



MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

**Commissioner's Ad Hoc Committee on
Police Education and Training**

Final Report and Recommendations

June 2017

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Commissioner's Charge to the Committee

This committee, consisting of representatives from the Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC), the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association (MCOPA), the Massachusetts Major City Chiefs Association, the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), the Massachusetts State Legislature, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, the Department of Higher Education (DHE), and a number of the state's colleges and universities, was charged by Dr. Carlos Santiago, the Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education, to conduct research, prepare a report, and make recommendations on three primary topics:

1. What should be the requirements to earn minimum educational qualifications for police officers in Massachusetts? Why?
2. What should be the mechanism to develop a statewide agreement on assessment of knowledge and assignment of college credit for prior learning experience obtained through Police Academy training?
3. What modifications and adjustments are recommended regarding the existing requirements for the Board of Higher Education's (BHE) Police Career Incentive Pay Program (PCIPP), also known as the Quinn Bill, approval and what is the rationale for them?

The committee met regularly from November 2016 – May 2017, and included in its work constituent surveys and meetings with mayors and town managers, chiefs of police, college Criminal Justice program coordinators, and police training administrators in other states.

The following report and recommendations are provided to the Commissioner for consideration, distribution, and action as appropriate.

Recommendations

1. What should be the requirements to earn minimum educational qualifications for police officers in Massachusetts? Why?

The Committee recommends that Massachusetts adopt the following educational requirement for any individual exercising police powers in the Commonwealth:

A minimum of an associate's degree in Criminal Justice, a related field, or a field of study authorized by the hiring department/agency. Individuals who have matriculated into an established program at a four-year institution and have completed 60+ credits toward a Bachelor Degree will also be considered eligible.

The committee recognizes that this recommendation is not in the purview of the BHE; nonetheless, an endorsement from the BHE would be significant for the field. With that in mind, the committee offers the following reasons for this requirement:

- Higher education attainment increases an individual's ability to think critically, solve problems, handle conflict, and enhance written and verbal communication, all of which are important to being an effective police officer.
- Police officers with college degrees demonstrate a better comprehension of civil rights issues from multiple perspectives, experience fewer complaints and disciplinary actions, and are less likely to use deadly force, among other benefits (Rydborg & Terrill).
- Numerous studies and surveys previously completed in Massachusetts already support increased educational requirements for police officers, including:
 - Entry into the field of policing in Massachusetts should require a BS or BA degree, preferably with a certificate or concentration in policing to be completed in the junior and senior years. The concentration could include courses such as Constitutional Law, Social History of US Policing, Human Behavior, Deviance in Human Behavior, Sociology or Social Psychology, Juvenile Psychology. (*"Massachusetts Association of Major City Chiefs Police Personnel Standards for the 21st Century": 2010.*)
 - A subsequent study found significant support among police chiefs and incumbent officers for requiring an associate's degree to enter the field, a bachelor's degree for promotion (e.g., sergeant, lieutenant), and a master's degree for top positions (e.g., captain, chief). (*"Massachusetts Major City Chiefs of Police Education Study": 2014.*)
- Currently, the minimum age to be licensed for a firearm, and therefore to become a police officer, in Massachusetts is 21. This leaves a significant gap of time that an individual who may not choose work or military experience can pursue a

degree after graduating from high school, but before turning 21. Individuals who pursue a degree show a capacity to learn and grow. This presents the individual departments with a more qualified and competitive applicant pool.

- Criminal Justice degrees are not the only credentials needed by law enforcement agencies. Police chiefs have expressed the need for officers with skills in computer science, sociology, psychology, foreign languages, and other fields.

2. What should be the mechanism to develop a statewide agreement on assessment of knowledge and assignment of college credit for prior learning experience obtained through police academy training?

The Committee recommends that the Commissioner form and charge a working group to advance collaborations with higher education colleagues and police academy colleagues to develop an assessment policy and related process for evaluating the knowledge and skills learned within police academies that crosswalk to content knowledge in credit-bearing programs and are consistent with an updated version of the BHE's *Guidelines for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Academic Programs Seeking Approval Under the Massachusetts PCIPP Guidelines*.

The Commissioner should ensure this working group includes Criminal Justice faculty from public community colleges, state colleges and the University of Massachusetts, as well as representatives from private colleges, and staff from the MPTC, to review MPTC approved police academy curriculum and determine allowable credit for a statewide articulation agreement consistent with revisions to the *PCIPP Guidelines*.

