



# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 55, ISSUE 11, SEPTEMBER 2026

MAJOR WILLIAM A. BROWN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

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### Andrew Sheaf

Local Government Policy Manager  
Dept. of Community & Economic Dev.  
Dauphin County

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Township Official of the First Class  
N. Huntingdon Twp, Westmoreland  
County

### Vacant

Borough Official

### Vacant

City Police Chief

### Vacant

Township Official of the Second Class

We recently observed the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11 attacks against our great nation. For those of us in law enforcement back then, we vividly recall the feeling of helplessness and stress dealing with the threats and aftermath of those events. I was working in Seattle and on duty during the attacks and remember wondering if that city was being targeted or if there were other forms of attacks in the works. I'm sure many of you were asking the same questions.

Most Americans know of the September 11 attacks, either firsthand or from history class in school. But we also need to remember within two weeks of that horrible day, the United States was attacked again. Unlike hijacked aircraft used as missiles, this second set of attacks was from a silent killer: *Bacillus Anthracis* (*better known as "Anthrax"*) was mailed to several major news outlets and two U.S. Senators. In all, 22 individuals were sickened, and five died.

This was the first major bioterrorism event in the United States and identified significant weaknesses within the law enforcement and emergency management communities. At that time, there were very few law enforcement officers trained in nuclear, biological or chemical (NBC) event detection and mitigation. Threats and potential items were often considered the responsibility of the fire department and emergency services with little regard for their evidentiary value.

This attack fundamentally transformed both law enforcement and the U.S. Postal Service but also prioritized national preparedness and the ability to defend against NBC hazards. Now, local, state and federal law enforcement have training, protocols and proper equipment to address these threats, but it took time to get there.

Going forward as law enforcement professionals, we must continue to look at the next threats. Artificial Intelligence (AI) facilitated crimes such as elderly fraud scams, child sexual abuse materials and harassment continue to rise at alarming rates. "Traditional" terrorism, whether it is an active shooter incident, explosive attack, or attack on our water supply and power grid remains a potential threat. Do you prepare and train for these events? Do you have a plan for what you will do if you have multiple coordinated attacks at several locations, such as the Mumbai, India attacks in 2008? Departments large and small need to consider these things and include them in their training. It doesn't have to be large full-scale exercises and can be as simple as a table-top exercise with public safety and federal partners. We know everyone is busy but remember the adage: "Failing to prepare is preparing to fail!"

I wish you a healthy and safe Fall season.

Michael J. Corricelli  
Director of Training





On September 11, 2026, the United States and the world marked the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks that forever altered the course of modern history. A quarter-century later, the memory of that clear September morning remains sharp—both for those who lived through it and for a generation that has grown up in its shadow.

On September 11, 2001, 19 terrorists affiliated with al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial airliners. Two were flown into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. A third struck the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. The fourth, United Airlines Flight 93, crashed in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after passengers and crew fought to regain control of the aircraft. Nearly 3,000 people were killed. Thousands more were injured. Countless others lost family members, colleagues, and friends.

The attacks transformed American security, foreign policy, and daily life, leading to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, and lasting changes in air travel and intelligence practices.

Twenty-five years later, the anniversary holds different meaning for those who lived through it and for a younger generation that knows it only through history. Ceremonies continue at Ground Zero, the Pentagon, and Shanksville. The day remains a time to remember the victims, honor first responders, and reflect on both the nation's resilience and the ongoing challenges of security and memory.



Contact us at (717) 346-4086 or (800) 342-0858

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# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

As a reminder, if you haven't completed all your annual training requirements (12 hours of MIST, Use of Force, Control Tactics (4 hrs. hands-on), Firearms, and First Aid/CPR, **you only have until December 31, 2026.**

The **only** waivers approved by law are for on-the-job injuries and activation for military deployment. If you don't complete all training by December 31, you will be listed as "Expired" as of January 1, 2027, and cannot function as a municipal police officer. With that, please don't wait to get these requirements done.

## Commission Meeting Highlights

On September 16 & 17, 2026, the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission held its regular quarterly meeting at the Sheraton Hotel at Station Square in Pittsburgh, PA. On Wednesday afternoon, September 16, 2026, the Commissioners held committee meetings to discuss the business of the Commission. On Thursday morning, September 17, 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 revoked certifications of five officers who were revoked for convictions of one or more of the following disqualifying offenses: terroristic threats, cruelty to animals, simple assault and official oppression
- The Commission voted to approve four 2028 Mandatory In-service Training (MIST) topics to include Legal Updates, which will be mandatory, Artificial Intelligence Facilitated Crimes – Part One, which will be mandatory, Artificial Intelligence Facilitated Crimes – Part Two, which will be mandatory, and Law Enforcement Response to Political Unrest, which will be elective
- The Commission voted to set the reimbursable amount for 2028 MIST courses at 25 dollars per officer for each of the four approved courses
- The next Commission meeting will be held **December 9-10, 2026**, at MPOETC, 8002 Bretz Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17112

