STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 48th Legislature (2001)

SENATE BILL 614 By: Wilkerson

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 1991, Section 3311, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 369, O.S.L. 2000 (70 O.S. Supp. 2000, Section 3311), which relates to the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training; adding requirements for certification as a police or peace officer; authorizing the Council to increase hours for the completion of the basic police course; modifying conditions for certain disciplinary actions against a police or peace officer; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 1991, Section 3311, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 369, O.S.L. 2000 (70 O.S. Supp. 2000, Section 3311), is amended to read as follows:

Section 3311. A. There is hereby re-created a Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training. The Council shall be composed of six (6) police or peace officers, one selected by each of the following: the Court of Criminal Appeals, the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association, the Oklahoma Association of Police Chiefs, the Board of Directors of the Fraternal Order of Police and the Governor. The Director selected by the Council shall be an ex officio member of the Council and shall act as Secretary. The Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training shall select a chair and vice-chair from among its members. Members of the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training shall not receive a salary for duties performed as members of the Council, but shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the

performance of Council duties pursuant to the provisions of the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

B. The Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training is hereby authorized and directed to:

1. Appoint a larger Advisory Council to discuss problems and hear recommendations concerning necessary research, minimum standards, educational needs, and other matters imperative to upgrading Oklahoma law enforcement to professional status.

2. Promulgate rules with respect to such matters as certification, revocation, suspension, withdrawal and reinstatement of certification, minimum courses of study, testing and test scores, attendance requirements, equipment and facilities, minimum qualifications for instructors, minimum standards for basic and advanced in-service courses, and seminars for Oklahoma police and peace officers.

3. Authorize research, basic and advanced courses, and seminars to assist in program planning directly and through subcommittees.

4. Authorize additional staff and services necessary for program expansion.

5. Recommend legislation necessary to upgrade Oklahoma law enforcement to professional status.

6. Establish policies and regulations concerning the number, geographic and police unit distribution, and admission requirements of those receiving tuition or scholarship aid available through the Council. Such waiver of costs shall be limited to duly appointed members of legally constituted local, county, and state law enforcement agencies on the basis of educational and financial need.

7. Appoint a Director and an Assistant Director to direct the staff, inform the Council of compliance with the provisions of this section and perform such other duties imposed on the Council by law.

8. Enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of classroom space, food, and lodging expenses as may be necessary for

law enforcement officers attending any official course of instruction approved or conducted by the Council. Such expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment. The food and lodging expenses for each law enforcement officer shall not exceed the authorized rates as provided for in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

9. Certify canine teams, consisting of a dog and a handler working together as a team, trained to detect controlled dangerous substances.

C. Failure of the Legislature to appropriate necessary funds to provide for expenses and operations of the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training shall not invalidate other provisions of this section relating to the creation and duties of the Council.

D. 1. No person shall be eligible to complete a basic police course approved by the Council until the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have reported to the submitting agency that such person has no felony record, and the employing agency has reported to the Council that such person has undergone psychological testing as provided for in paragraph 2 of this subsection, and the applicant has certified the completion of a high school diploma or a GED equivalency certificate and that the applicant is not participating in a deferred sentence agreement for a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude or is not currently subject to an order of the Council revoking, suspending, or accepting a voluntary surrender of peace officer certification.

2. No person shall be certified as a police or peace officer in this state unless the employing agency has reported to the Council that:

a. the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have reported that

such person has no record of a conviction of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude,

b. such person has undergone psychological evaluation such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, the California Personality Inventory, or other psychological instrument approved by the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training. The psychological instrument utilized shall be evaluated by a psychologist licensed by the State of Oklahoma, and the employing agency shall certify to the Council that the evaluation was conducted in accordance with this provision and that the employee/applicant is suitable to serve as a peace officer in the State of Oklahoma. Nothing herein shall preclude a psychologist licensed in the state from employing additional psychological techniques to assist the employing agency's determination of the employee/applicant's suitability to serve as a peace officer in the State of Oklahoma. Any person found not to be suitable for employment or certification by the Council shall not be employed, retained in employment as a peace officer, or certified by the Council for at least one (1) year, at which time the employee/applicant may be re-evaluated by a psychologist licensed by the State of Oklahoma. This section shall also be applicable to all reserve peace officers in the State of Oklahoma,

c. such person possesses a high school diploma or a GED equivalency certificate, provided this requirement shall not affect those persons who are already employed as a police or peace officer prior to November 1, 1985, ~~and~~

d. such person is not participating in a deferred sentence agreement for a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude,

e. such person has attained twenty-one (21) years of age prior to certification as a peace officer, and

f. such person has provided proof of United States Citizenship or resident alien status, pursuant to an employment eligibility verification form from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service.

and the Council has determined that such person has satisfactorily completed a basic police course of not less than one hundred twenty (120) hours of accredited instruction for reserve police officers and reserve deputies and not less than three hundred (300) hours for full-time salaried police or peace officers from the Council or curriculum or course of study approved by the Council, provided the Council may increase the number of hours for the completion of a basic police course by requiring independent study. Said training shall include training in crime and drug prevention, crisis intervention, and youth and family intervention techniques.

