

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 2022 Annual Report of the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council.

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 POST has implemented.

In Fiscal Year 2022 POST introduced many enhancements to better accomplish our mission and to better serve the law enforcement community. Some of these enhancements included:

Implementing the Georgia Officer Resiliency Program which is designed to equip an officer to successfully thrive in the stressful environment of law enforcement.

Developing an audit program whereby each academy is audited annually to ensure compliance with POST Rules and the Uniformed Academy Regulations.

Reviewing and eliminating non-essential fees for POST actions in all matters other than disciplinary.

Waiving fees for Retired Credentials and Retired Concealed Carry.

Reviewing and deleting annual requirement that officers "re-certify" in order to maintain their officer certifications.

Implementing a psychological screening requirement for all applicants that must be completed before acceptance To any police mandate training program.

Working with Ga. Law Enforcement to train officers to work with local elections officials to assist in providing secure state elections.

I am proud of Georgia POST Council's accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2022. 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 twenty-one 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
John Melvin	Director of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation or Designee
Don Banks	Member other than the Attorney General
Chief Bruce Hedley	President of the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police
Warden Walton Davis	President of the Georgia Prison Wardens' Association
Sheriff Carlton Speed	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
Ricky Myrick	The Commissioner of Corrections or Designee
Lt. Col. Billy Hitchens	The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety
Sheriff Ray Paulk	A Peace Officer
Sheriff Andy Hester	A Peace Officer

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
Executive Director Butch Ayers- Association Director	Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police
Executive Vice President Terry Norris- Association Director	Georgia Sheriffs' Association
Chief Mike Coverson	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
Director Billy Mixon	Command College
Stan Crowder	Kennesaw State University
Director Michael Nix	Georgia Emergency Management Agency
Sheriff Dan Kilgore	Upson County Sheriff's Office
Chief Steve Lynn	Perry Police Department
Thomas Walters	Federal Law Enforcement Training Center

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
Billy Hitchens, Vice-Chairman
Walton Davis
Carlton Speed
Ricky Myrick
Ray Paulk
David Keith

Advisory Members:

Chris Wigginton
Terry Norris
Barry Woodward
Tom Bojo
Michael Nix
Billy Mixon
Robert Bolton
Michael Nix
Thomas Walters

Probable Cause Committee:

Scott Maurer, Chairman
Chris Barnett, Vice-Chairman
Mitch Ralston
Mark Amerman
John Melvin
Thomas Barnard

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
Bruce Hedley
Lamar Paris
Don Banks
Clark Boddie
Andy Hester

Advisory Members:

Nicholas Marinelli, Jr.
Mike Coverson
Stan Crowder
Dan Kilgore
Steve Lynn
Butch Ayers
Wayne Dennard

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.

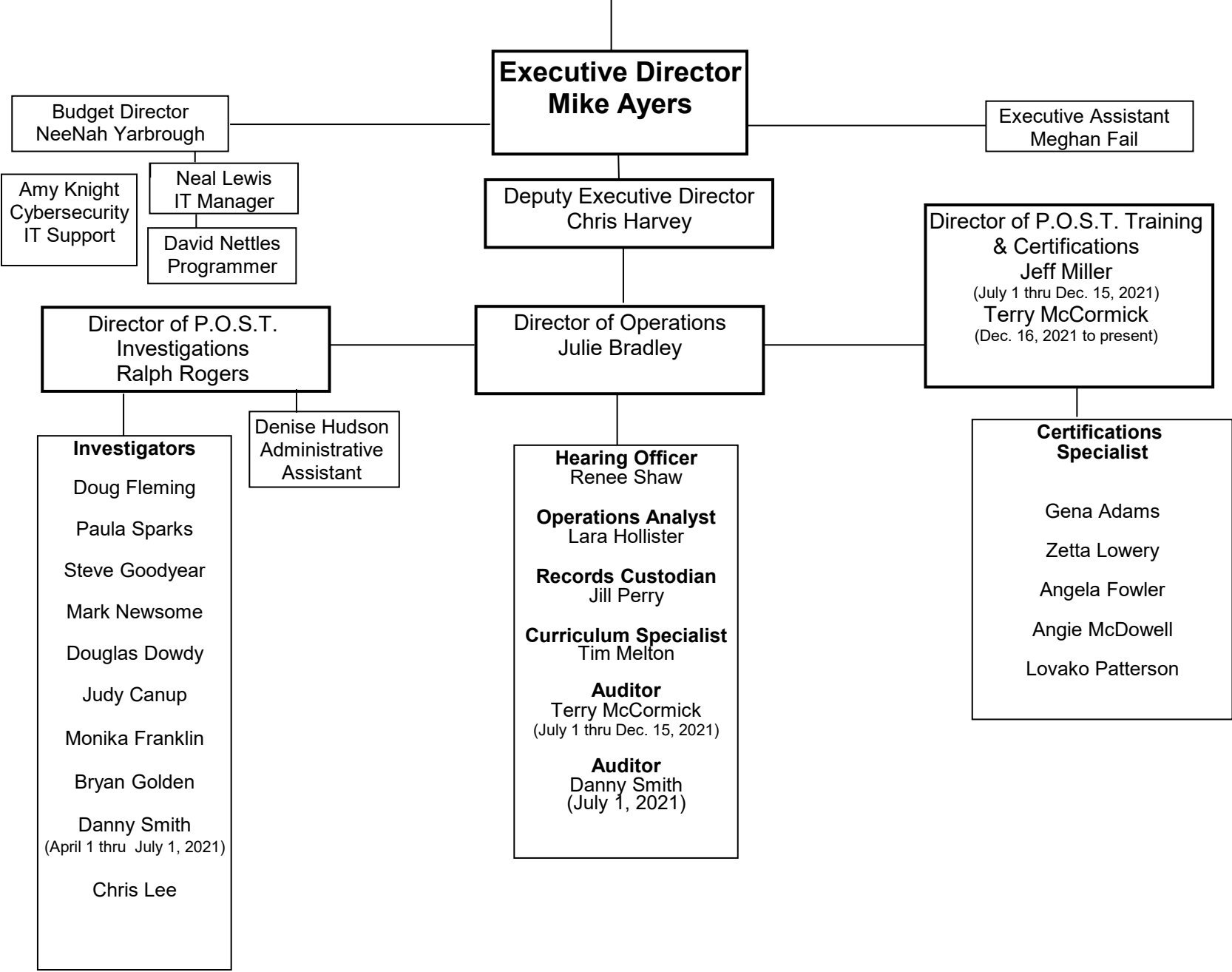
Following his honorable discharge from military service, Director Ayers began his law enforcement career in Hartwell, Georgia where he served as a uniformed police officer for the local municipality. In 1990 Director Ayers was hired by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation where he served until his appointment 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



