

Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council

Executive Director's Message

*The Honorable Brian Kemp, Governor
Members of the Georgia General Assembly
Citizens of the State of Georgia*



I respectfully submit the Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report of the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council.

This year brought a unique challenge with the COVID-19 pandemic. P.O.S.T. made remarkable efforts agency wide to minimize the impact of the COVID19 pandemic. To protect our employees and the community, the agency followed guidelines set out by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Georgia Department of Public Health. Even with this challenge the agency was able to make notable progress within the law enforcement community.

The Council is committed to being recognized as a leader in the law enforcement community. This leadership is being accomplished through the various initiatives that P.O.S.T. has implemented.

The P.O.S.T. Operations Division is responsible for providing administrative support with various projects and special services. Their focus is:

- *Regulating and investigating all training academies*
- *Handling the post-judgment processing of cases after adjudication by the Council*
- *Handling rule and certification changes for the Council*

In FY20, the Certification and Training Division accomplishments included but were not limited to:

- *Approved 8944 certifications*
- *Approved 741 Instructor Certifications*
- *Suspended 3236 officers for training deficiencies*

In FY20 our Investigations Division had 9 full time investigators 1 vacant position. This division made great strides in FY20 which included but were not limited to:

- *Expanded and improved existing computer system to decrease administrative tasks which improved productivity and reduced time required to complete cases*
- *Streamlined the investigative process to be more efficient and timely*

I am proud of Georgia P.O.S.T. Council's accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2020. It is my desire that as you read this report you will see that we are committed to the law enforcement community and to the citizens of Georgia. We look to the future with excitement, knowing that there are many goals yet to be realized.

Respectfully Yours,
Mike Ayers, Executive Director

MISSION



It is the mission of the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (P.O.S.T.) to provide the citizens of Georgia with qualified, professionally trained, ethical and competent peace officer and criminal justice professionals.

The Georgia P.O.S.T. Council administers the regulatory process, sets the standards for training and certification, and provides essential technical assistance to the law enforcement community.

The Georgia P.O.S.T. Council provides the highest degree of excellence in public safety service and eliminates unqualified individuals from the law enforcement profession.

VISION

P.O.S.T. envisions a professionally trained and ethical criminal justice profession. P.O.S.T. accomplishes this by:

- ✓ *Establishing and implementing high standards, developing and facilitating contemporary training curricula and programs.*
- ✓ *Holding criminal justice professionals to a higher standard.*
- ✓ *Providing the citizens of Georgia with the best protection in the nation.*

Georgia P.O.S.T. Council

The composition of the Council, its power, and function is established in Title 35 Chapter 8 of the Official Code of Georgia, Annotated. The Council consists of nineteen voting members and is supported by an advisory board. The voting members include:

Chief Steve Hyman, Chairman	A Municipal Police Officer
Major Stephen Adams, Vice-Chairman	President of the Peace Officers Association of Georgia
Tom McMichael- Secretary	A County Commissioner
Mayor David Keith	A City Manager or Mayor
Chief Scott Cagle	Department of Juvenile Justice - Designee
Director Chris Barnett	Chairman of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles of GA. or Designee
Commissioner Lamar Paris	Association County Commissioners of Ga. or Designee
Sheriff Mitch Ralston	A County Sheriff
Chief Mark Amerman	A Chief of Police
Mayor J. Clark Boddie	President of the Georgia Municipal Association Or Designee
Asst. Director Dan Kirk	Director of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation or Designee
Don Banks	Member other than the Attorney General
Chief Wesley Walker	President of the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police
Warden Walter Berry	President of the Georgia Prison Wardens' Association
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard	President of the Georgia Sheriffs' Association
Colonel Thomas Barnard	Department of Natural Resources
Asst. Commissioner Scott Maurer	The Commissioner of Georgia Dept. of Community Supervision
Commissioner Timothy Ward	The Commissioner of Corrections or Designee
Lt. Col. Russell Powell	The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety

Georgia P.O.S.T. Council Advisory Members

The advisory members are appointed by the Council Chairman, and it is their responsibility to serve in an advisory capacity and represent a cross section of the criminal justice system. The advisory members are:

Director Chris Wigginton- State Officer	Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Director Michael Nix	Georgia Emergency Management Association
Executive Vice President Terry Norris- Association Director	Georgia Sheriffs' Association
Director Bruce Homes	Board of Regents
Asst. Director Nicholas Marinelli, Jr.	GA. Perimeter College Campus Police
Lt. Barry Woodward	Communications Division
Chief Wayne Dennard	Acworth Police Department
Director Robert Bolton	Georgia Internal Affairs Investigators Association
Dean Tom Bojo Technical College System	GA. Northwestern Technical College
Major Alan Everidge	Law Enforcement Officer
Stan Crowder	Kennesaw State University

Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council

Chief Steve Hyman, Chairman

Major Stephen Adams, Vice-Chairman

Commissioner Tom McMichael, Secretary

Training Standards Committee:

Stephen Adams, Chairman
Dan Kirk, Vice-Chairman
Russell Powell
Walter Berry
Thomas Barnard
Stacy Jarrard
David Keith

Advisory Members:

Chris Wigginton
Terry Norris
Barry Woodward
Tom Bojo
Wayne Dennard
Bruce Holmes
Robert Bolton
Michael Nix

Probable Cause Committee:

Scott Maurer, Chairman
Mitch Ralston
Tim Ward
Chris Barnett
Mark Amerman

Executive Committee:

Steve Hyman, Chairman
Stephen Adams, Vice-Chairman
Tom McMichael, Secretary
Scott Maurer, PCC

Certification Committee:

Tom McMichael, Chairman
Scott Cagle, Vice-Chairman
Steve Hyman
Wesley Walker
Lamar Paris
Don Banks
Clark Boddie

Advisory Members:

Nicholas Marinelli, Jr.
Alan Everidge
Stan Crowder

Georgia P.O.S.T. Council Staff

Executive Director

The Council's rules and policies are executed by a professional and clerical staff, which operates under the supervision of the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for planning, organizing and directing the administration of a statewide program involving over 58,000 officers actively employed by over 1100 agencies.



