical marijuana card.
- The Commission amended Act 57 that § 241a.5(b)(v) shall state: "A review of the applicant's employment information from each previous law enforcement employer to determine the applicant's law enforcement work history. For purposes of this subsection this shall include attempting to contact the prosecuting attorney's office in the jurisdiction(s) in which the applicant was previously employed as a law enforcement officer."
- The Commission voted to revoke 5 officers with each officer having one more of the following convictions:
  - Simple Assault
  - Intimidation of a witness
  - Invasion of Privacy
  - Terroristic Threats

### NEXT MEETING:

JUNE 16 & 17

THE INN AT  
VILLANOVA  
UNIVERSITY

601 COUNTY  
LINE RD

RADNOR, PA

610-519-8000



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# QUARTERLY LEGAL UPDATES



## Type: Legal Updates

### Title: Reasonable Suspicion – Consent to Search

### Content: Commonwealth v. Graham 1037 WDA 2024 (02/02/2026)

**Facts:** On September 8, 2022, Officer Justin DeSimone stopped a vehicle driven by Edward Graham for expired registration. During the stop, he detected the faint smell of unburnt marijuana. The vehicle's owner, Tiara Pannell, admitted she had smoked earlier and that her medical marijuana card had expired. She consented to a search. Officers found marijuana in the console and a firearm in a fanny pack on the back seat. Graham admitted ownership of the fanny pack and acknowledged he did not have a permit to carry a concealed weapon.

Graham filed a motion to suppress the firearm on the grounds the officer unlawfully extended the traffic stop and that the consent to search did not cover the fanny pack. The suppression court denied the motion, and, following a stipulated bench trial, Graham was convicted under Title 18, § 6106(a)(1) for unlicensed carry of a concealed firearm.

### **Issues:**

1. Whether the traffic stop was unlawfully extended when the officer investigated the marijuana smell.
2. Whether the search of the fanny pack exceeded the scope of consent.

**Ruling:** The Court explained that asking about marijuana did not extend the detention beyond what is necessary for the original reason for the stop (citing *Rodriguez*). The questions about marijuana, asking Pannell about her use and her expired medical card, lasted approximately 45 seconds (evidenced by body worn camera footage). The court found, that by the time consent was requested, there was reasonable suspicion of unlawful marijuana possession (odor, admission of use, and no valid medical card).

The Court held that Pannell's consent to search the vehicle reasonably included containers such as the fanny pack where contraband could be stored. Unlike situations where consent is limited to specific areas without indication of criminal content, the presence of marijuana legitimized searching reasonable containers. Also, the Court noted Graham did not persuasively argue he had the privacy interest needed to challenge that consent.

**Significance:** Brief unrelated inquiries (even about marijuana odor) that do not *measurably extend* a traffic stop may be permissible. Consent to search a vehicle can reasonably include the search of containers therein where the subject of the search (e.g., marijuana) might be found.

[J-A19026-25o - 106664824345500327.pdf](#)



# NEW AGENCY EXECUTIVES



**Chief Michael Boyle**  
Wilkes-Barre City  
Luzerne County



**Chief John Korcek**  
Carroll Township  
Washington County



**Chief Ryan Devlin**  
Lansdale Borough  
Montgomery County



**Chief Shawki Lacey**  
Steelton Borough  
Dauphin County



**Chief James Fisher**  
Uwchlan Township  
Chester County



**Chief Jon Ogborn**  
Warwick Township  
Bucks County



**Chief John Henry**  
Lehigh Township  
Northampton County



**Chief Scott Rozitski**  
Wright Township  
Luzerne County



**Chief Jason Lando**  
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police  
Allegheny County



**Chief Stephen D. Powell**  
Exeter Township  
Berks County



**Chief Bradley Getz**  
West Vincent Township  
Chester County

## WHAT'S NEW AT MPOETC?



**Lauren Clift**, MPOETC Clerical Assistant 2, was recently promoted to a Clerical Assistant 3 with the State Police in the Bureau of Records and Identification, Fingerprint ID Section. Lauren was responsible for scanning a large volume of paper files into the Training and Certification System during her 2 years with MPOETC, and her contributions to this project are very much appreciated. We wish her luck in her new position!

