Oklahoma Association of Chiefs of Police
Oklahoma Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation and Professional Standards Program

Assessors and Assessment Team Protocol

Assessors

On-site assessors are trained law enforcement professionals who are familiar with the accreditation standards. They are fully qualified to review standard file folders, observe the operations of the candidate agency, and conduct interviews to determine whether the compliance of standards exists. Assessors are:

- Employees of an accredited or certified agency, and/or,
- Members of the Oklahoma Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (OLEAC), or
- Members of the Oklahoma Police Accreditation Coalition (OPAC) whose agencies are actively pursuing accreditation/certification.

Assessors and apprentice assessors are volunteers and typically allotted time from their agency to perform their duties without cost to the candidate agency.

Assessor Qualifications

Assessors must have attended the formal accreditation assessor training program and served as an apprentice assessor.

Apprentice Assessors

Apprentice assessors are members of the OLEAC and/or OPAC who are training to be assessors and perform under the guidance of an experienced assessor at an on-site assessment. Typically, the apprentice assessor is responsible for his/her expenses and not the candidate agency.

Assessor Selection

The Oklahoma Association Chief's of Police Accreditation Program Administrator is responsible for selecting the on-site assessment team lead assessor. The Program Administrator will coordinate with the lead assessor to construct the team including apprentice assessors. Apprentice assessors may be assigned only with the permission of the CLEO of the candidate agency.

Lead Assessor

Only employees of accredited agencies may server as lead assessors. The lead assessor is selected by the OACP Accreditation Program Administrator to be the manager of the assessment team. The lead assessor is selected within a time frame that will allow him/her to coordinate the many aspects of the on-site assessment including pre and post activities.

<u>Pre on-site assessment responsibilities of the lead assessor include:</u>

Contact the candidate agency and determine: (preferred minimum lead time is 30 days)

- Lodging logistics (direct bill, reimbursement, etc.?)

- Meal logistics (submit receipts, sign tickets, reimburse, etc.?)
- Miscellaneous expense payment arraignments
- Prepare the site-visit itinerary with the cooperation of the candidate agency and forward it to each assessor and apprentice assessor.
- Can the agency accommodate apprentice assessors and if so, the number. (The candidate agency is not expected to assume any expenses incurred by the apprentice assessors)
- Forward a list of assessors and apprentice assessors to the CLEO of the candidate agency.
- Afford the opportunity of the CLEO to challenge any of the assessors or apprentice assessors.

Confirm the following is completed or scheduled:

- The Agency Profile form is up to date.
- The candidate agency has a participation agreement on file with OACP
- Confirm the candidate agency has paid the required fees
- List of agency contacts including phone numbers and email addresses
- The candidate agency accreditation manager and assessors have reviewed the Code of Ethics.

Develop a tentative assessment itinerary with the candidate agency. The preferred minimum lead time is 15 days on this task.

Assemble assessment team to include assessors and apprentice assessors unless the Accreditation Program Administrator has already done so. Contact candidate agency CLEO to ensure that there are no conflicts with the assessment team.

Forward the itinerary and lodging, meal, miscellaneous, etc. to assessment team.

Ensure that the lead assessor has up-to-date standards, forms, and documents necessary to conduct the assessment.

Reconnect with the candidate agency and assessment team 2 to 5 days prior to the site visit to ensure that everyone is up-to-date and that logistics are clear.

<u>On-site assessment responsibilities of the lead assessor</u>

As the on-site assessment team manager, the lead assessor typically guides the initial entry and exit meeting with the CLEO. He/she serves as spokesperson for the team, assigns team tasks, and keeps the on-site assessment on track for the scheduled completion. In addition, the lead assessor is usually most knowledgeable of the standards and renders a decision on issues brought forward.

Upon completion of the exit meeting, the lead assessor will provide the CLEO of the candidate agency with a site visit assessment critique and request it be completed and submitted to the OACP Accreditation Program Administrator.

<u>Post on-site assessment responsibilities of the lead assessor</u>

The lead assessor will prepare a draft of the on-site assessment using the approved report template. The draft will be forwarded to the other assessors for comment. The lead assessor will forward the final draft to the Commission for review and action.

Other responsibilities of the lead assessor include preparing a written report to the Commission documenting concerns or issues with standards, forms, the assessment process, etc. that should be addressed by the Commission.

On-Site Assessment Protocol

Pre-Assessment Meeting

The CLEO, agency accreditation manager, other appropriate agency personnel, and assessment team should meet upon arrival for a formal pre-assessment meeting. The meeting is used for introductions, review the itinerary, answer questions, and clarify other issues. The team may be introduced to members of the jurisdictional governing group when this is feasible. If the city, town or county manager is available, try to arrange a brief introduction. However, remember that these are political positions and time at the on-site assessment is a premium.

Facility Tour and Static Display

Following the pre-assessment meeting, the assessment team should be provided with a tour of the main facility and view static displays. Static displays will provide the team with a jump on many of the standard folders through observational compliance but is optional. The static display should provide the team with a chance to get the team off to a good start in finding compliance with a multitude of standards. The personnel assigned to the display should be briefed on the teams' purpose and answer questions asked by the assessment team. Displays may include special equipment your department uses such as SWAT equipment, K-9, transport vehicles, watercraft, aircraft, motorcycles, animal control units, mobile dispatch vans, forensic vehicles, community relations units, bicycle patrol and, of course, a fully equipped patrol vehicles.

Assessor Work Area and Provisions

The assessment team will spend numerous hours reviewing file folders. The candidate agency should provide a comfortable, private, and quite room with ample work space for the assessors to work. If the agency is automated, a workstation with access to the website and other appropriate information will be helpful. Additionally, copies of all written directives such as policies, procedures, standard operating procedures, training manuals, bargaining unit contracts, local codes or ordinances, etc. should be available in the work area. This of course is in addition to the standard file folders.

Clerical supplies such as staplers, post-it note pads, pens, pencils, paper clips, etc. should be placed at each workstation. Coffee, soft drinks, drinking water, fruit, gum, mints, pastry and other snacks should be available in the room.

The Role of the Agency Accreditation Manager during the On-Site Assessment

The accreditation agency manager is typically the main point of contact for the assessment team and should be immediately available during the time assessors are working. The lead assessor should have emergency contact with the accreditation manager after hours as well.

The Role of the Assessment Team during the On-Site Visit

The role of the assessor is to ensure compliance of the accreditation/certification standards in a professional and non-adversarial manner. In order to accomplish this, the assessment team will spend significant time reviewing standard file folders but will also observe and interview agency personnel in records, communications, evidence and property, jail/holding facilities, etc. Assessors should have the prerogative to conduct interviews and ride-alongs with agency employees of their choice. With this in mind, agency personnel should expect to see, and possibly converse with, assessors anytime of the day or night during the on-site assessment.

Occasionally assessors will discover a standard not to be in compliance. When this happens, the issue will be brought to the attention of the agency accreditation manager as soon as practical thereby affording the agency the opportunity to bring the standard into compliance during the on-site assessment.

Post-Assessment Meeting

The post-assessment meeting is typically attended by the same personnel who attended the pre-assessment meeting. This meeting is conducted to brief the CLEO of the findings of the assessment team. The lead assessor will explain the overall findings and address positives as well as possible discrepancies. The lead assessor should also inform the CLEO of the assessment teams’ recommendation to the Accreditation Commission. Individual assessors will also convey positive and negative points they discovered during the assessment. This is also a question and answer time.

Refer to the Form and Document ID list for other official forms and documents relating to the accreditation process.