Mike Ayers serves as the Executive Director of the Georgia Peace Officer Training and Standards Council (POST). Director Ayers was appointed to the position on May 15, 2019 by Georgia Governor Brian Kemp. Director Ayers is a 32-year veteran of law enforcement.

Following his honorable discharge from military service, Director Ayers began his law enforcement career in Hartwell, Georgia where he served as a uniformed police officer for the local municipality. In 1990 Director Ayers was hired by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation where he served until his appointment as POST Executive Director. During his 29-year tenure with the GBI, Director Ayers served in varied positions. He began his career at GBI working as an undercover drug enforcement agent working throughout the state. Later, he would become a Forensic Crime Scene Specialist and gained extensive experience in the investigation of violent crimes, focusing primarily on Officer Use of Force and Homicide investigations. Director Ayers also has extensive experience in the investigation of large scale drug trafficking investigations and in 2000 was awarded the OCDETF Case of the Year Award for Investigative Excellence for the Southeastern United States.

Director Ayers entered supervision with the GBI in 2000 with a promotion to Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC). In this capacity, he managed the Piedmont/Northern Multi-Agency Narcotic Taskforce which conducted street and midlevel narcotic investigations in multiple counties in Northeast Georgia. Later, Director Ayers served as the ASAC for the GBI Region 11 Field Office in Athens, Georgia. Director Ayers was promoted to Special Agent in Charge (SAC) in 2008 where he managed GBI Investigative Field Offices in Cleveland, Georgia, Thompson, Georgia and Athens, Georgia. These offices specialized in the investigation of violent crime and public corruption throughout much of North Georgia.

Director Ayers is a graduate of the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice. He has completed the Georgia Law Enforcement Professional Management Program at Columbus State University. In 2009, Director Ayers attended the 236th session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. In 2020, Director Ayers completed his Masters of Public Safety Administration from Columbus State University.

Director Ayers is the First Vice President of the International Academy Directors and Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST), Director Ayers serves on the council of the Regional Counterdrug Training Academy (RCTA) in Meridian, Mississippi, The training committee for the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), The Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), the Georgia Governor's Public Safety Awards Committee the Georgia Indemnification Commission, and Public Safety Co-Chair of the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police (GACP). Director Ayers is also a member of the Georgia Chapter of FBI National Academy Graduates and the Peace Officers Association of Georgia and The Georgia Alliance of School Resource Officers and Educators.

Georgia P.O.S.T. Council

Executive Director
Mike Ayers

Budget Director
NeeNah Yarbrough

Executive Assistant
Meghan Fail

Neal Lewis
IT Manager

David Nettles
Programmer

Deputy Executive Director
Ryan Powell

Director of P.O.S.T.
Investigations
Phillip Stacy

Director of Operations
Julie Bradley

Director of P.O.S.T. Training
& Certifications
Jeff Miller

Investigators

Doug Fleming
Paula Sparks
Steve Goodyear
Mark Newsome
Lenwood Pickens
Judy Canup
Monika Franklin
Bryan Golden
Ralph Rogers
Vacant

Denise Hudson
Administrative
Assistant

Hearing Officer
Renee Shaw

Operations Analyst
Lara Hollister

Records Custodian
Jill Perry

Curriculum Specialist
Donald Noe

Auditor
Nick Reonas

Certifications Specialist

Gena Adams
Zetta Lowery
Angela Fowler
Angie McDowell
Lovako Patterson
Melanie Monk

Purpose

The purpose of the Georgia P.O.S.T. Council is to ensure that only qualified and well-trained persons are certified as peace officers in this state. In order to attain the goals, the Council has been given the statutory authority to enforce those qualifications and training requirements enumerated by laws to:

- ✓ Research, plan, and establish policy relative to peace officer training
- ✓ Develop, adopt, and issue advanced or professional peace officer certificates based on education, training, and experience
- ✓ Determine whether a peace officer candidate has met legal pre-employment and training requirements
- ✓ Refuse to grant a certificate or to discipline certified peace officers and exempt officers who have not met or have failed to maintain the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing practices of peace officers
- ✓ Provide technical assistance as requested by law enforcement units
- ✓ Provide and administer the certification of persons qualified to operate speed detection devices and withdraw and suspend such certifications
- ✓ Establish minimum qualifications for academy directors and certify those qualified
- ✓ Certify instructors and withdraw or suspend such certifications
- ✓ Establish and modify the curriculum, including methods of instruction, composing the basic course
- ✓ Evaluate academies annually for recertification
- ✓ Withdraw or suspend certification of academies or academy directors who fail to continue to meet or maintain, at any given time, the criteria and qualifications required
- ✓ Enforce those qualifications and training requirements enumerated by laws
- ✓ Ensure standards are maintained by peace officers
- ✓ Take corrective action against officers who violate standards
- ✓ Develop and adopt quality training for all peace officers

The staff of the Georgia P.O.S.T. Council consists of the Executive Office and 3 divisions:

- ***Certification and Training Standards Division***
- ***Investigations Division***
- ***P.O.S.T. Operations***

Certification and Training Standards Division

The primary function of the Certification and Training Standards Division is to ensure compliance, by agencies and peace officers, of qualifications and training requirements enumerated in the P.O.S.T. Act. Some major responsibilities include:

- Process applications for peace officer certification
- Issue of basic certification
- Certify speed detection device operators
- Provide technical assistance to agencies
- Processing of specialty certifications
- General and Specialty Instructors Certification
- Seminar Approval

Division Reports:

- Agency rosters
- Demographic reports
- Individual personnel and training histories
- Agency deficiency reports

Certification of Peace Officers

All employees of any agency that are granted the full rights and powers under the definition of a peace officer as defined by the P.O.S.T. Act must be certified by P.O.S.T.

