MPTC 

\*Excellence Through Education\*

**MPTC Bridge Academy 2021–2024**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Updated October 4, 2021

**Definitions:
Civilian Traffic Control**: A non-sworn member of a police department whose duties are restricted to traffic direction, control, road construction details, parades, other pre-planned events that only involve vehicular or pedestrian safety and other capacities as determined by the Chief of Police that are not performed by Sworn Officers.

**Law Enforcement Agency:**  a state, county, municipal or district law enforcement agency, including, but not limited to:

* + - A city, town, or district Police department, [Local]
		- the office of environmental law enforcement, [Environmental Police]
		- the University of Massachusetts Police department, [UMass Police]
		- the department of the state Police, [MSP]
		- the Massachusetts Port Authority Police department, also known as the Port of Boston Authority Police department, and [Massport Police]
		- the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Police [Transit];
		- Sheriff’s Department in its performance of Police duties and functions; or
		- a public or private college, university, or other educational institution
		- or hospital Police department. [College/University/Hospital]

**Law Enforcement Officer or “officer:”**

* + - any officer of an agency, including the head of the agency;
		- a special state Police officer appointed pursuant to section 58 or section 63 of chapter 22C;
		- a special sheriff appointed pursuant to section 4 of chapter 37 performing Police duties and functions;
		- a deputy sheriff appointed pursuant to section 3 of said chapter 37 performing Police duties and functions;
		- a Constable *executing an arrest* for any reason; or
		- any other special, reserve, or intermittent Police officer.

**Police Detail:** 700 CMR 6.02 – any uniformed sworn law enforcement officer and any official marked police vehicle on a public works project.

\*A detail is a privately paid assignment. Accrued hours of police detail time can NOT be included in the 2,400 hours for exemption eligibility. The only time that can added to the 2,400 hours is assignments of shift in the role of a police officer on patrol.

**Road Flagger:** 700 CMR 6.02 – an individual certified by MassDOT, or a MassDOT approved organization, to perform traffic control services on public roads.

**Sworn Member**: A sworn member of the Department who is appointed as a Police Officer under M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 98 or a Special Police Officer under M.G.L. Chapter 41, section 99.

**Are Special State Police Officers [SSPOs] Who Obtained a Warrant by attending a Training Academy run by the Massachusetts State Police academy in new Braintree exempt from the MPTC bridge academy?**

Yes, SSPOs who obtained their official warrant from the Colonel of the MSP by attending the Massachusetts State Police Academy held in New Braintree, MA consisting of 708 hours of curriculum are NOT required to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy based on successfully completing and passing the comprehensive training program offered by the Massachusetts State Police.

**Are sspos who obtained a warrant by attending a training academy run by the Massachusetts state police in a location other than new Braintree also exempt from attending the MPTC bridge academy?**

No, only those SSPOs who attended the New Braintree training academy training program consisting of at least 708 hours of curriculum, are exempt from attending the MPTC Bridge Academy. This is due to the fact that only the New Braintree site offered a comprehensive 708 hours of curriculum. Any program less than 708 hours of curriculum offered at the New Braintree site will not exempt an officer from being required to attend the Bridge Academy.

All requests for exemption from the Bridge Academy may be made in writing to mptcbridge@mass.gov using the Bridge Academy Exemption Form (found at mass.gov/bridge academy/forms).

**Eligibility:**

All law enforcement officers who have:

* successfully graduated from an approved MPTC Reserve Officer Training Program; and
* have performed specific police duties and functions (not including assignments commonly referred to as police details) and,
* have not had an interruption or break in service greater than five (5) years, are *eligible* to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy.