In determining allowable credit for prior learning experiences in the police academy in a statewide articulation agreement, the working group will utilize the approach to transfer and articulation of credits applied by the [Mass Transfer Pathways A2B](#) initiative: faculty with content expertise will compare the alignment of learning outcomes achieved in police academy coursework and higher education Criminal Justice program coursework, and determine the appropriate amount and allocation of college credits that have been earned.

Colleges and universities providing credit for prior learning experiences achieved through police academy training under a statewide articulation agreement will work with the MPTC to ensure that police academy directors and/or instructors meet all New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Standards for accreditation purposes.

The committee offers the following reasons for these recommendations:

- Competency-Based Education (CBE) and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) initiatives, which allow students to earn credit for prior learning experiences they have earned in other learning environments, are gaining acceptance and credibility in reputable degree and certificate areas at colleges and universities

nationwide. Valid assessments are significant to the effectiveness of such initiatives.

- A majority of states responding to the committee's police education and training survey (17 of 24) provide college credit for learning experiences in the police academy, with most states offering between 16-28 credits for academy completion.
- The curriculum of the Massachusetts police academies, as approved by the MPTC, has evolved considerably over the past several years in its' range and complexity, and includes content found in courses offered by the state's community colleges and state universities, such as Constitutional Law, Courtroom Procedures, Criminal Law, and Motor Vehicle Law.
- Likewise, the MPTC's instructor pool and instructor certification criteria have evolved, as well. Approximately 75% of MPTC police academy instructors have postsecondary degrees, a majority with bachelor's degrees and a significant number with master's and doctoral degrees. In addition to their duties as police officers and MPTC instructors, many teach as adjunct faculty at the state's community colleges and universities.
- Recognizing the value of police academy education in the context of a Criminal Justice degree, some of the state's higher education institutions, such as Fitchburg State University and Northern Essex Community College, provide some form of credit for prior learning experiences in the police academy that have content commensurate with credit bearing courses.
- Allowing colleges and universities to provide credit for prior learning experiences in the police academy for PCIPP approved programs will encourage more colleges and universities to pursue PCIPP approval for their degree offerings, and it may encourage increased collaboration and partnerships between higher education and the field.
- Providing the opportunity to earn college credit through police academy learning experience will contribute to the successful completion of the proposed requirement that police officers should have a minimum of an associate's degree for entry to the field. It will also provide an incentive and mechanism for more police officers to pursue and receive higher education and training. The potential for financial aid assistance to be awarded *prior* to an officer being hired by municipal police departments could result in significant savings annually in the salaries and training costs to Massachusetts cities and towns.
- Criminal Justice Programs in the state may benefit from increased enrollments.

3. What modifications and adjustments are recommended regarding the existing requirements for BHE PCIPP program approval and what is the rationale for them?

The committee recommends that the BHE amend the *PCIPP Guidelines* to address Standard D, Paragraph 4, which states:

“Only credit from regionally accredited institutions of higher education is accepted for transfer into an undergraduate Criminal Justice program. No academic credit is awarded for life experience nor for military, police academy or other training.”

To the following amended language:

“Credit from regionally accredited institutions of higher education is accepted for transfer into an undergraduate Criminal Justice program. Credit for prior learning experiences in the military or in police academy training must be the result of a regionally accredited institution’s evaluation of the student’s knowledge and skills. In all cases the assessment must correlate specifically to the content knowledge and skills that are covered by the academic program course content into which the student will transfer.”

Further, the committee recommends that the new working group charged by the commissioner research and determine whether the following sentence from Standard D, Paragraph 5 should still be applicable, and/or whether a new proportion for knowledge-based examinations should be applied:

“No more than 10 percent of an Associate and/or Bachelor’s degree is completed through knowledge-based examinations (e.g., College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Dantes).