Peace officer applicants must complete ALL certification requirements before employment. Once the pre-employment requirements are met, an authorization for training is issued.

Certifications issued by the Council include:

BASIC CERTIFICATIONS

- Basic Law Enforcement
- GBI Investigator
- Sheriff
- Communications Officer
- Narcotics Agent
- Correctional Officer
- Probation Officer
- Parole Officer
- Jail Officer
- Forensic Scientist (GBI only)
- Basic Juvenile Correctional Officer
- Municipal Probation Officer
- Communication Officer

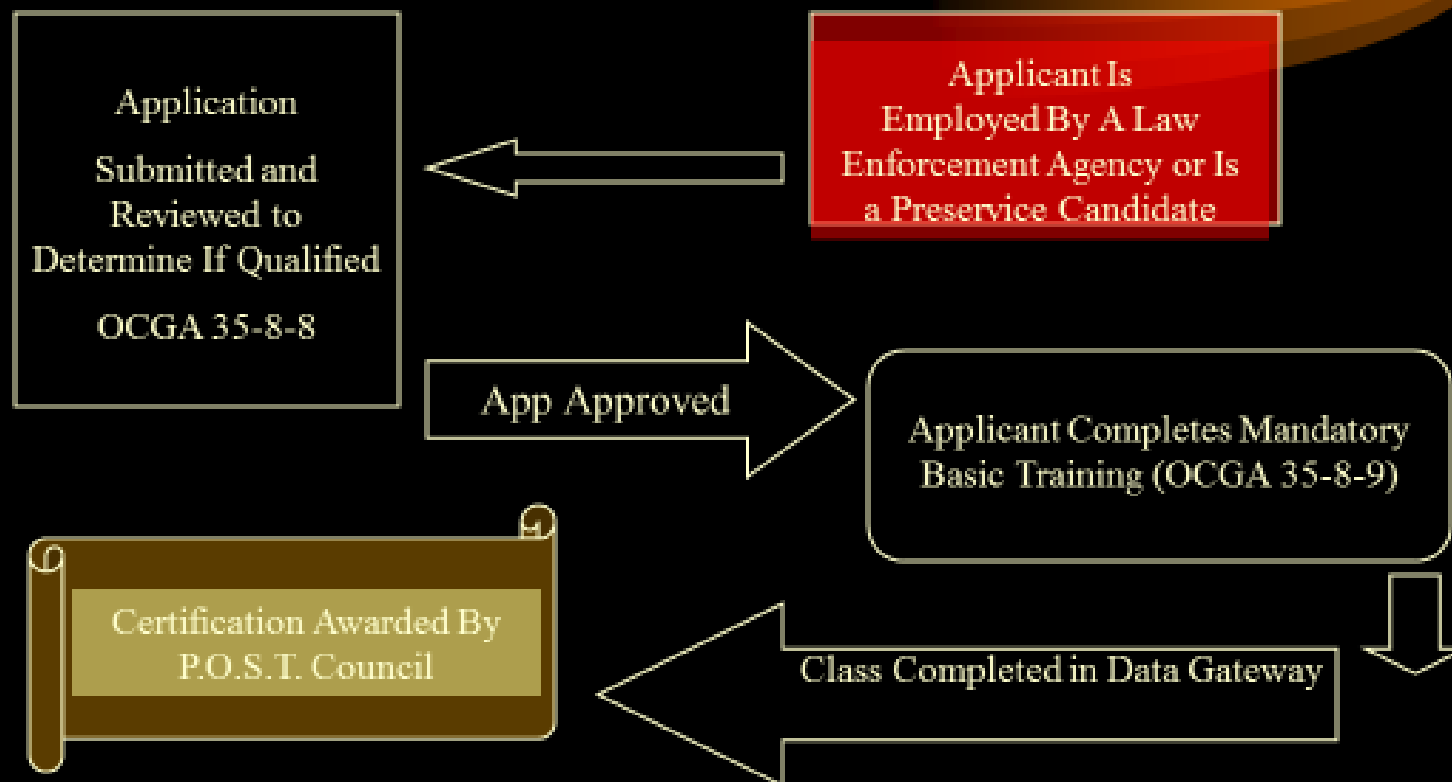
SPECIALTY CERTIFICATIONS

- Radar
- Laser
- Vascar
- Field Training Officer
- Identification Technician
- Departmental Training Officer
- General & Specialty Instructors
- Career Development Certifications
- Arson Investigator
- Bomb Technician
- Handler of Animal Trained to Detect Explosives
- Senior and Master Instructor Trainer