**What year am I eligible to attend the bridge?**

The approved MPTC Bridge Academy shall commence on or about **October 1, 2021 and** run through June 30, 2024. Pursuant to Section 102(d) of the *Justice, Equity, and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth Act, “*[t]*he certification of a law enforcement officer who has graduated from an academy or training program certified by the municipal police training committee or the training programs prescribed by said chapter 22C* [MSP] *who is certified as a result of this section and whose* ***Last Names*** *begin with*:

A to H, inclusive, shall expire 1 year after the effective date; *Certification* expires July 1, 2022

I to P, inclusive, shall expire 2 years after the effective date: *Certification* expires July 1, 2023

Q to Z, inclusive, shall expire 3 years after the effective date: *Certification* expires July 1, 2024

**What if I am unable to attend the Bridge due to a medical or military leave?**

All requests for deferment of the Bridge Academy enrollment requirement due to medical or military leave may be made in writing to mptcbridge@mass.gov using the Bridge Academy Deferment Form (found at mass.gov/bridge academy/forms).

**what is the tuition for the MPTC Bridge Academy?**

There is no cost to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy; however, the officer is required to bring their own ammunition and issued firearm and the agency is required to supply a cruiser for the EVOC week including the cost of fuel (unless the agency can show a hardship).

**entrance requirements for the MPTC bridge academy:**

**Sponsorship:** Every individual must be sponsored by a law enforcement agency.

**Medical Screening:** Every individual shall be required to submit an [Initial-Hire Medical Standards Medical Examination Form](https://www.mass.gov/doc/medical-examination-form-1/download) signed by a medical doctor and dated within ninety (90) days of registration indicating the candidate is medically cleared to participate without limitations in the practical skills-based sessions including defensive tactics, emergency vehicle operation course, and firearms training.

**Physical Ability Test (PAT):** Every individual shall successfully pass the Human Resource Division’s Physical Ability Test (PAT) within nine (9) months prior to the start date of the MPTC Bridge Academy. The cost to take the PAT test is $150.00. The PAT must be valid (unexpired) as of the start date of the MPTC Bridge Academy. For more information on the PAT test and how to schedule please go to <https://www.mass.gov/guides/schedule-physical-ability-test-pat-for-fire-and-police-departments> For additional questions please email PAT@mass.gov.

**Completed Agreement and Indemnification Form:** Every individual shall complete a signed MPTC Agreement and Indemnification Form prior to the start of the MPTC Bridge Academy.

**Health Insurance:**  Every individual shall be required to provide proof of full medical coverage, which will remain in full force and effect through the entire MPTC Bridge Academy.

**Firearms and Ammunition**: Every individual shall be required to bring their own issued firearm and ammunition and have a valid firearm’s License to Carry (LTC) or make arrangements for the transportation of a firearm and ammunition for the firearms range qualification course at the MPTC Bridge Academy.

**Cruiser for one-week of Defensive Driving**: Every officer must have access to a police patrol vehicle for the week of training devoted to the Emergency Vehicular Operation Course [EVOC] also referred to as Defensive Driving. The MPTC will acquire twelve (12) police vehicles for use during the three (3) years of the MPTC Bridge Academy. These vehicles will be available at a specified EVOC driving course for any department that demonstrates a significant hardship in making a police vehicle available. The department will be responsible for the cost of fuel during the weeklong training.

**What kind of accommodation will be given to officers who are pregnant/breastfeeding during the time they are assigned to attend the bridge?**

There will be exceptions made for those officers who are pregnant or breastfeeding. The appropriate documentation will be required but each case will be addressed on an individualized (or “case-by case”) basis.

**How do I enroll for the bridge academy and sign up for classes?**

Enrollment for the MPTC Bridge Academy will be done through ACADIS. Once successfully enrolled in the academy, the online course modules will be loaded into the individuals ACADIS account. All Bridge Academy Defensive Tactics, EVOC and Firearms classes scheduled through the MPTC staff and available by dates and locations. Only MPTC Bridge Academy attendees will be allowed to enroll in these classes.

**Can I still work while I am enrolled in the bridge academy?**

Yes, as of July 1, 2021, all officers are effectively “certified” by POST and are eligible to work until the date their Certification expires and/or until they have successfully completed the MPTC Bridge Academy and, if applicable, have been granted an Exemption by the MPTC.