The committee offers the following reasons for these recommendations:

- The basis for the BHE’s “Guidelines” is the PCIPP/Quinn Bill, enacted by the state legislature in 1970. MA ended its reimbursement to cities and towns for police career incentive pay in 2010, leaving it to municipalities to determine what, if any, incentive programs they would offer police officers; and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled in 2012 that cities and towns are not obligated to pay the state’s portion for the previous incentive pay program. These developments effectively served to diminish the potential for the abuses that inspired the PCIPP Guidelines in the first place.
- While the current prohibition against providing credit for prior learning experiences in life and/or police academy toward Criminal Justice degrees did serve to curtail abuses of the PCIPP/Quinn Bill, today the field has changed for the better and the prohibition is in direct opposition to the 2012 VALOR Act,

which provides that knowledge and skills learned during military experience can be assessed for college credit. The Valor Act requires the state's public colleges and universities to have policies and procedures in place for evaluating student's military occupation(s), military training, coursework, and experience, in order to determine what a student knows and can do, such that academic credit may be awarded for learning. This approach to assessment could be applied to the PCIPP Guidelines.

- The committee understands there is significant value in the periodic review of programs under PCIPP approval. Recommendations for increased educational requirements for police officers and the articulation of police academy learning experiences assessed for college credit value would underscore the need for an ongoing approval process, with oversight from the BHE for college and university Criminal Justice programs.

Addenda

The following information is provided as additional context and supporting research for the recommendations by the committee.

Background

The work performed by municipal, campus, and environmental police officers in Massachusetts is becoming more complex, with greater requirements for understanding technology, legal issues, personal communications, psychology, community relations, and a number of other subjects.

A number of national studies have demonstrated the value of postsecondary education for policing by illustrating that college educated police officers have better communication skills, a better comprehension of civil rights issues from multiple perspectives, receive fewer complaints and disciplinary actions, and are less likely to use deadly force, among other benefits.

While many departments, municipalities, or states have implemented increased educational requirements, or at least enhanced options for educational requirements, there is no statutory or regulatory minimum educational requirement for police officers in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with the exception of communities whose officers are covered by Civil Service requirements. Civil Service requires applicants to have a “high school diploma or equivalency certificate approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education OR three years of experience in the armed forces of the United States with last release or discharge under honorable conditions.” Even so, only half of the Commonwealth’s police departments are part of Civil Service.

Still, recognizing the importance of additional education, between 1970-2010, the PCIPP/Quinn Bill, provided 10-25% salary increases to police officers who obtained advanced degrees in Criminal Justice; with the cost of the increases split between the state and municipalities.

To ensure the quality of these programs, in 2003 the state’s DHE developed [Guidelines for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Academic Programs](#), with standards for program structure and curriculum, faculty, administration, admission and articulation, resources, student support services, and other areas.

The DHE’s Guidelines explicitly disallowed awarding credit for prior learning experience, military experience, or police academy training toward classes or degrees in Criminal Justice.

Since the state eliminated its funding for the PCIPP in 2010, cities and towns have taken a variety of approaches to compensating officers for additional education, with some paying the full percentage increase, some a portion, and some paying none at all.

With the incentive pay for additional education reduced or eliminated, the state may be facing a future with a less educated police force. The state’s MPTC, which is

responsible for “the development, delivery and enforcement of training standards of municipal, University of Massachusetts, and Environmental Police officers of the Commonwealth,” already reports a drop in the number of police academy candidates arriving with college courses or degrees completed.

Additionally, in the absence of PCIPP funding, and because of the burdensome reporting requirements of the BHE’s *PCIPP Guidelines*, many of the state’s colleges and universities are withdrawing from the DHE’s accreditation process for Criminal Justice programs. Approximately ten years ago, there were 44 PCIPP approved programs in the state. This year, there are only 28.

There may be some advantage to Massachusetts, like other states, considering minimum educational requirements for police officers; and developing closer partnerships between police academies, with oversight from the MPTC, and colleges and universities.

Such partnerships could lead to a better-educated and better-trained police force, with reduced costs to Massachusetts cities and towns for hiring and training police officers and enhanced police officer service within the Commonwealth and their communities.

A Brief History of Police Education and Training in America and in the Commonwealth

A number of other studies preceding this one have documented in some detail the history of police training in Massachusetts, with particular attention paid to the evolving role of the MPTC and the PCIPP/Quinn Bill. The “Resources” section at the end of this report contains references to some of these helpful documents.

For purposes of better explaining the context for this committee’s recommendations that follow, here are some highlights of the history of police education and training in America and in the Commonwealth:

The first centralized, municipal police department in America was created right here in the Commonwealth, in the City of Boston in 1838.