Recognition of Law Enforcement Agencies

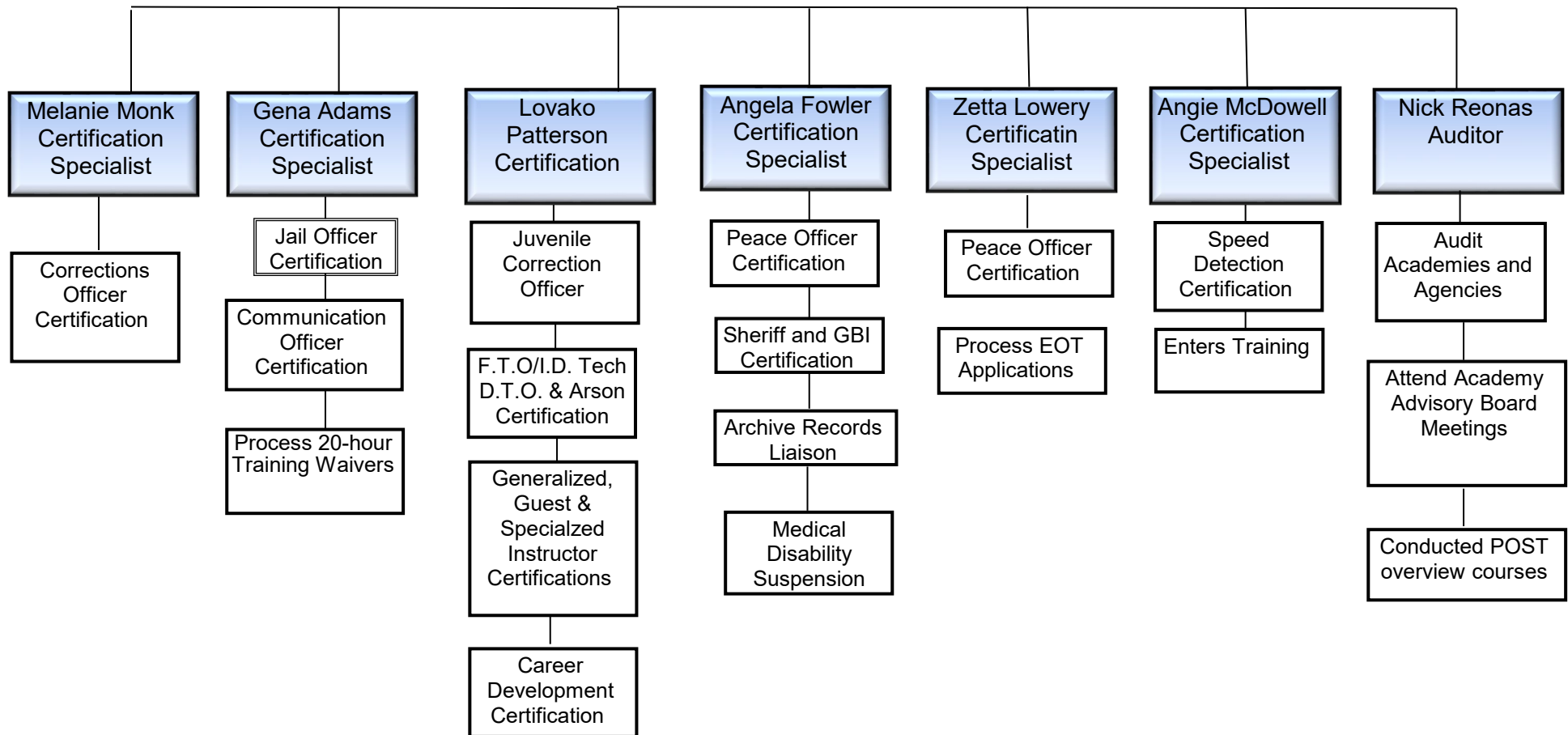
All agencies covered by the P.O.S.T. Act or those permitted to voluntarily comply with the Act can be recognized by P.O.S.T. Those requesting recognition must submit to P.O.S.T. a copy of the ordinance or law that established their authority as a law enforcement agency, along with a request for recognition from appointing authority. Once approved, the agency is supplied with an identification number and all paperwork necessary to conduct business with P.O.S.T.

Certification Process



Georgia P.O.S.T. Council Certification & Training Standards Division

Jeff Miller
Division Director



PEACE OFFICER STATISTICS	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
BASIC CERTIFICATIONS					
Peace Officer	1,935	1,954	1,958	2,084	2,018
Juvenile Probation Officer	52	36	19	13	9
Jail Officer	1,546	1,677	1,610	1,551	1,356
Communication Officer	518	550	464	622	547
Juvenile Correctional Officer	509	559	504	512	374
State Correctional Officer	1,870	1,685	2,053	1,741	1,383
Parole & Probation Officer	194	205	205	124	62
TOTAL BASIC	6,624	6,666	6,813	6,647	5,749
EXEMPT REGISTRATIONS					
Peace Officer(Retired)	0	1	1	0	0
Federal Officer	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL BASIC EXEMPT	0	1	1	0	0
SPECIALTY CERTIFICATIONS					
Arson Investigator	26	21	16	20	18
Field Training Officer	653	688	685	623	622
Radar & Lidar Operator	595	723	732	833	669
Instructor	805	1,029	987	867	741
Latent Print Examiner	0	3	3	3	7
Laser Operator	588	660	664	559	352
Sheriff	0	7	3	1	0
Traffic Accident Reconstruction	14	18	11	22	11
Swat Officer	0	0	0	3	1
CAREER DEVELOPMENT					
Intermediate	178	218	270	261	166
Advanced	127	112	112	121	85
Supervisory	218	222	231	255	220
Management	90	131	136	125	124
Executive	11	9	7	9	3
Senior Instructor Trainer	56	59	47	33	37
Master Instructor Trainer	10	6	5	7	10
Senior Deputy	12	12	19	37	40
Departmental Training Officer	16	1	10	0	26
Bomb Techs. & Animal Handler	11	10	4	9	11
Jail Training Officer	14	20	15	11	22
Comm. Training Officer	1	0	2	0	0
Crime Scene Tech	27	45	53	41	30
TOTAL SPECIALTY CERTIFICATIONS	3,452	3,994	4,012	3,840	3,195
TOTAL ALL CERTIFICATIONS	10,076	10,661	10,826	10,487	8,944

Training Standards Division

The **Training Standards Division** is responsible for the functions related to development, evaluation and management of peace officer training. Other major responsibilities include:

- Curriculum development, modification and maintenance
- Research and development
- Performing quality control functions on basic and advanced-level training
- Processing of school, school director, and functions relating to instructor certification
- Out-of-State course equivalency ratings for approval/disapproval
- Technical assistance to POST certified police academies
- Processing and evaluating new course recognition requests