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

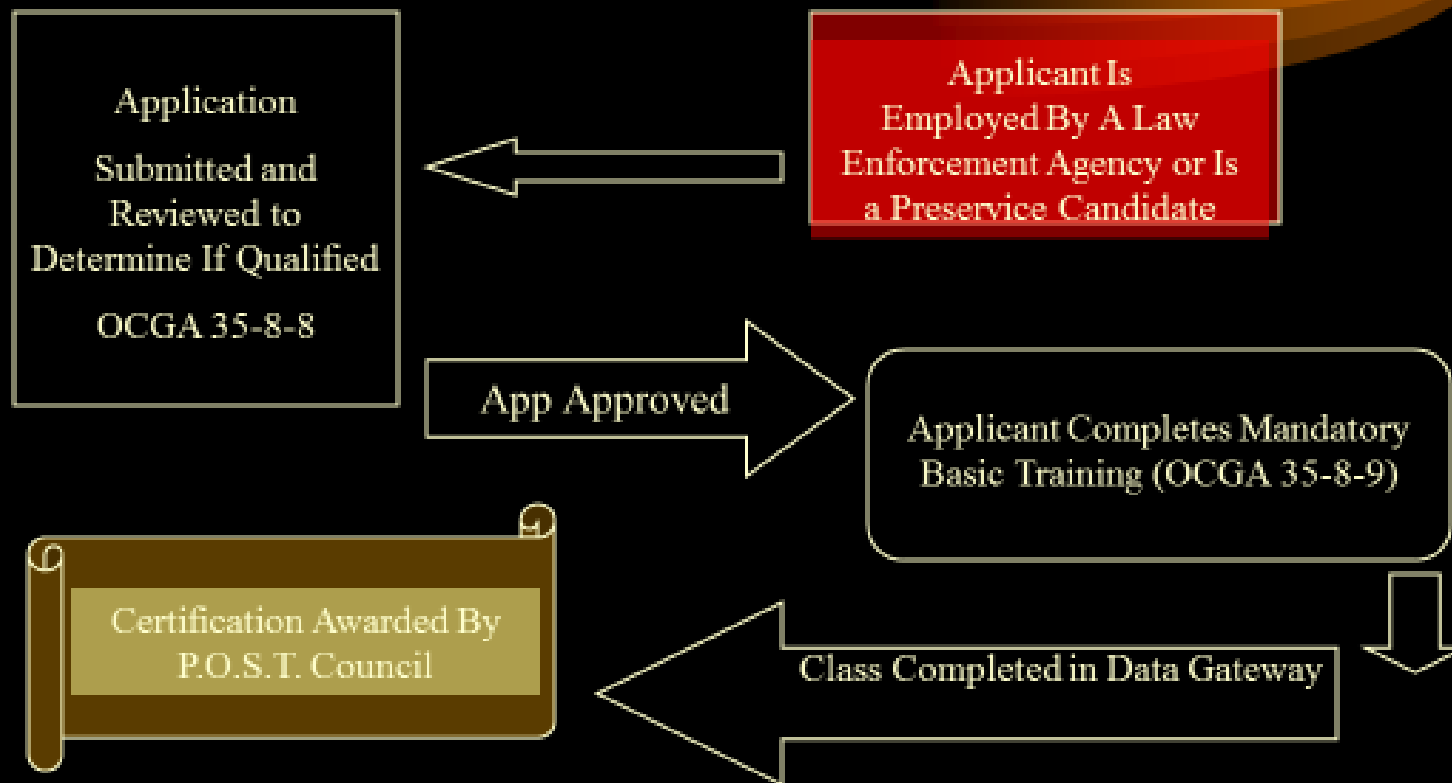
SPECIALTY CERTIFICATIONS

- 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

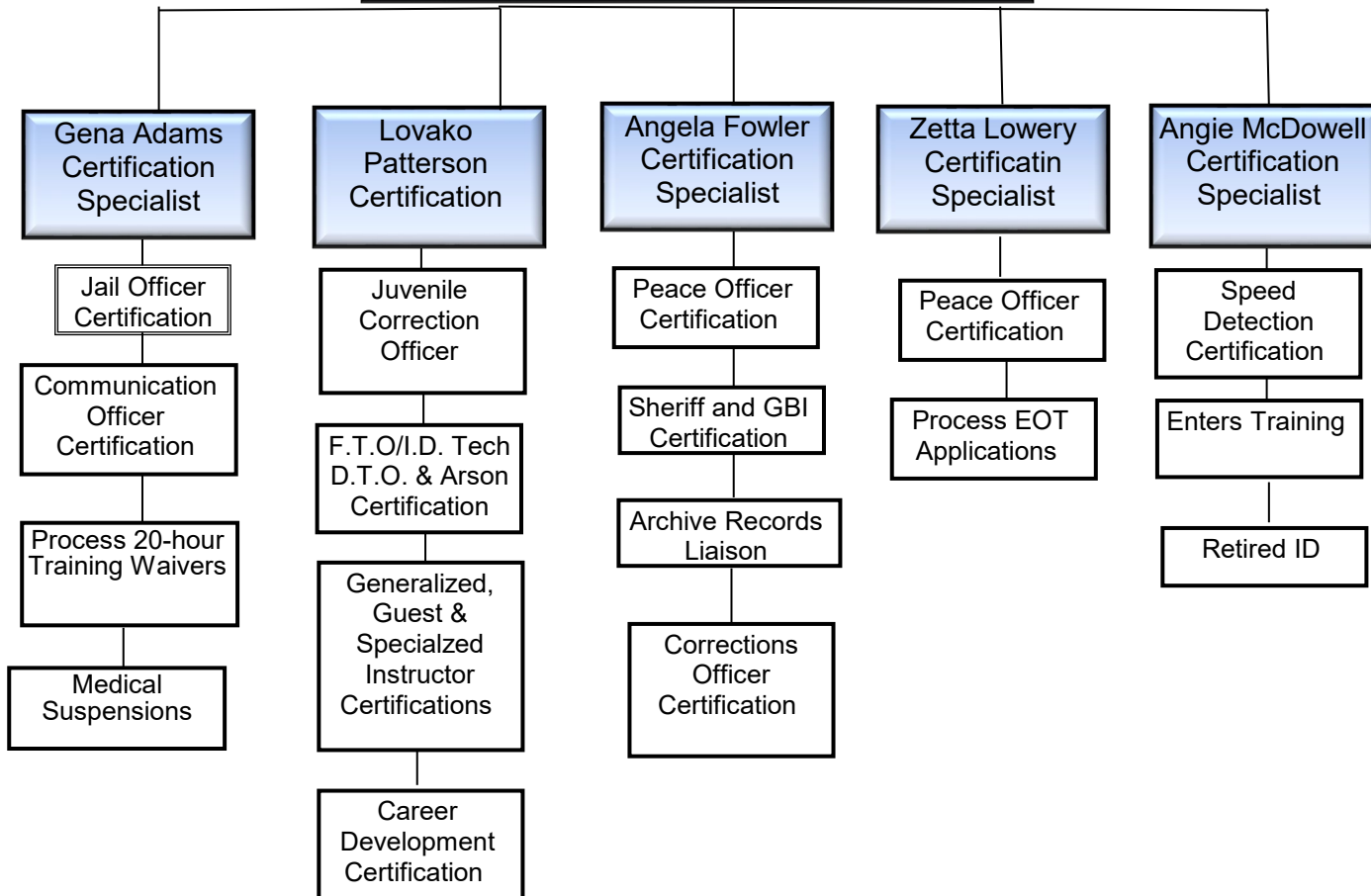
All agencies covered by the P.O.S.T. Act or those permitted to voluntarily comply with the Act can be recognized by P.O.S.T. Those requesting recognition must submit to P.O.S.T. a copy of the ordinance or law that established their authority as a law enforcement agency, along with a request for recognition 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
(July 1 thru Dec. 15, 2021)
Terry McCormick
(Dec. 16, 2021 to Present)