Unlike the loose, untrained, and largely volunteer system of watchmen and constables that patrolled towns and villages up until that time, the new city police department was publicly supported, with full-time police officers, accountable to a central government authority, with formal rules and procedures.

Still, it was not until after the turn of the twentieth century that policing in America began to resemble a profession, with increased attention to education and training standards.

According to Robert Prout’s 1972 “Analysis of Associate Degree Programs in Law Enforcement”:

In 1908, August Vollmer, the Berkeley, California Chief of Police, started the first police school in the United States, with courses in photography, first aid, criminal law, and police methods. By 1916 he was the first chief to require police officers to attain college degrees, and he helped launch the Criminal Justice Program at the University of California, Berkeley to train them. The university taught the police officers liberal arts courses, and the technical courses were taught by either the university or the police department—whichever was most effective.

Later, in 1929, the University of Chicago became the first college to offer technical law enforcement courses within the regular undergraduate curriculum, with August Vollmer appointed as Professor of Police Administration.

The expansion of junior (community) colleges in America in the 1950s and 1960s provided useful avenues for police education and training, with Los Angeles Junior College becoming the first to offer the two year Associate of Arts Degree in Law Enforcement, and several hundred other community and junior colleges following.

Despite the availability of higher education programs for law enforcement, however, most police officers, apart from those in the higher ranks, did not pursue postsecondary education.

Then, following a series of urban riots in the 1960s, a number of blue ribbon commissions were established, including the Knapp Commission, the Kerner Commission, and the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, to study the nation's Criminal Justice system and make reform recommendations. In general, these commissions recommended:

- That *some* years of college be required for appointment;
- That higher requirements be set for promotion;
- That education programs be a matter of formal policy;
- That higher education should be viewed as an occupational necessity.

The best known of these commissions, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, established in 1967, recommended that "all police personnel with general enforcement powers have baccalaureate degrees."

The Massachusetts PCIPP/Quinn Bill, was passed in 1970, in response to a report written in 1967 by the Massachusetts Committee on Law Enforcement that indicated Massachusetts police officers were, "some of the least educated in the country."

The purpose of the PCIPP/Quinn Bill was to encourage individuals working as police officers in the state of Massachusetts to pursue higher education and degrees in Criminal Justice and law enforcement, by offering them increased base salaries as a reward.

Through the PCIPP/Quinn Bill, police officers were able to earn various points towards base salary increases in the following ways:

1. One (1) point for each semester hour credit earned while working towards an Associate or Bachelor degree;
2. Sixty (60) points earned upon completion of an Associate degree through the PCIPP were granted based;
3. One hundred and twenty (120) points upon completion of a Bachelor degree;
4. And one hundred and fifty (150) points upon completion of a Master degree or a degree in law.

These points were given, provided that the credits or degrees were leading toward a degree in law enforcement or in courses or degree programs approved by the BHE prior

to July 1st, 1976; and that the credits and degrees were earned at an institution accredited by the NEASC or by the BHE.

The PCIPP provided 10-25% salary increases between 1970 and 2010 to police officers. The cost of these increases was split between the state and the municipalities.

Since 2010, when the state eliminated its portion of the funding, the 254 municipalities which adopted the PCIPP/Quinn Bill have taken a number of different approaches. Some negotiated clauses into collective bargaining agreements requiring the municipality to pay the full benefit, including the portion previously provided by the state. Others paid only the 50 percent municipal portion, leading to a decrease in police salaries. Some created their own new education incentive programs.

A Brief History and Status of Assessment of Knowledge and Assignment of College Credit for Prior Learning Experience

Colleges and universities in America have been granting college credit for prior learning experiences gained outside the traditional classroom for decades, with the significant growth in the practice of “Prior Learning Assessment” occurring with the G.I. Bill and World War II returning veterans who earned college credits for their military training.

PLA, can take many forms, such as competency-based or [CLEP tests](#); resume or portfolio reviews such as [Learning Counts](#), offered by the Center for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL); or the American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service, now used by over 600 corporations, professional associations, labor unions and government, ranging from Starbucks and Jiffy Lube to the Federal Aviation Administration Academy and the National Security Agency, to provide access to accelerated higher education credentials for working adults.

Southern New Hampshire University has been making headlines, and attracting enormous numbers of students, to their “College for America” programs, which partners with sponsoring employers to offer students intensive prior learning assessments to accelerate their degree completion, followed by a fully competency-based curriculum that allows them to work at their own pace and complete degrees in healthcare, business, or communications for \$3,000 per year.