### NEXT MEETING:

DECEMBER  
9 & 10

MPOETC

8002 BRETZ  
DRIVE

HARRISBURG  
17112

717-346-4086

## WHAT'S NEW AT MPOETC?

**Katlin Bang** joined MPOETC on July 1 as a Clerical Assistant 2. She will be responsible for scanning the remaining paper files that consist of municipal police officers, departments, training applications and Act 235 files into the Training and Certification System. Katlin comes from outside of the Commonwealth and PSP. She has a medical background as a CNA as well as clerical experience with billing and scheduling at a dental office. She will also be assisting with other miscellaneous clerical support tasks within the office. In her short time at MPOETC she has scanned well over 1,500 files! Welcome aboard Katlin!



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# QUARTERLY LEGAL UPDATES



**Type:** Legal Update

**Title:** Drug Overdose Response Immunity Act (DORIA) 35 P.S. § 780-113.7

**Content:** Commonwealth v. Wilson 6 WAP 2025 (Pa. 8/18/26)

**Facts:** The defendant was found unconscious in a vehicle that had crashed into a fence. The paramedic that had located the crash suspected that the defendant was unconscious due to a drug overdose. Narcan was administered at the scene. Once the defendant was stabilized, he agreed to be transported to the hospital.

Because the defendant was transported to the hospital, after the accident, the responding officer arranged for the vehicle to be towed because it was illegally parked. The officer who arranged for the vehicle to be towed conducted an inventory search prior to the vehicle being moved. During the search, the officer located an empty stamp bag used to package heroin. The defendant was charged with, among other offenses, possession of drug paraphernalia.

**Issue:** Was the police search of the defendant's vehicle "independent" of the 911 overdose call, so that the drug evidence could be used for prosecution?

DORIA generally provides immunity from prosecution for specified drug overdoses when the statutory requirements of reporting and responding are satisfied. The protections are limited when a law-enforcement officer obtains information regarding an offense "prior to or independent of" the action of seeking or obtaining emergency assistance.

The defendant argued that the inventory search was sufficiently connected to the overdose response that the evidence discovered during the search should remain within DORIA's immunity protection.

**Ruling:** The court held that the discovery of the drug paraphernalia during the inventory search was "independent of" the action of seeking or obtaining emergency assistance for purposes of DORIA's limiting provision.

The critical factual distinction was timing and purpose. By the time the officer conducted the search, the defendant had already been placed in the care of EMS providers to be transported to the hospital. The inventory search was conducted because the vehicle was being impounded—not as part of providing emergency medical assistance to the defendant.

**Significance:** This case establishes that DORIA does not create a blanket immunity for drug evidence discovered during every police investigation that begins as an overdose call. The decision emphasizes the statutory distinction between evidence obtained as part of the emergency response and evidence obtained through a subsequent, independent police action.

For law enforcement, this means that the existence of an overdose call does not necessarily eliminate the ability to otherwise lawful police action after the immediate medical emergency has been addressed.



# POLICE ACADEMY OF THE QUARTER

## Retiring the Binder: HACC's Police Academy Goes Digital

Fifty years ago, the first class of police cadets graduated from the Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) Municipal Police Academy in 1976.

For decades, police academy classrooms across Pennsylvania looked remarkably similar: rows of cadets, stacks of paper handouts, and oversized 3-ring binders packed with PowerPoint printouts thick enough to qualify as fitness equipment. Ironically, while modern policing has become increasingly technology-driven, many police academies continued teaching future officers in a format that would have felt familiar in the late 1990s.