PEACE OFFICER STATISTICS	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
BASIC CERTIFICATIONS					
Peace Officer	1,958	2,084	2,018	1,821	1,700
Peace Officer-Equiv of Trng	0	0	0	0	109
Juvenile Probation Officer	19	13	9	2	6
Jail Officer	1,610	1,551	1,356	1,323	1,290
Communication Officer	464	622	547	484	505
Juvenile Correctional Officer	504	512	374	273	224
State Correctional Officer	2,053	1,741	1,383	1,042	687
Parole & Probation Officer	205	124	62	81	97
TOTAL BASIC	6,813	6,647	5,749	5,026	4,618
EXEMPT REGISTRATIONS					
Peace Officer(Retired)	1	0	0	0	1
Federal Officer	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL BASIC EXEMPT	1	0	0	0	1
SPECIALTY CERTIFICATIONS					
Arson Investigator	16	20	18	8	14
Field Training Officer	685	623	622	599	739
Radar & Lidar Operator	732	833	669	626	835
Instructor	987	867	741	746	1,054
Latent Print Examiner	3	3	7	6	6
Laser Operator	664	559	352	267	230
Sheriff	3	1	0	2	8
Traffic Accident Reconstruction	11	22	11	8	21
Swat Officer	0	3	1	1	1
CAREER DEVELOPMENT					
Intermediate	270	261	166	209	222
Advanced	112	121	85	100	106
Supervisory	231	255	220	248	294
Management	136	125	124	152	143
Executive	7	9	3	12	12
Senior Instructor Trainer	47	33	37	27	65
Master Instructor Trainer	5	7	10	15	7
Senior Deputy	19	37	40	25	33
Departmental Training Officer	10	0	26	2	6
Bomb Techs. & Animal Handler	4	9	11	12	12
Jail Training Officer	15	11	22	16	22
Comm. Training Officer	2	0	0	0	0
Crime Scene Tech	53	41	30	27	20
TOTAL SPECIALTY CERTIFICATIONS	4,012	3,840	3,195	3,108	3,850
TOTAL ALL CERTIFICATIONS	10,826	10,487	8,944	8,134	8,469

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

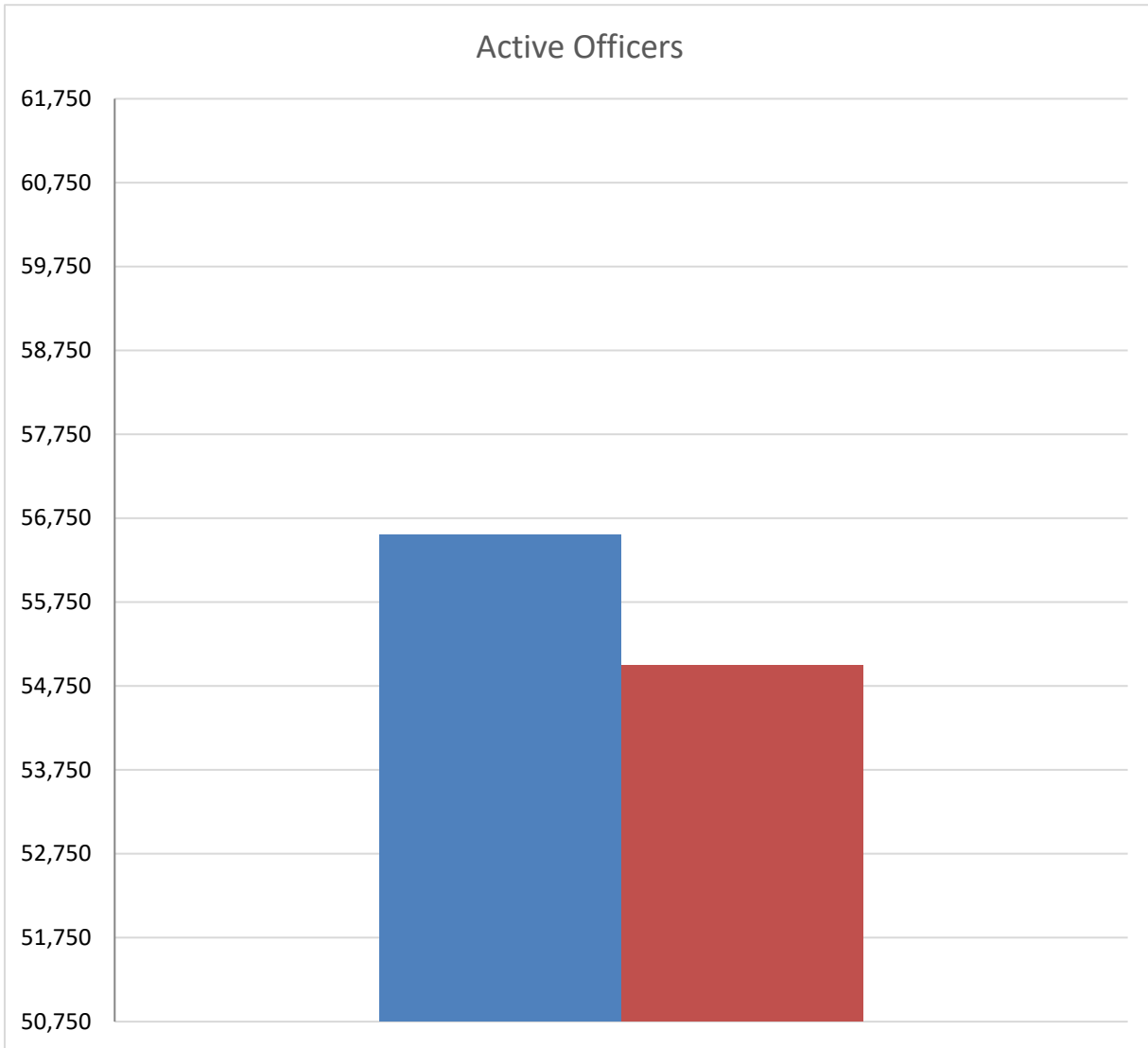
Special Operations of the Training Standards Division