Along similar lines, recognizing the need to help more adults complete postsecondary certificates and degrees in preparation for the Massachusetts workforce, the state’s DHE has begun to include PLA initiatives and CBE programs in their requests for proposals for annual Performance Incentive Grant funding.

The VALOR Act

The VALOR Act, “An Act Relative to Veterans’ Access, Livelihood, Opportunity, and Resources,” was signed by Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick on May 31st, 2012.

Among other features, the act was designed to provide expanded and, where possible, accelerated access to higher education credentials for the state’s military veterans.

However, currently the Massachusetts BHE and DHE “Guidelines for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Academic Programs Seeking Approval under the Massachusetts PCIPP” explicitly excludes Criminal Justice programs—and only Criminal Justice programs—from consideration under the VALOR Act.

The VALOR Act enabled legislation and made a statutory requirement for the Massachusetts BHE to develop a policy for each higher education public institution to create a clear, concise, and consistent VALOR Act Academic Credit Evaluation Policy to govern the evaluation of experience and awarding of credit for military occupation(s), training, coursework, and experience, although multiple methods of evaluating experience and training for credit could be utilized, including CLEP, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests, and others.

These policies were to align with each institution’s admissions standards and to remain consistent with the Commonwealth’s system-wide mission of higher education.

The VALOR Act also required each higher education public institution to designate a single point of contact to help make determinations about the creditworthiness of prior experiences. The ultimate goal of the Act is to provide consistency in the application process for military professionals across the state. Furthermore, the academic credits granted through The VALOR Act should be transferable to all public institutions in Massachusetts in accordance with the MASS Transfer Agreement.

This Ad Hoc Police Education and Training Committee surveyed the Veteran Certifying Officials for Public Institutions, asking them for information regarding the number of individuals taking advantage of the VALOR Act, the types of credits that are currently being awarded for military experience, the mechanism(s) used to analyze credits, and about any advantages or challenges the schools were facing when applying and processing the VALOR Act on various campuses.

Five individuals responded to the survey questions and their responses are summarized below:

- Only one institution was able to provide specific numbers when asked about the number of individuals taking advantage of the VALOR Act (120 military transcripts processed with 260 credits awarded since June 1st, 2013).

- The remaining institutions provide the information to their Veteran population, but noted they either did not know how many people were taking advantage of the Act or had no mechanism for tracking those taking advantage.
- Each institution used a variety of methods to evaluate the translation of military experiences to academic credit, including Joint Service Transcripts (JST), ACE Transcripts, DANTES, and CLEP.
- Most of the responding institutions granted credit for free or general electives, those courses beyond the graduation requirements for individual majors, *excluding Criminal Justice majors*.
- For Criminal Justice programs, institutions are only able to accept credit from regionally accredited higher education institutions and are not able to award credit for prior learning experiences, including life experience, military, police academy, or other training.
- The amount of allowable credits accepted through the VALOR Act varies between the responding institutions. While one institution responded that they have no written guidelines to determine maximum amount of credit to be received for military experience, others allow up to 75 credits.
- Two of the respondents noted that, thus far the VALOR Act is working well on their campuses, with no challenges noted. One did not address the question and the remaining two respondents noted advantages and disadvantages of the system in place.
- One of the challenges faced by the Certifying Officials on some campuses was faculty from particular departments being unwilling to recommend electives for credit transferability.
- Another responded that the credit-specific portion of the VALOR Act was not working as well as they would like, noting the lack of consistency in the statewide application of awarding credit to students, along with vague guidelines governing the process.
- Additionally, not all students under the VALOR Act are considered equal. For example, Criminal Justice students in particular are not allowed to access the VALOR Act benefits.
- Some institutions also found it challenging that credits were not awarded for core requirements in students' majors.
- Lastly, there is an ACE credit database that is available to schools, however, one respondent was not able to find courses on their students' transcripts using the system.

National Trends in Police Education and Training

In order to better understand the *national* context for police education and training, and how Massachusetts compares today to other states, the committee conducted an email survey, distributed to a listserv of directors in each state who are responsible for the oversight of police education and training.

Twenty-four states responded.

To supplement the survey, the committee conducted independent web-based research of state police education and training policies and practices.