**Can SSPOs, who are currently working full-time, continue to work full-time in order to accumulate the requisite 2,400 hour of experience?**

Such Full-time SSPOs who have received their official warrant from a Reserve Training Program other than the **State Police Academy 708 hour Training Program held in New Braintree**, but have **NOT** yet accumulated the requisite law enforcement experience of an aggregate of 2,400 hours of performing specific police duties and functions, including exercising the powers of arrest, in the capacity of a college/university/hospital or other similar law enforcement officer position, and have successfully completed the mandated in-service training requirements for each of those preceding years worked, may continue working in the capacity as a law enforcement officer for the specified law enforcement agency on a full-time basis in order to accumulate the requisite law enforcement experience hours of 2,400 or greater. However, if the SSPO has not accumulated the requisite 2,400 of police related experience hours by **12/31/22**, the **full-time SSPO** shall be required to attend the next available full-time MPTC operated or approved ROC Training Academy in order to continue to work on a full-time basis.

**Will I automatically be certified as a fulltime officer upon successful completion of the bridge?**

No, an officer who has:

* Successfully attended and completed the MPTC Bridge Academy; and
* Has worked in the capacity of a law enforcement officer performing specific police duties and functions, including exercising the powers of arrests for 2,400 hours over a five (5) year period or other period where the aggregate number of experience hours accumulated is equal to or greater than 2,400 hours; and
* Has successfully completed the mandated in-service training requirements for each of those preceding years.

With the agency’s Chief Executive Officer’s authorization, is *eligible* to apply to the MPTC for an exemption which, if approved, would exempt the officer from attending the fulltime MPTC operated or approved Recruit Officer Class (“ROC”) Training Academy.

Note: The official procedure for requesting an exemption for the Officer in question shall be initiated by the Chief Executive of the law enforcement agency that employs the Officer.

**Our Special Officers will not make the 2,400 hours requirement. The way I'm understanding this, even if they complete the Bridge Academy, they will have to attend a full-time ROC because they did not meet the 2,400 hours?**

If the officer has not already met the 2,400-hour requirement prior to attending the MPTC Bridge Academy, they will have until January 1, 2027 to complete the 2,400-hour requirement after successfully attending and completing the MPTC Bridge Academy. The officer must also continue to complete the mandated MPTC in-service training requirements.

**Special State Police officers (SSPOs) complete the Massachusetts State Police (MSP) annual in-service and not necessarily MPTC annual in-service. If they did SSPO in-service but not MPTC in-service does this disqualify them for the bridge?**

No, as long as the officer completed the required Massachusetts State Police annual in-service training, that MPTC will consider the in-service training requirements met.

**if we did not do the mandated in-service training, can we make it up?**

No, the mandated in-service requirement cannot be made up. Special exceptions will be made for those officers who were not able to complete their in-service training due to a medical or military leave. The appropriate documentation will be required but each case will be addressed on an individualized (or “case-by case”) basis.

**what if we missed in-service training due to medical or military leave, can we make it up?**

If an officer was unable to complete the required in-service training due to a medical or military leave from their agency, the Chief can make a request (MPTC Bridge In-Service Request Form found at mass.gov/bridge academy/forms) in writing to mptcbridge@mass.gov for approval to complete the missed in-service training.

**we use special police officers for police details only. Since they will not meet the required 2,400 hours, can we no longer use them?**

Special Police Officers are considered Law Enforcement Officers by statute. As long as they have attended the Reserve Training Program, or in the case of retired Police Officers who have attended the fulltime academy and have been sworn in as Special Police Officers upon retirement, they can continue to work details until such time as their Certification expires provided, they continue to attend the required In-service training each year. Retired Officers presumably would have accumulated the requisite number of experience hours (>=2400 work hours). Part-time Reserve Officers or so-called “Specials” will need to accumulate the 2400 work hour total before (date to be determined) or they would be required to attend the MPTC Fulltime ROC Academy.