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 6-30-2021 56,553

Active officers as of 6-30-2022 54,998



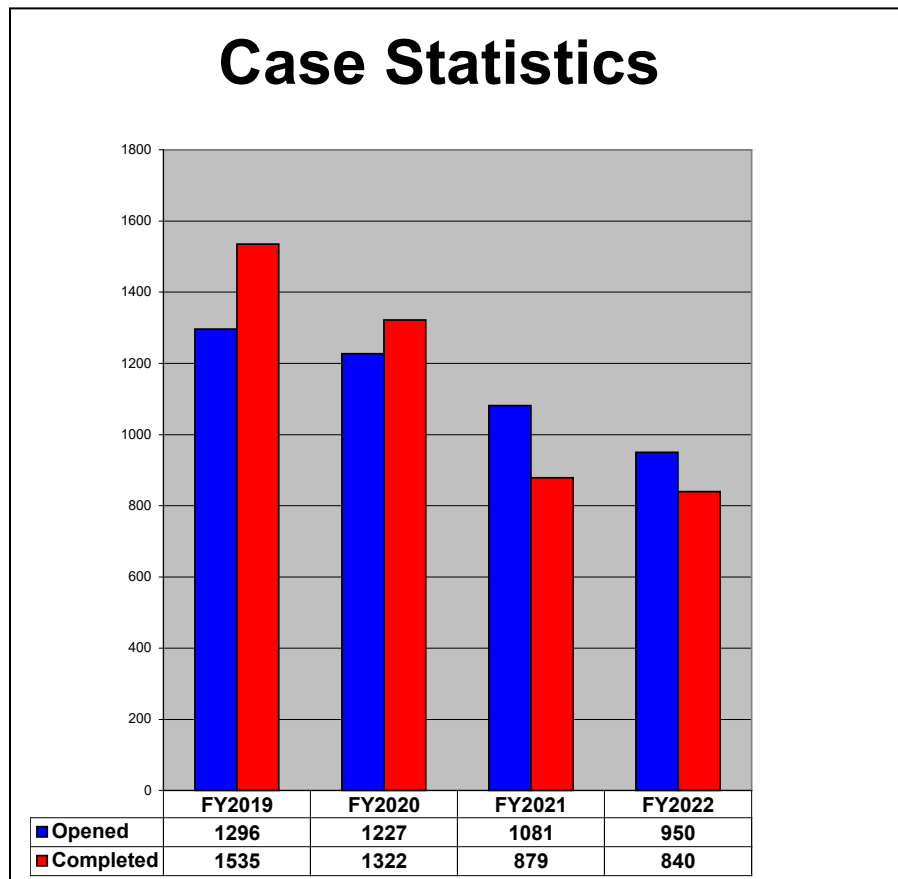
Investigations Division

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).