A complete summary of the State-to-State Police Education and Training Survey is included in the “Appendix” section of this report.

Our survey asked:

Educational Requirements

1. What are your state’s minimum educational requirements for entry-level municipal and state police officers?
2. Does your state have minimum educational requirements for municipal and/or police officers in order to qualify for advancement/promotion?
3. If yes, what are those requirements?

College Credit for Police Academy Training

1. Can police officer recruits receive college credit for their police academy training?
2. Under what circumstances (e.g. upon graduation from recruit training or for attending certain specialized courses)?
3. If yes, how many credit hours can eligible students earn?
4. What forms of credit are awarded? Are they transferable?

Police Academy - College/University Partnerships

1. In your state, do colleges and universities offer Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) approved police training? If so, what types of POST-approved training are offered by them (i.e. basic, in-service, specialized, et cetera)?

2. Separately, do you directly partner with any colleges and/or universities to provide police training?
3. If so, what is the nature of that partnership?

Through our research, we learned that:

- Only one state (Minnesota) from the 24 surveyed and researched, had a minimum educational requirement of an associate degree or higher in order to become a police officer.
- Wisconsin required some college prior to becoming a police officer.
- Nine of the states had various educational requirements depending on officer type, agency, department, or stage of application.
- Thirteen states responded that applicants only needed a high school diploma or GED in order to apply.
- Five of the 13 states with a high school diploma or GED requirement for initial entry in the field, also have minimum college degree requirements in order to qualify for advancement or promotion.
- College credit hours that recruits can earn for police academy training varied widely state to state.
- Seventeen of the respondents noted that their states do offer college credit for prior learning experiences in the police academy.
- Of this group, 29% said that the amount of credit given varies, while others offered more specific responses.
- The lowest amount of credit provided for police academy training was 3-6 college credits in Delaware. The highest was Michigan, offering between 15-60 college credits for police academy training. Other states fell within this range, with most of the states offering between 16-28 credits.
- When asked about transferability of these credits, 47% of respondents noted that transferability varies depending on the accepting institution. Roughly 12% noted that they are transferable, but only to a Criminal Justice degree field. About 18% said that credits were transferable in limited cases, such as only to other community colleges or transferable to most state universities. About 18% answered “yes” with no contingencies.

- Fourteen of the states surveyed and researched offered POST-approved police training at their colleges and universities and 14 of the states had direct partnerships with colleges and universities in order to provide police training.

Surveys and Constituent Group Responses

Recognizing that the recommendations provided by this committee may impact a wide range of constituents in the state, we sought to interview, survey, or meet with key stakeholder groups to seek their input and guidance.

Chiefs of Police

In addition to appointing three current chiefs of police, including the president of the MCOPA, the president of the Massachusetts Major City Chiefs Association, and the chairman of the MPTC, and the Superintendent and Chief of Staff of the Boston Police Department, to the committee; and studying previous reports and recommendations issued by the MCOPA and MPTC; the committee chairman, Lane Glenn, attended a meeting of the MCOPA to discuss the emerging recommendations of the committee.

Feedback from the assembled chiefs included:

- The chiefs are unanimous in their desire to have a better-educated police force.
- They are supportive of an educational degree requirement higher than a high school diploma or GED.
- They are supportive of providing college credit for prior learning experiences gained in the police academy.
- Some have concerns that higher educational requirements may inhibit applicants to the police academies. For example, between 2013-2017 there was a 27% decline in the number of people taking the civil service municipal police officer exam, and a 40% decline in the number of people taking the civil service state trooper exam. Additional educational requirements may deter more applicants.
- Some chiefs of major cities, and municipalities seeking to diversify their police forces, have some concern that higher educational requirements may make those diversity efforts more challenging; while others insist that with the right supports in place, increased educational requirements will not be a limiting factor for minority, or any other applicants.
- Smaller, rural, police departments, which often have as few as one full-time police officer, expressed concern that higher educational requirements may not be as necessary for them, and may make recruitment more challenging.
- Most of the chiefs expressed concern that there is already insufficient funding available for police education and training; though they were pleased to hear that a “train first and then hire” approach, which becomes possible through integration

of police academies into college degree programs, may actually reduce costs for municipal police departments.

Mayors and Town Managers

Municipal mayors and town managers were represented on the committee by the MMA's Senior Legislative Analyst.