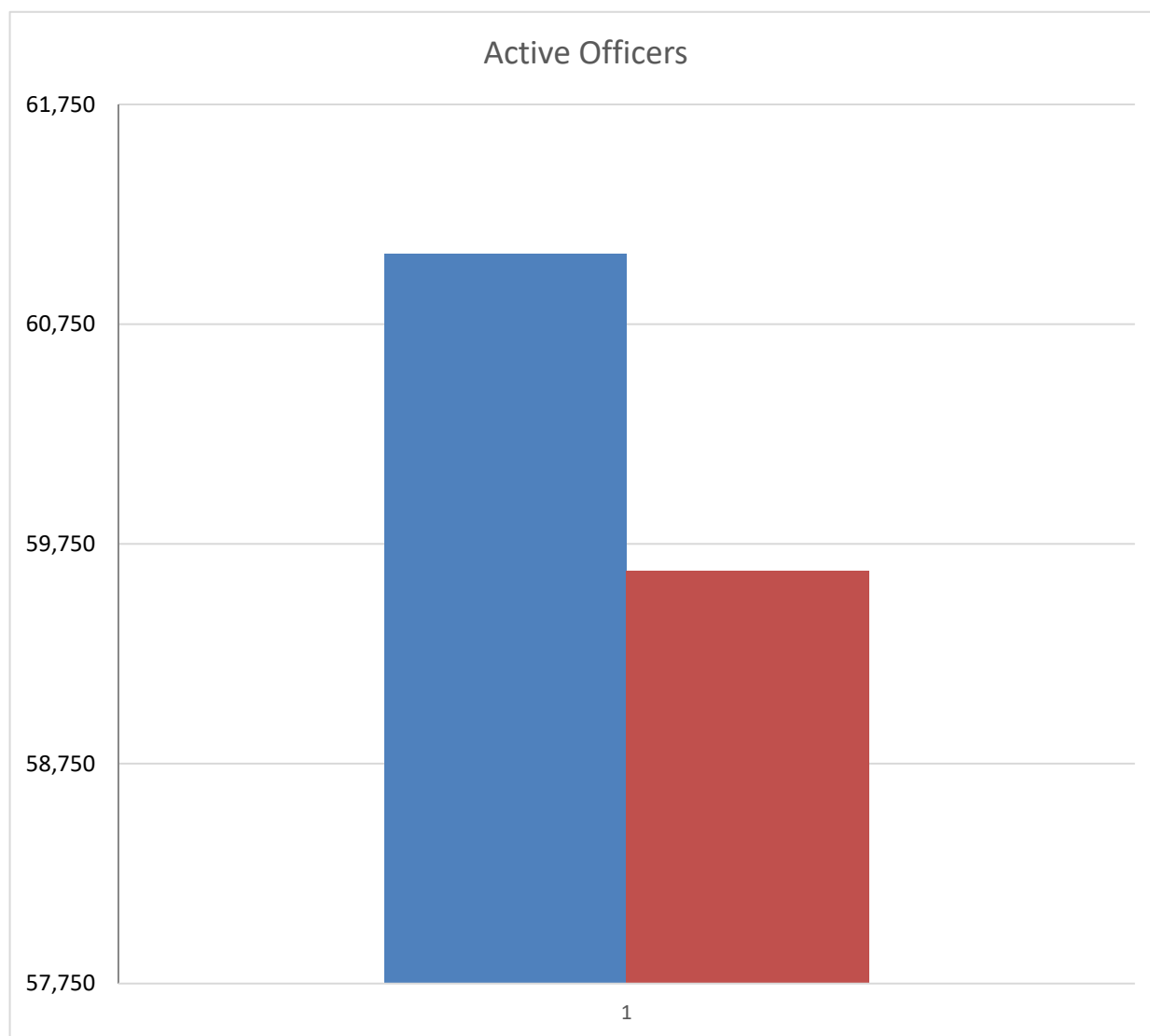
Special Operations of the Training Standards Division

The **Training Standards Division** has additional responsibilities that ensure the peace officers of Georgia are receiving the highest quality and most up to date training that is available. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Process and review Basic Course Completion packages (300+) to ensure compliance with POST rules and policy
- Process and review peace officers' requests for waiver of the 20-hour annual training requirement
- Re-certification Application Processing

Active officers as of 6-30-2019 61,071

Active officers as of 6-30-2020 59,627



Investigations Division

The Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council has discretionary authority by law, to discipline officers. Disciplinary action is taken in the form of sanctions against an officer's certification. Action is based on the preponderance of evidence that they were in violation of the P.O.S.T. Act (O.C.G.A. §35-8 as amended).

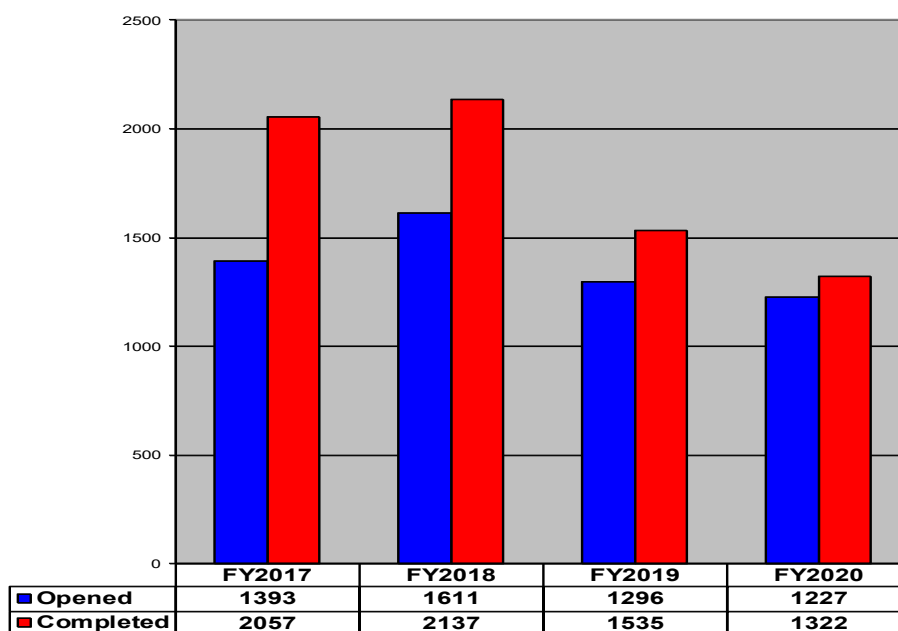
Discipline/Investigation of Officers

This division is responsible for investigating terminations of officers, suspensions of more than 30 days, and alleged criminal involvement of any officer. The investigator then reports to the P.O.S.T. Council Probable Cause Committee (PCC) for further action/recommendation. The PCC recommends a sanction to the Council, which may include: (a) Revocation of Certification; (b) Suspension of Certification; (c) Probation; or (d) Sanctions as permitted by Law, (O.C.G.A. 35-8-7.1(1)).