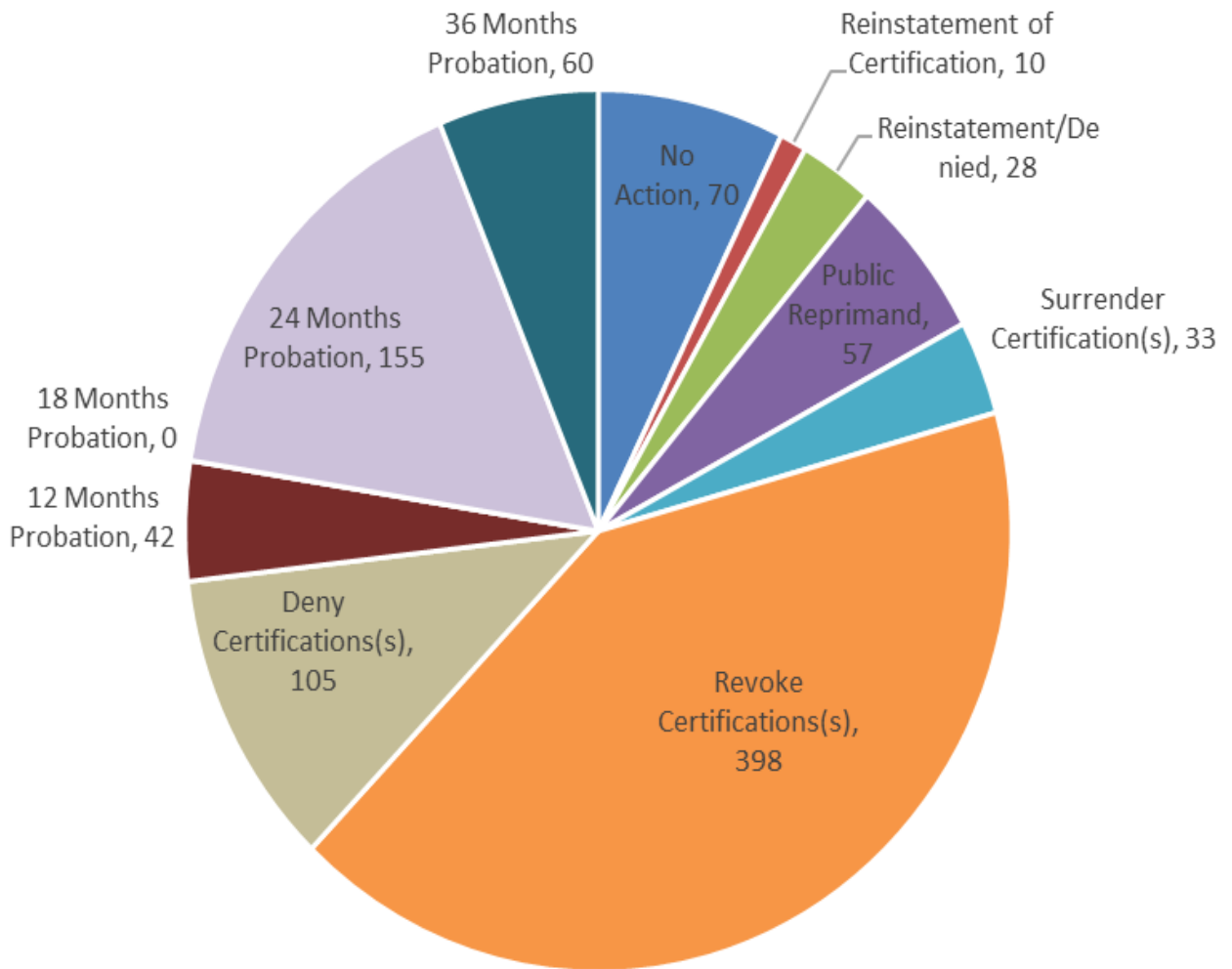
Discipline/Investigation of Officers

POST Investigators are assigned cases of involuntary officer terminations, suspensions of more than 30 days, and alleged criminal involvement of any officer. At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator makes a report to POST. This report is reviewed and may be submitted to the Probable Cause Committee (PCC) for further action/recommendation. The PCC recommendation to Council may include:

1. Revocation of Certification
2. Suspension of Certification
3. Probation
4. Other Sanctions as Permitted by Law ([O.C.G.A. 35-8-7.1\(11\)](#))



