

Texas Police Chiefs Association Adds a Number of Services for Smaller Cities in Texas

The Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA) has been busy lately increasing the services it can provide to smaller Texas cities. City managers and mayors are familiar with the benefits of association membership for their police chief, because city managers and mayors derive similar benefits from their own professional associations. But even the benefits of membership have expanded for police chiefs over the past few months. Now, in addition to having monthly legal updates directed specifically toward law enforcement and access to a mail serve that gives the chief direct access to more than 600 other chiefs in Texas, the association has added access to a complete *Sample Policy Manual*. This manual of more than 400 pages and a Patrol Standard Operating Procedure meets Texas law enforcement's best practices

and is provided to members at no charge. It is provided in Word format and can be easily edited to meet local needs.

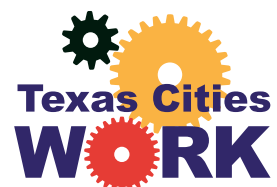
The TPCA's Best Practices Recognition Program is also expanding rapidly and is becoming the new standard for law enforcement operations in Texas. This program utilizes standards and systems similar in nature to CALEA, the national Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement, but at a much lower cost and in a more user-friendly format. There are currently 32 recognized agencies in Texas and more than 40 in the process. Many more have gone through the training and are preparing to enter the program. The best practices or standards are provided to any agency at no cost and can be used to improve local police departments, even if they



You see a police officer

We see a police officer named Hal who works closely with fire departments and EMS, who knows every business owner downtown, who can name every city street, and who buys 12 snow cones on Saturdays, even though his T-ball team never won a game.

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choose not to participate in the program. To become a “Recognized Agency,” departments must apply and prove their compliance with the standards to an independent assessment team. Annual fees, depending on agency size, maintain the program. The *Recognition Program Standards*, as well as a *Program Manual*, can be downloaded from the TPCA Web site at <http://rp.tpcf.org>.

There are a number of consulting firms that assist with executive search services when a city is looking for a new police chief. However, if city officials have decided to conduct that process in-house, they may need some assistance in wading through résumés and identifying the best candidates. The Texas Police Chiefs Association provides free information, tools, and technical assistance in the process of reviewing résumés and identifying credible candidates. Using these resources can increase the chances of a city selecting the best candidate for its department. The association can also provide a complete selection process, usually at a much lower cost than many consulting firms.

Due to increasing interest and requests from city managers and mayors, the association has recently added a new department review service to conduct operational reviews of police departments. Many times, city managers or mayors need an independent review of their police department. There are many consulting firms that do this work, but they are often too expensive for smaller cities. Because these firms often have large office staff and expenses, they must charge enough to cover those costs. There are, however, a number of very competent and experienced retired police chiefs in Texas who remain interested in their prior careers. The Texas Police Chiefs Association has developed a group of these retired chiefs who can provide a very detailed analysis of a department and provide an independent assessment of its strengths

and weaknesses. These retired chiefs will act as consultants for the TPCA in providing those services to cities at a fraction of the cost of large consulting firms. One of the best times to conduct a department review is after a chief has left but before a replacement has been hired. Conducting a review at that time can assist in identifying the skills needed in the new chief.

The Texas Police Chiefs Association continues to find new ways to provide services to both police chiefs in Texas and the cities they serve. The association actively solicits input into what new services and support it can provide. TPCA welcomes the opportunity to present a short program about these services to any local or regional city management association meetings and answer any questions about these or other programs. Association offices are located in Elgin, Texas, but regional directors around the state can provide assistance, as well. City managers and mayors are encouraged to contact TPCA Executive Director James McLaughlin at 512-281-5400 for more information about these or other programs. ★

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