**Sydni Shirk** transferred to MPOETC in January to fill the vacant Clerical Assistant 3 position in the Lethal Weapons Unit. Sydni was previously employed as a Clerical Assistant 3 in the State Police, Bureau of Records and Identification, Criminal Records Section. Prior to her employment with the State Police, she was employed as a clerk with the Lebanon County Assistance Office. Welcome Sydni!

**Lieutenant Zachary Ryland** has been promoted to Captain and assigned as Executive Officer to the Deputy Commissioner of Staff at Department Headquarters. During his time with MPOETC, Captain Ryland served as the Assistant Director. We wish Captain Ryland success in his new position!



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Did you know?



# Pennsylvania

## Chiefs of Police Association

**Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association** is an organization comprised of over 1,200 command level law enforcement officers which includes not only chiefs of police, superintendents and commissioners, but also the commanding officers of federal, state and industrial agencies. The Association goal is to be regarded as a world class resource for professional Law Enforcement leadership and a respected voice for Pennsylvania's law enforcement community.

The Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association mission is to promote excellence in service and expertise in law enforcement and public safety services, to advocate for Law Enforcement leaders, and to provide innovative programs and training for our members.

### Online Training from the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association for you and your police department:

PAVTN is the only place that has the MPOETC Mandatory In-Service Training Courses ONLINE, plus other outstanding courses such as investigation of human trafficking, investigating missing persons with Alzheimer's disease, livescan fingerprinting, driving under the influence, fingerprint compliance, investigating sexual assault, investigating stalking, investigating strangulation, PA SAVIN, protection from abuse database, responding to a domestic violence call and many more. The PAVTN currently hosts 73 different training courses that officers can take on-demand. [PAVTN.NET](http://PAVTN.NET)

The **Use of Force training** should be completed by officers either through PAVTN or in a classroom setting **prior** to attending the 4-hour Control Tactics qualification course.

The Control Tactics course available on PAVTN is intended for instructors to review and become familiar with the material before delivering the course. It is **not** designed to replace the in-person qualification component.

If you choose to require your officers to complete both the Use of Force and the online Control Tactics material prior to attending the qualification course, that decision is within your discretion as the instructor. However, please note that completion of the online Control Tactics module does **not** substitute for the in-class qualification course.

You can find training resources on the MPOETC website under the In-Service training tab, Use of Force and Control Tactics section.

[Use of Force and Control Tactics | Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)



# POLICE ACADEMY OF THE QUARTER



**The Reading Police Academy** has been certified **since 1976** by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission to teach the basic police officer curriculum and is celebrating its 50th year. The Reading Police Academy is owned by the City of Reading and operated by the Reading Police Department. The Academy is located at 540 Upland Avenue Reading, PA 19611 2nd FLR (Rm 223).

"This anniversary reflects the consistent work that has gone into training officers to meet state standards and serve their communities," said Reading Police Chief Javier Ruiz. "The Academy continues to focus on practical, professional training that prepares cadets for the realities of the job."

Since receiving state recognition, the Academy has expanded its training model and developed partnerships with Alvernia University and Kutztown University, allowing criminal justice students to attend the Academy as part of their academic programs.

"For 50 years, the Reading Police Academy has played an important role in preparing officers not just for Reading, but for communities throughout the region," said Mayor Eddie Morán. "Strong training is essential to public safety, and this milestone reflects the value of that investment."

Since its founding, the Reading Police Academy has graduated numerous cadets who have gone on to careers in law enforcement across Berks County and surrounding areas. The City of Reading Police Department remains committed to providing high-quality training and education as the Academy looks ahead to its next 50 years of service.



First Class 1976



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

**MAY 25, 2026 (MEMORIAL DAY)**

**JUNE 19, 2026 (JUNETEENTH)**

#### **ADMINISTRATIONS/CERTIFICATION**

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

EMAIL: [MPOCERTIFICATION@PA.GOV](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:MPOSTANDARDS@PA.GOV)

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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/m-poetc/resources/newsletters-and-annual-reports.html>



# In Other News...



## pennsylvania STATE POLICE

In accordance with laboratory evidence destruction policies, the Bureau of Forensic Services (BFS) Firearm and Tool Mark (FATM) Section is initiating the destruction of test fires that have been retained for more than ten (10) years.