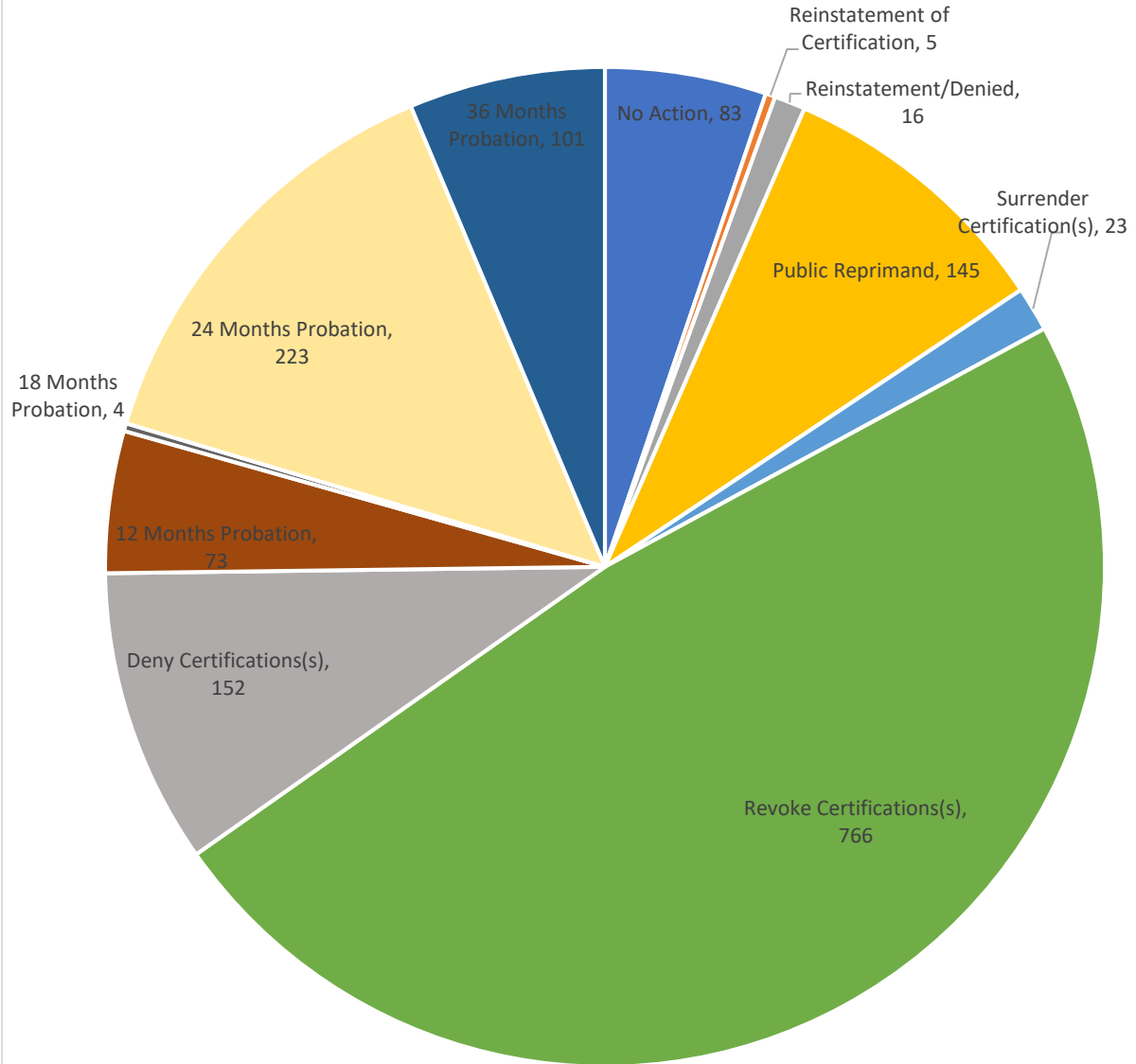
Technical Assistance

The investigation division also provides technical assistance to the law enforcement agencies and their officers in matters relating to the P.O.S.T. Act.