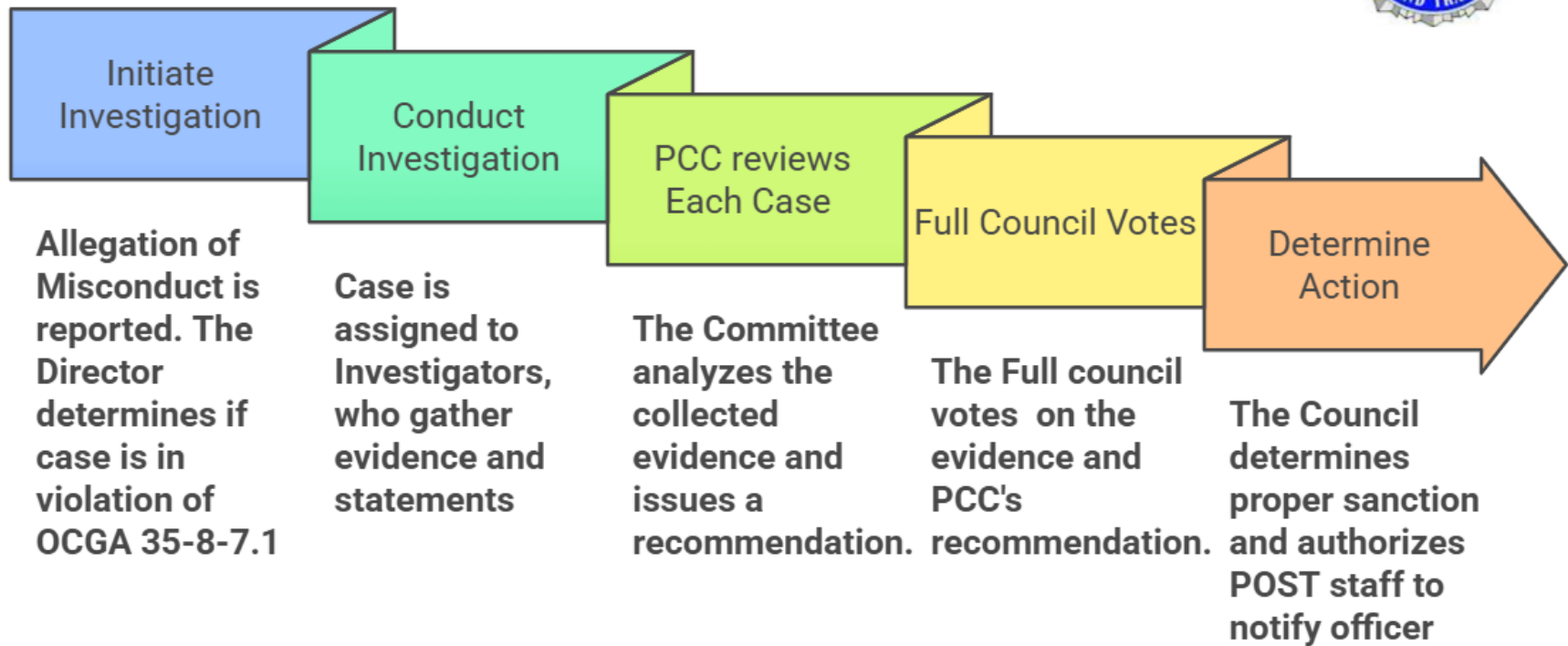
Summary of Sanctions



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



Investigation Division Process Flow



Hearings

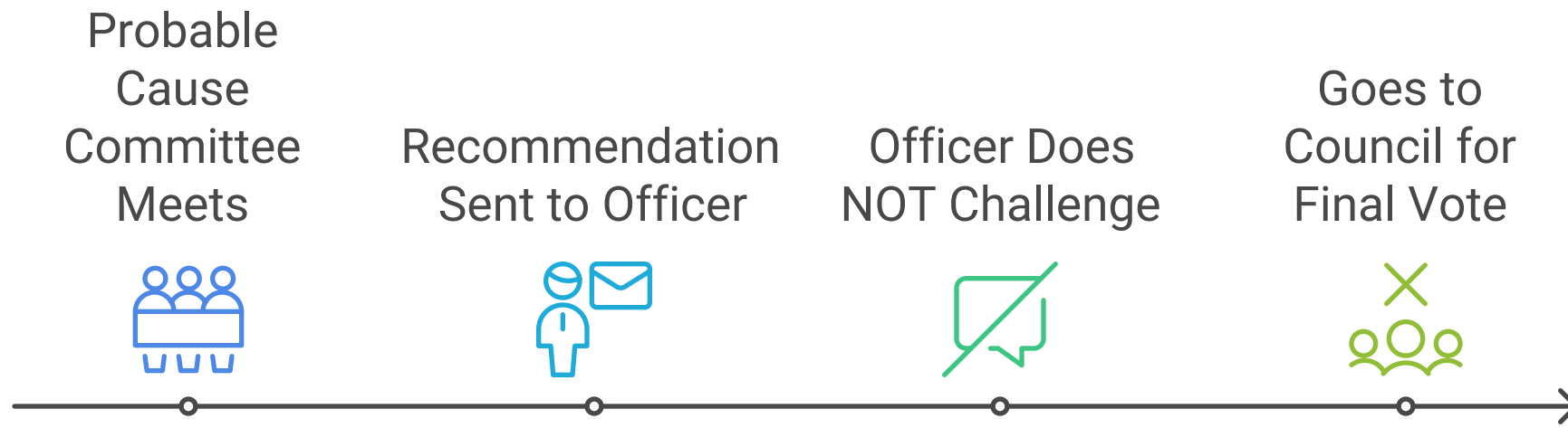
Officers are entitled to challenge sanctions imposed on their certification by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council. The officer's due process is afforded through an administrative hearing in accordance with the Georgia Administrative Procedures Act (O.C.G.A. §50-13).