**What if** **a reserve officer that is required to attend the bridge academy in this first year due to a last name beginning with the letter A - H, opts not to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy, are they done as an officer immediately?**

No, they can continue to work through June 30, 2021. Pursuant to the passing of the *Justice, Equity, and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth Act* on December 31, 2020*,* “[a]***ll law enforcement officers****[[1]](#footnote-1) who have completed a reserve training program on or before the effective date of this section* [July 1, 2021] *shall be certified as of the effective date of this section. Prior to the expiration of that certification, the officer shall complete* ***additional training as required*** *by the Municipal Police Training Committee*.

A to H, inclusive, shall expire 1 year after the effective date; *Certification* expires July 1, 2022

I to P, inclusive, shall expire 2 years after the effective date: *Certification* expires July 1, 2023

Q to Z, inclusive, shall expire 3 years after the effective date: *Certification* expires July 1, 2024

**What about retired officers working details? will they be certified?**

Special Police Officers are considered Law Enforcement Officers by statute. In the case of retired Police Officers who have attended the fulltime academy and have been sworn in as Special Police Officers upon retirement, they can continue to work details until such time as their Certification expires provided, they continue to attend the required In-service training each year. Retired Officers presumably would have accumulated the requisite number of experience hours (>=2400 work hours).

**Where would a Full Time Campus Police Officer (Non-MSP SSPO Trained) who ALSO works as a reserve for a municipal department fall? Would they have to attend ROC because they are technically full time for an SSPO agency?**

As long as the officer attended an MPTC certified reserve training program, they are eligible to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy. Presumably, they would also be able to meet the 2,400-hour work requirement based on their full-time campus work coupled with their part-time employment hours. If not, they would be required to attend the next available MPTC Fulltime ROC Academy.

**what about officers with no in-service at all but have the work hours?**

An officer who has not completed the mandatory in-service training will have to complete five consecutive years of mandatory MPTC in-service training and have the requisite 2,400 hours of work prior to filing for an exemption.

**How about an Auxiliary Police Officer that attended a reserve academy and a 56 hour firearms training and in-service training, will they be eligible to attend a the bridge academy?**

All law enforcement officers who have:

* successfully graduated from an approved MPTC Reserve Officer Training Program; and
* have performed specific police duties and functions (not including assignments commonly referred to as police details) and,
* have not had an interruption or break in service greater than five (5) years, are *eligible* to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy.

**There are several part-time officers in Berkshire County and other Western Mass towns who work full-time hours between multiple agencies**. **Does the time between all the agencies count towards the 2,400 hours?**

Yes, all hours between agencies can be accumulated to achieve the 2,400 hours; however, only one agency will be sponsoring the individual for purposes of the Bridge Academy enrollment.

**We have 20 Auxiliary officers. They help assist at numerous community events and WEATHER-RELATED problems. They all have the reserve academy but are never tasked with full-time police officer calls for service. They are never on duty to augment a shift shortage.**

An agency can still use these individuals as civilian traffic control officers, but if they will never be able to meet the experience requirement, they will either have to attend a full time ROC academy or they will no longer have powers of arrest after their certification expires.

**will there be waivers based on age from the PAT requirement?**

No, the skills classes require a certain level of physical fitness; therefore, all officers will be required to successfully complete the PAT for entrance into the MTPC Bridge Academy.

**If a part-time municipal officer completes the bridge academy but does not meet the work hour requirement, can they continue to work part-time?**

Yes, an officer who successfully attends and completes the MPTC Bridge Academy can continue to work part-time for their agency while working towards achieving the 2,400-hour requirement until a date to be determined by the MPTC Committee. The officer cannot work in a full-time capacity during this period of time.

**will pre-entrance testing (cooper standard’s) be required?**

No, the only physical entrance testing required will be the PAT. There will be NO waivers on this requirement. The testing is done through an outside agency. The MPTC does not set the standards based on age.