Case Statistics

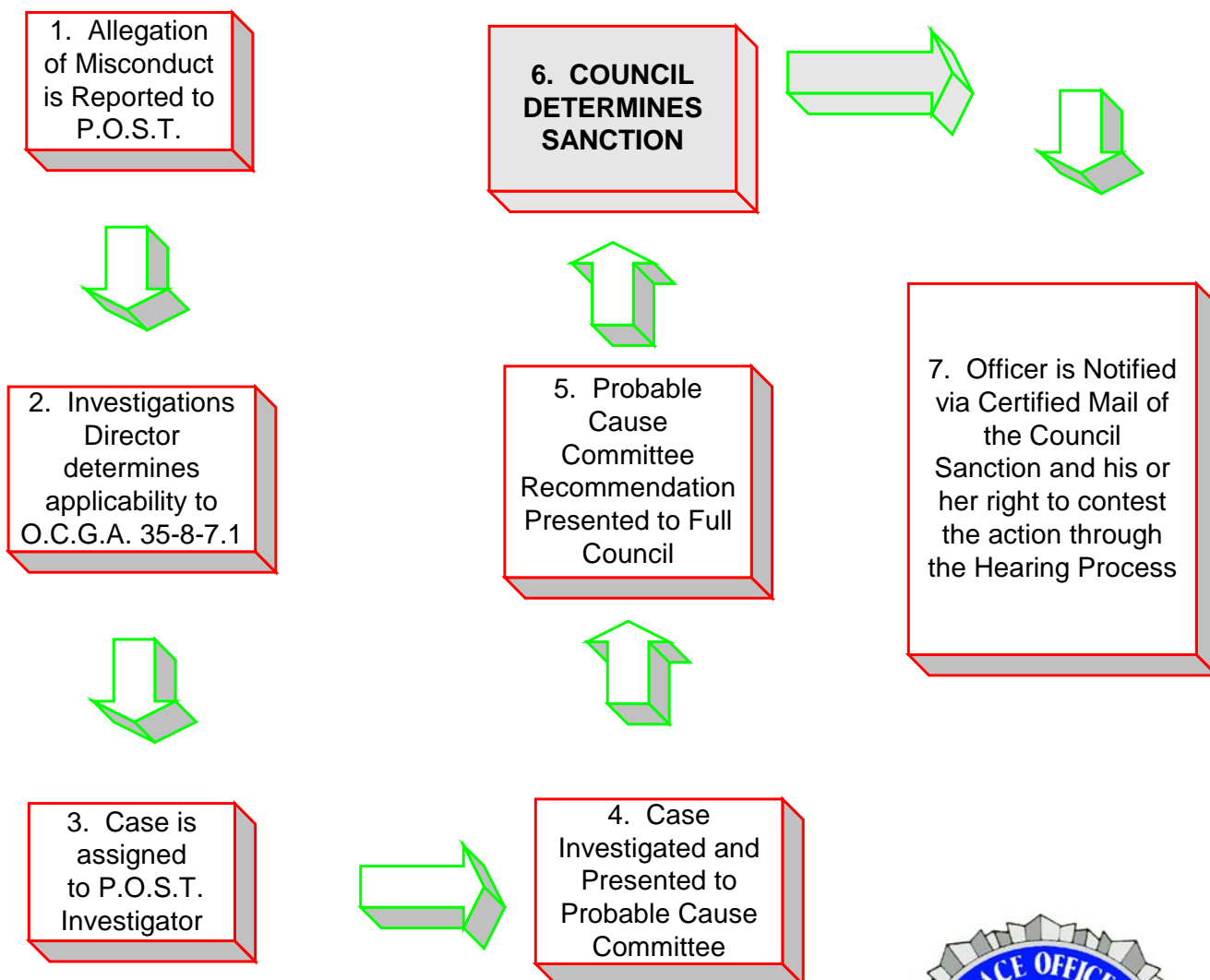


Summary of Sanctions



- No Action
- Reinstatement/Denied
- Surrender Certification(s)
- Deny Certifications(s)
- 18 Months Probation
- 36 Months Probation
- Reinstatement of Certification
- Public Reprimand
- Revoke Certifications(s)
- 12 Months Probation
- 24 Months Probation