Prior to 2014, laboratory reports generated by National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) Specialists and the FATM Section did not include a statement regarding the retention of test fires created for NIBIN entry. This communication serves as official notification that test fires created by the FATM Section prior to 2014 will be destroyed.

Criminal Investigation Section Commanders or their designee shall review past homicide cases in which test fires were conducted and, after consultation with the appropriate District Attorney, determine if the test fires should be retained. Commanders or their designee may also identify other cases where there is a desire to retain the test fires. **All requests for test fires to be returned must be submitted** to the BFS Resource Account at [RA-SPFORENSICSERVICE@PA.GOV](mailto:RA-SPFORENSICSERVICE@PA.GOV) no later than April 6, 2026.

**Any test fires older than ten (10) years for which no request is received by April 6, 2026, will be sent for destruction.**

Questions concerning the contents of this message should be directed to Lieutenant Melissa Sanzick, Investigation and Operational Support Division, Bureau of Forensic Services, at 717-705-8859 or via email at [msanzick@pa.gov](mailto:msanzick@pa.gov).

## OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

The Derry Township Police Department is proud to recognize Detective Tom Pavone for his exceptional investigative work in a sensitive juvenile case. Detective Pavone received a report involving an incident that had occurred approximately five years earlier. The victim, who was a minor at the time, had been harmed by a trusted adult.

Detective Pavone's expertise and dedication were instrumental in reconstructing the timeline of events, which spanned multiple counties. Through a series of careful and compassionate interviews, he was able to gather critical information and ultimately identify the individual responsible.

His persistence and professionalism led to a full confession from the suspect, resulting in multiple felony and misdemeanor charges. Detective Pavone's commitment to justice, along with his respectful and victim-centered approach, exemplifies the values of this department.

This award recognizes his outstanding service and dedication to protecting the citizens of Derry Township. His efforts have made a meaningful impact on the community, and we are grateful for his continued service.



Chief  
Garth Warner

Detective  
Tom Pavone



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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- 14

Allentown Police Academy- 9

Delaware County Community College- 37

Harrisburg Area Community College- 5

Indiana University of Pennsylvania- 19

Lackawanna College- 25

Mercyhurst University Police Academy- 27

Montgomery County Community College- 28

Reading Police Academy- 4

Westmoreland County Community College- 13



181 Cadets are available for hire.

Please reach out to any of these academies for more information about available cadets!

## CONTROL TACTICS REGISTRATION

The process for registering as a **Control Tactics Instructor** has changed **effective 02/25/26**, and now will be done exclusively in TACS. This change is part of an effort to systematize and streamline our procedures, making the process more efficient for both departments and MPOETC. The Control Tactics (CT) application process is now aligned with the Firearms Instructor process.

- To apply, log into TACS and navigate to the **“My Profile”** tab.
- Select **“Create Firearms/Control Tactics Instructor Application,”** then choose the **“Control Tactics Application”** option.
- Review the **Eligibility Requirements, Required Submissions, and Required Uploads** before proceeding.
- Once reviewed, click **“Start Application”** and follow the on-screen prompts to complete the process.

Upon review by MPOETC, the officer as well as their active department(s) Chief(s) will receive an email with an approval or denial of their application. If you have any questions or require assistance, please email [RA-MPOTRAINING@pa.gov](mailto:RA-MPOTRAINING@pa.gov)



# HONORING THE FALLEN



Andy Chan

E.O.W: 12/02/25



Police Officer Andy Chan succumbed to injuries he received in a motorcycle crash on January 3, 2019.

Around 6:00 p.m., Officer Chan was driving on Rhawn Street in Philadelphia when the driver of another vehicle struck his motorcycle near Rowland Boulevard. Neither driver was cited for the crash.

Officer Chan was transported to the hospital with severe brain trauma and was in a coma for a few weeks. He was released from the hospital and battled his injuries for over six years before passing away on December 2, 2025.

Officer Chan had served with the Philadelphia Police Department for 24 years. He is survived by his wife, three children, parents, sister, and three brothers.



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