3. Every person who has not been certified as a police or peace officer and is duly appointed or elected as a police or peace officer shall hold such position on a temporary basis only, and shall, within one (1) year from the date of appointment or taking office, qualify as required in this subsection or forfeit such position. In computing the one (1) year, all service shall be cumulative from date of first appointment or taking office as a police or peace officer with any department in this state. The Council may extend the time requirement specified in this paragraph for good cause as determined by the Council. An elected police or peace officer shall be eligible to enroll in a basic police course in accordance with this subsection upon being elected. A duty is hereby imposed upon the employing agency to withhold payment of the

compensation or wage of said unqualified officer. If the police or peace officer fails to forfeit the position or the employing agency fails to require the officer to forfeit the position, the district attorney shall file the proper action to cause the forfeiting of such position. The district court of the county where the officer is employed shall have jurisdiction to hear the case.

4. The Council may certify officers who have completed a course of study in another state deemed by the Council to meet standards for Oklahoma peace officers providing the officer's certification in the other state has not been revoked or voluntarily surrendered and is not currently under suspension.

5. For purposes of this section, a police or peace officer is defined as a full-time duly appointed or elected officer who is paid for working more than twenty-five (25) hours per week and whose duties are to preserve the public peace, protect life and property, prevent crime, serve warrants, and enforce laws and ordinances of this state, or any political subdivision thereof; provided, elected sheriffs and their deputies and elected, appointed, or acting chiefs of police shall meet the requirements of this subsection within the first six (6) months after assuming the duties of the office to which they are elected or appointed or for which they are an acting chief; provided further, that this section shall not apply to persons designated by the Director of the Department of Corrections as peace officers pursuant to Section 510 of Title 57 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

E. No person shall be certified as a police or peace officer by the Council or be employed by the state, a county, a city, or any political subdivision thereof, who is currently subject to an order of the Council revoking, suspending, or accepting a voluntary surrender of peace officer certification or has been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude unless a full pardon has been granted by the proper agency; however, any person who has been

trained and certified by the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training and is actively employed as a full-time peace officer as of November 1, 1985, shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection for convictions occurring prior to November 1, 1985.

F. Every person employed as a police or peace officer in this state shall be fingerprinted by the employing law enforcement agency. One set of said impressions shall be mailed to the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and one set to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D.C. within ten (10) days from the initial date of employment.

G. 1. The Council is hereby authorized to provide to any employing agency the following information regarding a person who is or has applied for employment as a police or peace officer of such employing agency:

a. Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and Federal Bureau of Investigation reports,

b. administration of the psychological tests provided for herein,

c. performance in the course of study or other basis of certification,

d. previous certifications issued, and

e. any administrative or judicial determination denying certification.

2. An employing agency shall not be liable in any action arising out of the release of contents of personnel information relevant to the qualifications or ability of a person to perform the duties of a police or peace officer when such information is released pursuant to written authorization for release of information signed by such person and is provided to another employing agency which has employed or has received an application for employment from such person.

H. A law enforcement agency employing police or peace officers in this state shall report the hiring, resignation, or termination for any reason of a police or peace officer to the Council at a time established by the Council. Failure to comply with the provisions of this subsection may disqualify a law enforcement agency from participating in training programs sponsored by the Council.

I. As used in this section, "employing agency" means a political subdivision or law enforcement agency which either has employed or received an employment application from a person who, if employed, would be subject to this section.

J. 1. The Council may take disciplinary action against a police or peace officer to include a denial, suspension or revocation of peace officer certification on a showing of clear and convincing evidence for the following:

a. the Council shall deny, revoke or accept voluntary surrender of peace officer certification for conviction of a felony following a plea or finding of guilty to a felony charge,

b. the Council shall deny, revoke or accept voluntary surrender of peace officer certification for conviction of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; provided, if the conviction is a single isolated incident that occurred more than five (5) years ago and the Council is satisfied that the person has been sufficiently rehabilitated, the Council may certify such person providing that all other statutory requirements have been met,

c. <u>verdict of guilt, entry of plea of guilty or nolo contendre to a felony, crime involving moral turpitude or domestic violence, and admittance to a deferred sentence,</u>

d. falsification or a willful misrepresentation of information in an employment application, or records of evidence, or in testimony under oath, or

~~d.~~

e. revocation or voluntary surrender of police or peace officer certification in another state.

2. Disciplinary proceedings shall be commenced by filing with the Council a complaint, on a form approved by the Council, verified by the complainant.