**GEORGIA PEACE OFFICER
STANDARDS AND TRAINING
COUNCIL
Investigations Division**

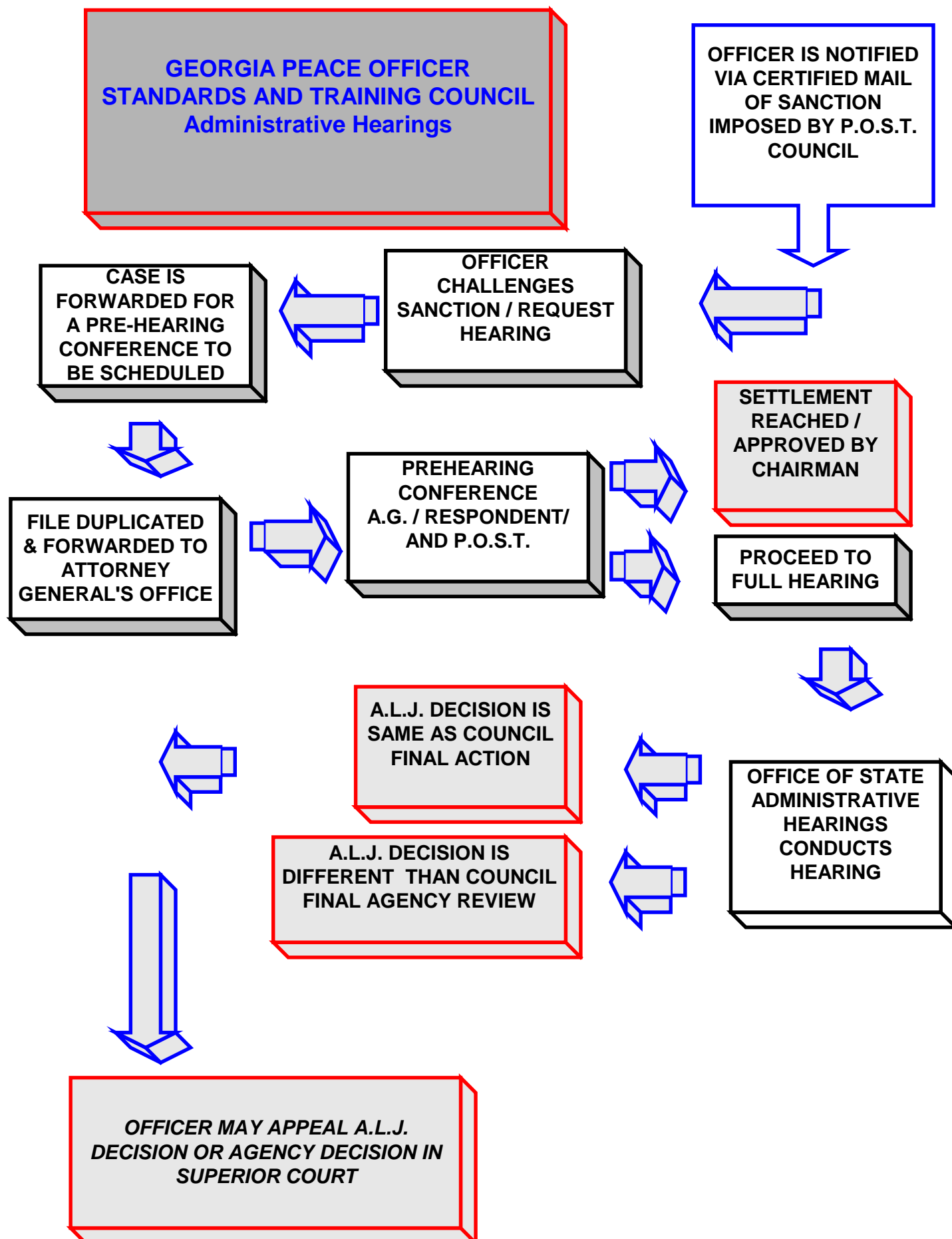


Hearings

Officers are entitled to challenge sanctions imposed on their certification by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council. The officer's due process is afforded through an administrative hearing in accordance with the Georgia Administrative Procedures Act (O.C.G.A. §50-13).

It is estimated that over 15% of the officers sanctioned by the Council appeal within the allotted fifteen (15) day period by filing a written request for a hearing. Once received, a "pre-hearing conference" is scheduled with the affected officer, the officer's legal representative, and a member of the Attorney General's Office. During a pre-hearing conference, a negotiated settlement is explored. The Attorney General makes a recommendation as to whether to proceed to a formal hearing or suggest an alternative.

Unsettled cases are forwarded to the Office of State Administrative Hearings (O.S.A.H.). A Special Assistant Administrative Law Judge is assigned by the Chief Judge of O.S.A.H. to preside in a contested case and schedules a complete evidentiary hearing in the disputed matter. Upon conclusion, the Judge will render a "Final Decision" (conclusion is the same as Council's action) or an "Initial Decision" (conclusion differs from Council's action). Initial Decisions are reviewed by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council through a "Final Agency Review". Officers may appeal all decisions in Superior Court as a matter of law. During Fiscal year 2020 there were 221 pre-hearing conferences held.



P.O.S.T. Operations Division

*The **P.O.S.T. Operations Division** is responsible for providing administrative support and special services. Other major responsibilities include:*

- Certification Examination
- Custodian of Records- Open Records Request
- Curriculum Revision
- Special Projects
- Media Relations
- Rule Revisions
- Technology Support for Headquarters & Field Officers
- Administrative Hearings
- Pre-Investigative Consent Orders

During FY 2020 P.O.S.T. responded to approximately 5,741 Open Records Requests. This Division is tasked with searching for and implementing new processes that will make the agency more efficient.

Maintenance of P.O.S.T. Computer System/Peace Officer Records

P.O.S.T.'s Data Communications Section maintains the following records on the P.O.S.T. computer system:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <i>A. Personnel History</i> | <i>G. Training Course Completions</i> |
| <i>B. Employment History</i> | <i>H. Certification/Registration</i> |
| <i>C. Discipline</i> | <i>I. Terminations</i> |
| <i>D. Training Courses</i> | <i>J. Agencies</i> |
| <i>E. Chief Executives</i> | <i>K. Advanced Certification</i> |
| <i>F. Sheriffs'; Wardens'; and Chiefs' Current Training Histories</i> | |

P.O.S.T. maintains employment, certification and training records on over 115,000 officers. Of these, over 58,000 are actively employed in their field of certification.

PRE-INVESTIGATIVE CONSENT ORDERS

The Pre-Investigative Consent Order (commonly referred to as PICO) Program was designed to help alleviate the Investigation Division with backlog cases and reduce their case load as a result of the implementation of the POST Data Gateway. The PICO program allows certain applicants/candidates and certified officers to resolve a POST disciplinary issue in an expedient manner with use of consent orders for certain violations similar to plea agreements in certain criminal cases.

Although POST Council approved POST RULE Chapter 464-7 entitled Pre-Investigative Consent Orders in December 2015, the rule became effective on Jan. 10, 2016. The process became available to Applicants and Certified Officers after March 9, 2016 POST Council Meeting.

According to POST Rule Chapter 464-7, Pre-investigative consent agreements may be entered into by Georgia POST Council and an applicant/candidate for certification or person certified pursuant to O.C.G.A. Title 35, Chapter 8. POST Council may issue a pre-investigative consent order in situations in which the individual agrees to the imposition of certain disciplinary sanctions in accordance with O.C.G.A. Title 35, Chapter 8, Section 7.1. Entering into a consent agreement resulting in a consent order is entirely voluntary and any person entering into such agreement waives all other proceedings, hearings and processes normally associated with actions taken by POST Council.

In certain instances, using guidelines approved by the POST Council, a pre-investigative consent order may be offered, in lieu of a full POST disciplinary investigation. Any such consent order agreed upon and finalized by the Executive Director and Chairman shall be presented before the Council at the next regularly scheduled meeting for final approval. In cases in which no agreement is made, the Director of the Investigations Division of the Council shall assign the case to an investigator as in other cases.

A pre-investigative consent order may be rescinded by the Council if it is found to have been based on misleading, deceptive, untrue, or fraudulent information or documents submitted to POST Council or its staff. If a pre-investigative consent order is rescinded, the investigative matter shall be forwarded to the POST Investigations Division for review by the Council.

The Administrative Hearing Officer oversees the Pre-Investigative Consent Orders after case assignment from the Director of Investigations Division.

Since July 2020, POST Council has approved 57 Pre-Investigative Consent Orders.