



MASSACHUSETTS PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS & TRAINING COMMISSION

February 3, 2023

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Chiefs and Sheriffs of Police Departments and Law Enforcement Agencies:

Thank you for your continued compliance with POST certification processes and reporting requirements. I am writing today to ask for your help in submitting **sustained disciplinary records** that were previously submitted to POST.

As you recall, we collected historical disciplinary records for active officers by December 31, 2021 and for transferred officers by January 31, 2022. After analyzing and aggregating this data, we realized that there were major questions of data integrity that required validation. The issues were as follows:

- 1. POST regulations for submitting records became effective on June 24, 2022 (after the submission of these records).** This effectively meant that POST had in its possession many records that were not reportable to POST, and thus should not be published. We have no way of accurately identifying which records should be omitted. The instructions attached further clarify what records should be excluded from any submission to POST.
- 2. We cannot confidently distinguish between records of officers with common names (officer ambiguity).** The initial template circulated in 2021 did not include a unique identifier for each officer (Acadis #, date of birth, or SSN). This resulted in the possibility of having officers with common names potentially having records wrongly attributed to them.
- 3. There were multiple instances in which agencies entered multiple charges in different rows.** This resulted in challenges regarding attributing, aggregating and reporting on the information submitted. These discrepancies among agencies would likely generate the impression that some officers would have more incidents than their actual history. The new template addresses this concern by ensuring there is only one record per row (when an incident includes multiple charges), but allows capturing multiple charges if applicable.

Given these data integrity issues, and after exploring alternatives to validate this data, we concluded that the surest and safest way to validate the data is asking you to resubmit the information, using the attached template.

We have developed a new template that we believe will help ensure data accuracy, officer disambiguation, and accurate and better reporting. The template includes detailed instructions in both the header and the second tab. The template is designed to only allow the entries related to certain fields, but is flexible enough to allow copy/paste. There is also a data dictionary that explains the required and optional fields. Please find the new template here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/post-commission-disciplinary-records>

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Please note that **we are only requesting that you submit sustained disciplinary records as part of this resubmission**. The instructions also include a set of specific examples (incidents or complaints) that are not reportable to POST (even when they may have been sustained). We are asking that you exclude all information not reportable to POST, as well as all records for complaints and incidents that were “Unsubstantiated” “Not sustained” “Unfounded” or “Exonerated.” POST will only publish “Sustained” records, and those are the ones that need to be validated at this point.

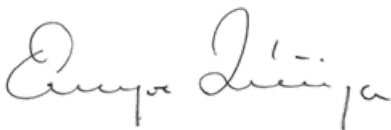
We are asking that you submit this information by March 15, 2023. We recognize this is an imposition on the time of your staff, and envision that this validation will only be necessary once. POST has a clear mandate and the strongest interest in ensuring that we do not publish information with the potential for integrity issues as described above.

POST is in the process of finalizing a permanent solution to the disciplinary record submission process. By this summer, POST will deploy a robust platform that will greatly help with the on-going task of submitting complaints and disciplinary information. This will result in a simpler way to submit information to POST. Until then you can continue to submit disciplinary records using the template attached, and following the instruction of what is reportable to POST.

If you have questions about this process, issues with the template or if you are unable to submit the information by March 15, 2023, please e-mail your request at POSTCReports@mass.gov

Thank you very much for your collaboration, and patience with this process. I am always available to respond to your questions as we continue to build the POST Commission.

Sincerely,



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The Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission is charged with creating a mandatory certification process for police officers, as well as processes for decertification, suspension of certification, or reprimand in the event of certain misconduct.