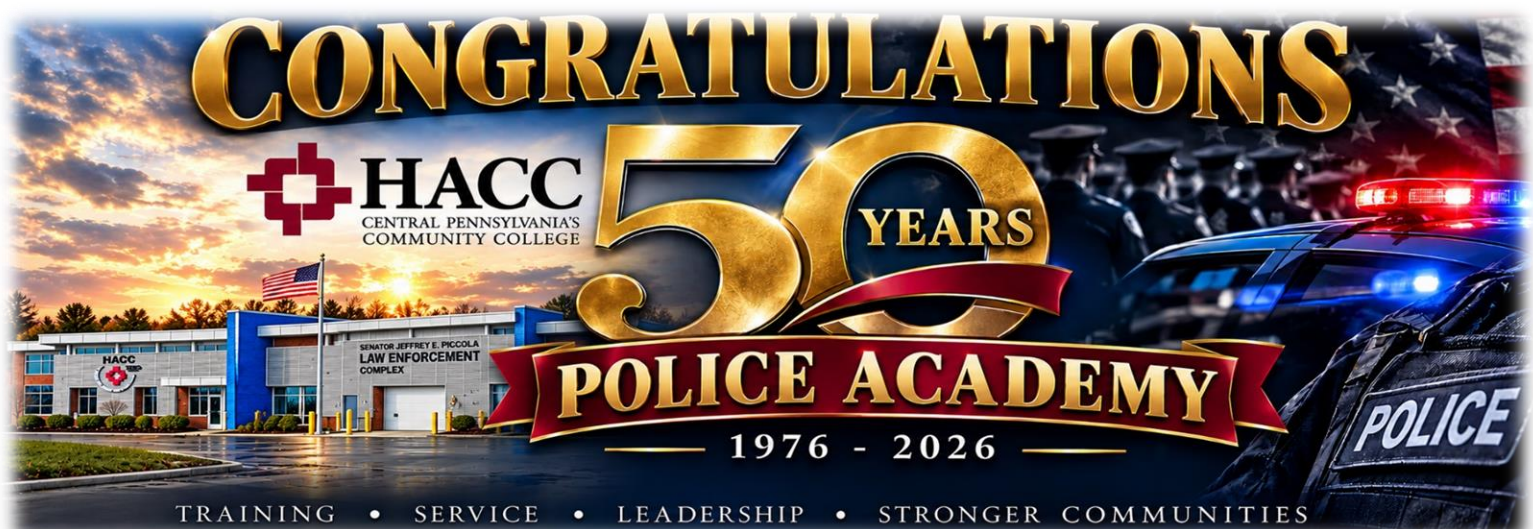
That all changed at HACC in 2026.

Cadets in HACC's 128th Police Academy became the first class required to report with a laptop or electronic learning device as part of a major modernization initiative. Using HACC's collegiate learning management system, D2L / Brightspace, cadets now participate in an interactive learning environment that allows instructors to distribute materials instantly, facilitate discussion, administer assignments, and exchange information in real time.

The transition was not without skepticism. Some instructors initially questioned whether abandoning paper binders would negatively impact learning, arguing that some students learn better with printed materials. The cadets, however, adapted almost immediately. Having grown up with digital learning platforms throughout high school and college, many found the old binder system amusingly outdated. Several cadets joked that carrying a 3-ring binder in 2026 felt like texting on a flip phone.

The move to digital learning reflects the realities of modern policing. Today's police officers spend a significant portion of their careers using computers for report writing, criminal complaint preparation, vehicle accident reporting, records management, evidence documentation, and data analysis. Cadets now use their laptops in the classroom to complete realistic police reports, draft criminal complaints, prepare vehicle accident reports, and practice the same computer-based documentation skills they will use daily in the field.

Beyond reducing paper usage and improving organization, the use of laptops in the classroom helps cadets develop modern academic notetaking, research, and report-writing skills that directly translate to field operations. The result is a learning environment that better prepares future officers for the technology-centered profession they are entering while finally giving the 3-ring binder a well-earned retirement.



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# ***NEW AGENCY EXECUTIVES***

Chief Christopher Duncan  
Wilkesburg Boro  
Allegheny County



Chief Steven Heinly  
West Lampeter Township  
Lancaster County



Chief Michael Lindenfelser  
Upper St. Clair Township  
Allegheny County



Chief Farzad Sharif  
Newberry Township  
York County



Chief Patrick Roche  
Limerick Township  
Montgomery County



Chief Richard Schaffer  
Cheltenham Township  
Montgomery County



Chief Ryan Sheehan  
Upper Providence Township  
Montgomery County



Chief Adam Shope  
Mifflin County Regional  
Mifflin County



Chief Jared Zimmerman  
South Londonderry Township  
Lebanon County



Chief Randell Zook  
City of Lancaster  
Lancaster County



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**TACS**  
PENNSYLVANIA  
TRAINING & CERTIFICATION SYSTEM  
TRAIN CERTIFY TRACK PROTECT

**K9 UNITS NOW IN TACS**

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 27, 2026, departments are now able to enter all K9 units into their TACS account.

**THE INFORMATION WILL INCLUDE:**

- Name of the K9 and K9 handler
- Date of certification
- Status of the K9 (active, inactive, etc.)
- K9 photo
- The type of skill in which the K9 unit is certified

**PLEASE ADD YOUR K9 UNITS** to this new TACS roster and remember to update your K9 status if there are any changes.  
*This does not include support animals.*

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PROFESSIONALISM THROUGH PREPARATION

LOYALTY  
SERVICE  
INTEGRITY  
ALWAYS  
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SAME PARTNERSHIP.  
SAME MISSION.  
NOW BETTER ACCOUNTABILITY.

MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
EDUCATION & TRAINING COMMISSION

Did you know?

Pennsylvania cops were walking a beat before America was a country.

Philadelphia established its night watch in 1700—76 years before the Declaration of Independence. Watchmen patrolled the streets carrying bells to summon help when trouble occurred. Pennsylvania's tradition of local law enforcement is literally older than the United States.



## OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

The East Lampeter Township Board recently honored Ofc. Nicholas Zollner with the Life Saving Award for his quick response to a call for an unconscious man. On Tuesday, 6/2/26 at 2:56 p.m., Officer Zollner responded to a cardiac arrest, at the intersection of Strasburg Pike and Lincoln Highway East. Upon arrival, Officer Zollner observed an unconscious male, whom he later identified as 46-year-old Matthew Scott Brandt, lying in the roadway, next to his work truck.

Officer Zollner quickly utilized an AED, which immediately assessed and delivered a shock. Shortly after, EMS personnel were able to take over continued lifesaving measures, until such time that Mr. Brandt could be transported to the hospital.

Mr. Brandt survived the heart attack and after several days in the hospital, was able to return home to the care of his family.



Matthew Brandt

Officer Zollner



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# MPOETC

MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS'  
EDUCATION & TRAINING COMMISSION

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## 2027

# GENERAL INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT COURSE — 40-HOUR COURSE —

### BEGINNING JANUARY 2027

FOR ALL NEW MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICER INSTRUCTORS  
IN PENNSYLVANIA.

PREPARE.  
EDUCATE.  
LEAD.  
STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES.

BETTER  
INSTRUCTORS.  
SAFER  
COMMUNITIES.



INSTRUCTIONAL  
METHODS



LESSON PLANNING  
& PRESENTATION



RISK MANAGEMENT  
& LIABILITY



EVALUATION &  
TESTING



ADULT LEARNING  
PRINCIPLES



COMPREHENSIVE  
CURRICULUM



LED BY  
MPOETC STAFF &  
SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS



HOSTED BY  
YOUR LOCAL  
POLICE ACADEMY



3-YEAR  
CERTIFICATION



LOW COST



PRACTICAL  
& APPLICABLE



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STRONGER TRAINING  
COMMUNITY

TRAIN TODAY.  
DEVELOP TOMORROW.  
SERVE ALWAYS.

PENNSYLVANIA LAW ENFORCEMENT STARTS HERE.



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## 2027 CONTROL TACTICS INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT 40-HOUR COURSE

**BEGINNING JANUARY 2027**

FOR *ALL* NEW DEPARTMENT LEVEL INSTRUCTORS  
AND ACADEMY INSTRUCTORS.

SAFER  
OFFICERS.  
STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES.

PA COPS  
TEACHING  
PA COPS



COMPREHENSIVE  
INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT  
AND PRE-COURSE WORK



HOSTED BY  
LOCAL POLICE  
ACADEMIES



3-YEAR  
CERTIFICATION



AFFORDABLE



ACCESSIBLE



ADVANCED



ACCELERATED



**BETTER INSTRUCTORS.  
STRONGER OFFICERS.  
SAFER COMMUNITIES.**

PENNSYLVANIA LAW ENFORCEMENT STARTS HERE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION. VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR PRE-REQUISITES, ENTRY STANDARDS  
AND APPLICATIONS. YOU MAY ALSO CONTACT MPOETC AT [MPOTRAINING@PA.GOV](mailto:MPOTRAINING@PA.GOV)

# HONORING THE FALLEN



**EOW: 07/01/26**

Trooper First Class Michael Pahira was struck and killed by a commercial vehicle while conducting a vehicle safety inspection on Interstate Highway 81 in Cass Township.

At 7:00 a.m., Trooper Pahira was in the southbound lanes near exit 119 inspecting a commercial vehicle when a tractor-trailer struck his patrol vehicle and slammed into the inspected vehicle. Due to the speed of the tractor-trailer, the force pushed the commercial vehicle into the side of the road and trapped Trooper Pahira under the vehicle. The tractor-trailer then caught fire.

Trooper Pahira was transported to the hospital but succumbed to his injuries 90 minutes later.

The driver of the tractor-trailer was injured and transported to a local hospital. He was charged with homicide by vehicle, involuntary manslaughter, and reckless driving.

Trooper Pahira had served with the Pennsylvania State Police for 19 years and was assigned to Troop L in Frackville. Survivors include his parents and sister.



#### **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  
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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)

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:**

**OCTOBER 12, 2026 (COLUMBUS DAY)**

**NOVEMBER 11, 2026 (VETERANS DAY)**

**NOVEMBER 26 & 27 (THANKSGIVING)**

**DECEMBER 25, 2026 (CHRISTMAS)**

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>