Additionally, the committee, through the MMA, surveyed members of the Massachusetts Municipal Personnel Association (MMPA), which largely consists of the human resources staff members of cities, towns, and police departments across the state.

The survey asked these questions:

1. Does your municipality require a degree for police officers? If so, what degree do you require?
2. Do you offer incentive for the attainment of a degree? If so, how does this work?
3. Have you seen a difference in the number of officers coming in with advanced degrees?
4. What are the relative educational levels in your department?
5. What is the population of your city/town?
6. Are you a civil service municipality?

Complete results of the survey are included in the "Appendix" section of this report. In summary, highlights include:

- 21 of 35 responding municipalities are civil service cities and towns.
- Only one of the 35 municipalities requires an associate's degree or higher.
- Several express preference for police officer candidates with college degrees; while most have no current degree requirement.
- In the absence of state funding for the PCIPP/Quinn Bill since 2010, responding cities and towns have a very wide range of incentives for additional education for police officers, from a few cities and towns that offer no additional compensation at all, to some that have only continued to pay officers eligible for PCIPP/Quinn Bill incentive pay prior to 2010, to others that continue to provide full PCIPP/Quinn Bill incentive pay funding, and to several that have created their own tiered system of incentive pay for increased educational attainment (e.g.,

\$3000 for an associate's degree, \$6,000 for a bachelor's degree, and \$7,500 for a master's degree).

- Most responding municipalities indicated that a majority of their police officers have some kind of postsecondary credential, and that most of the applicants they are seeing continue to have college degrees.
- However, some cities and towns report a decrease in the number of applicants with college degrees, especially among veterans and those candidates from the civil service lists.

At the invitation of MMA Senior Legislative Analyst and committee member Nick Downing, committee chairperson Lane Glenn and special assistant Ashley Moore attended a meeting of Massachusetts Town Managers to share the committee's emerging recommendations and get their feedback, which included:

- A desire for the state to bring back its share of the funding for incentives for police education.
- As an alternative, perhaps the state could reimburse cities and towns for some of the costs of police education and training.
- Concern about how part-time police might be impacted by proposed changes to educational requirements.
- Concern for how proposed changes might impact rural police departments, particularly in the western part of the state.
- Concern for how proposed changes might impact veterans. Perhaps a provision could provide veterans additional time to complete their degrees after being hired.

Criminal Justice Program Coordinators

Lastly, committee chairman Lane Glenn and special assistant Ashley Moore participated in a meeting of the statewide Community College Criminal Justice Program Coordinators, to share the committee's emerging recommendations and get their feedback, which included:

- Unanimous support for increasing the educational requirement for police officers to a minimum of an associate's degree.
- Support for providing credit for prior learning experiences in the police academy training, provided there is demonstrated academic rigor and instructor qualifications in the delivery of academy instruction.

- Recognition that the VALOR Act contradicts the PCIPP/Quinn Bill, and this needs to be resolved.
- Questions about civil service requirements and those entering that already have college degrees, and concern that this number may be dropping considerably.
- A desire for a formal process, involving college and university faculty, for determining how police academy experience would be articulated into college credit, and, where appropriate, ensuring the transferability of that credit among colleges and universities.

Resources

- “A Realistic Plan to Improve Public Safety Training: Report to the Massachusetts Working Group for Law Enforcement Training”: 2007.
- “Massachusetts Association of Major City Chiefs Police Personnel Standards for the 21st Century”: 2010.
- Massachusetts Board of Higher Education “Guidelines for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Academic Programs”: 2003.
- “Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Valor Act Academic Credit Evaluation Policy: 2013.
- Prout, Robert S. “An Analysis of Associate Degree Programs in Law Enforcement.” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Volume 63, Issue 4, Article 19: 1972.
- Rydberg, Jason and William Terrill. “The Effect of Higher Education on Police Behavior.” *Police Quarterly*, Vol. 13(1):92-120. March 2010.
- “Results and Recommendations of the Special Commission on Massachusetts Police Training”: 2010.

Appendix

See included here:

- Committee Charge from Commissioner of Higher Education
- Massachusetts Municipal Association Survey of Police Education
- State-to-State Police Education and Training Survey
- Rich-Shea, Aviva M. “Massachusetts Major City Chiefs of Police Education Study”: 2014.