3. Upon the filing of the verified complaint, the Council's Executive Director shall conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether:

a. there is reason to believe the person has violated any provision of this subsection, or

b. there is reason to believe the person has entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a felony, a crime involving moral turpitude or a domestic violence offense and is currently participating in a deferred sentence agreement.

4. If the Executive Director does not find there is reason to believe the person has violated any of the provisions of this subsection, or the Executive Director is satisfied the person is sufficiently rehabilitated as provided in subparagraph b of paragraph 1 of this subsection, the person shall remain certified. If the Executive Director finds that there is reason to believe the person has violated the provisions of this subsection, the matter shall be referred for disciplinary proceedings. The disciplinary proceedings shall be in accordance with Articles I and II of the Administrative Procedures Act.

5. The Council shall revoke the certification of any person upon determining that such person has been convicted of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude; provided, that if the conviction

has been reversed, vacated or otherwise invalidated by an appellate court, such conviction shall not be the basis for revocation of certification; provided further, that any person who has been trained and certified by the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training and is actively employed as a full-time peace officer as of November 1, 1985, shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection for convictions occurring prior to November 1, 1985. The sole issue to be determined at the hearing shall be whether the person has been convicted of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude.

6. The Council shall suspend or revoke the certification of any person upon determining that such person <u>is subject to a verdict of guilt,</u> has entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a felony, a crime involving moral turpitude or a misdemeanor domestic violence offense and received a deferred sentence; provided, that any person who has been trained and certified by the Council and is actively employed as a full-time peace officer shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection for convictions occurring prior to November 1, 1985.

7. For all other violations of this subsection, the hearing examiner shall take into consideration the severity of the violation, and any mitigating circumstances offered by the person subject to disciplinary action, and any other evidence relevant to the person's character to determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

8. a. A police or peace officer may voluntarily surrender and relinquish his peace officer certification to CLEET. Pursuant to such surrender or relinquishment, the person surrendering the certification shall be prohibited from applying to CLEET for reinstatement within five (5) years of the date of the surrender or relinquishment.

b. No person who has had a police or peace officer certification from another state revoked or voluntarily surrendered shall be considered for certification by CLEET within five (5) years of the effective date of any such revocation or voluntary surrender of certification.

c. Any person seeking reinstatement of police or peace officer certification which has been suspended, revoked, or voluntarily surrendered, may apply for reinstatement pursuant to promulgated CLEET rules governing reinstatement.

9. A duty is hereby imposed upon the district attorney who, on behalf of the State of Oklahoma, prosecutes a person holding police or peace officer certification for a felony or crime involving moral turpitude in which a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or other finding of guilt is entered by, against or on behalf of a certified police or peace officer to report such plea, agreement, or other finding of guilt to the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training within ten (10) days of such plea agreement or the finding of guilt.

10. Any person or agency required or authorized to submit information pursuant to this section to the Council shall be immune from liability arising from the submission of the information as long as the information was submitted in good faith and without malice.

K. 1. Every canine team in the state trained to detect controlled dangerous substances shall be certified, by test, in the detection of such controlled dangerous substances and shall be recertified annually so long as the canine is used for such detection purposes. The certification test and annual recertification test provisions of this subsection shall not be applicable to canines that are owned by a law enforcement agency and

that are certified and annually recertified in the detection of controlled dangerous substances by the United States Custom Service.

2. The fee for the certification test shall be Two Hundred Dollars ($200.00) and the annual recertification test fee shall be One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) per canine team. A retest fee of Fifty Dollars ($50.00) will be charged if the team fails the test. No such fee shall be charged to any local, state or federal government agency. The fees provided for in this paragraph shall be deposited to the credit of the C.L.E.E.T. Fund created pursuant to Section 1313.2 of Title 20 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

L. All tribal police officers of any Indian tribe or nation which has entered into a cross-deputization agreement with the State of Oklahoma or any political subdivision of the State of Oklahoma pursuant to the provisions of Section 1221 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall be eligible to enroll in and receive the training provided for in this section under the same terms and conditions that such training is made available to members of the law enforcement agencies of the State of Oklahoma and its political subdivisions, except that a fee of Three Dollars and sixteen cents ($3.16) per hour of training shall be charged for all training provided pursuant to this subsection. Such fees shall be deposited to the credit of the C.L.E.E.T. Fund created pursuant to Section 1313.2 of Title 20 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

M. If an employing law enforcement agency in this state has paid the salary of a person while that person is completing in this state a basic police course approved by the Council and if within one (1) year after certification that person resigns and is hired by another law enforcement agency in this state, the second agency or the person receiving the training shall reimburse the original employing agency for the salary paid to the person while completing the basic police course by the original employing agency.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2001.

SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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