**will there be waivers for individuals who have already attended a 56-hour firearms course?**

In-person trainings may be waived for certain qualified Student Officers who are currently MPTC-certified instructors in the specific subject matter area. In the interest of adhering to the standardization and consistency in the delivery of the training, no other waivers shall be granted

**Does a parttime officer who graduated the academy in the last year need to go to the bridge academy to continue working part-time?**

If the officer successfully completed a full-time ROC academy, they are not required to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy; however, if the officer completed a reserve academy, then yes, they would need to attend and successfully complete the MPTC Bridge Academy to maintain their certification.

**How do we treat the out of state Municipal academy and Federal Trained officers?**

Out of state or federally trained officers are not eligible to attend the Bridge Academy. Exemptions will be handled at a later date.

Only law enforcement officers who have:

* successfully graduated from an approved MPTC Reserve Officer Training Program; and
* have performed specific police duties and functions (not including assignments commonly referred to as police details) and,
* have not had an interruption or break in service greater than five (5) years, are *eligible* to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy.

**If I was a Boston special police Officer now turn SSPO for a university and I have a letter from Boston Police that shows my time as law enforcement officer that I preforming law enforcement DUTIES, am I eligible to attend the bridge?**

All law enforcement officers who have:

* successfully graduated from an approved MPTC Reserve Officer Training Program; and
* have performed specific police duties and functions (not including assignments commonly referred to as police details) and,
* have not had an interruption or break in service greater than five (5) years, are *eligible* to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy.

**Being a reserve police officer for 15 years, 3 of the last years as a police chief I now have to attend the bridge academy?**

Pertaining to specific rank, the MPTC is bound by the statute and does not have much by the way of flexibility. Therefore, pursuant to the passing of the Justice, Equity, and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth Act on December 31, 2020*, “[a]ll law enforcement officers[[2]](#footnote-2) who have completed a reserve training program on or before the effective date of this section [July 1, 2021] shall be certified as of the effective date of this section. Prior to the expiration of that certification, the officer shall complete additional training as required by the Municipal Police Training Committee,”* which includes mandatory attendance at the MPTC Bridge Academy and successful completion of annual In-Service Training.

**Is there an age requirement to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy?**

There is a minimum age requirement of 21 years old to be eligible to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy. There is no maximum age requirement.

**Do officers who attended the Massachusetts State Police Reserve Intermittent Academy need to attend the Bridge Academy?**

Yes, an officer who attended a reserve academy at the Massachusetts State Police does need to attend the MPTC Bridge Academy. The hours of curriculum are not comparable to the SSPO training academy in New Braintree.

**What about hours that are volunteer and unpaid for auxiliary officers who are performing law enforcement functions?**

As long as the individual worked in the capacity of a law enforcement officer performing specific police duties and functions, including exercising the powers of arrest, those hours count towards the 2,400 hours.

**Can I be waived from attending the skills portion of the Bridge Academy if I am a certified MPTC instructor in that discipline?**

Yes, anyone who is eligible to attend the Bridge Academy and is a certified MPTC instructor in Defensive Tactics, EVOC or Firearms may apply for a waiver from the specific skills class they are certified to teach. All requests for waivers of in-person skills classes may be made in writing to mptcbridge@mass.gov using the Bridge Academy Skills Waiver Form (found on mass.gov/mptc/bridge academy/forms).

**What if I do not have access to a cruiser for the EVOC training?**

The Chief of an agency, who would find it particularly difficult to provide an officer with a cruiser for the 40-hour EVOC training due to availability, may send a request in writing to mptcbridge@mass.gov using the Bridge Academy Cruiser Hardship Form (found on mass.gov/mptc/bridge academy/forms).

**For any additional questions, please email MPTCbridge@mass.gov.**

1. See Massachusetts General Law Chapter 6E §1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Massachusetts General Law Chapter 6E §1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)