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 2022 there were 94 pre-hearing conferences held.



Administrative Hearing Process



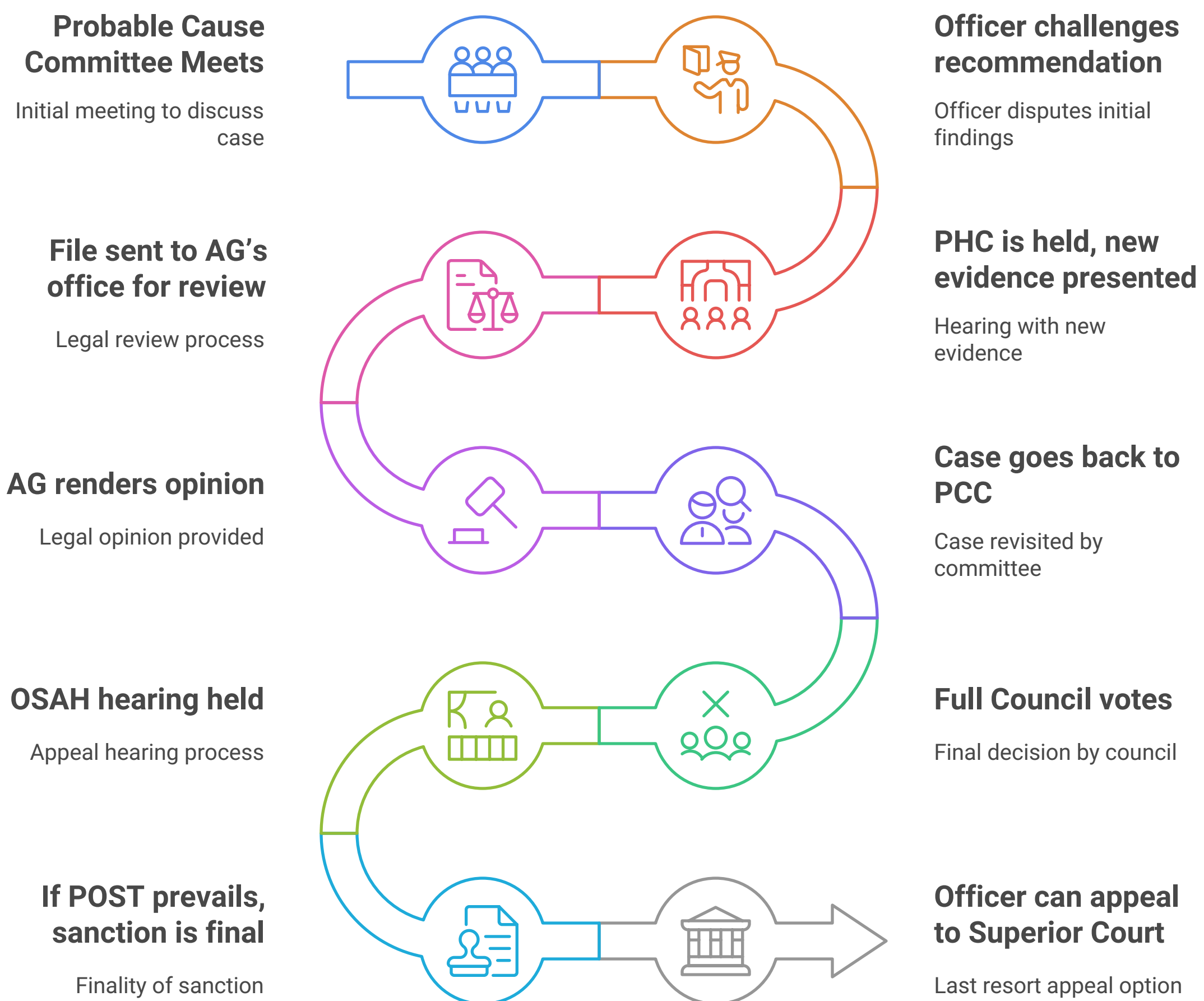
Officers are entitled to challenge sanctions imposed by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council. This information is intended to assist officers in this process by providing information relevant to an Administrative Hearing.

For Officers contesting sanctions or other issues related to their Peace Officer Certification, it is suggested and encouraged that knowledge in the following be attained:

Rules of the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (Rule 464 published 1998 in the Office of the Secretary of State) Specifically Rule 464-8 as amended. (O.C.G.A. 35-8-7.1 and 35-8-7.2)

Rules of the Office of State Administrative Hearings (Rule 616 published 1995 in the Office of the Secretary of State) O.C.G.A. 50-13 as amended (The Georgia Administrative Procedure Act)

Navigating the Administrative Hearings Process



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:

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

During FY 2022 P.O.S.T. responded to approximately 7,095 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.

In FY2022, POST Council has approved 83 Pre-Investigative Consent Orders.