



# Criminal Justice Training Commission Issue Brief

**Sufficient funding for law enforcement training is vital for ensuring safe communities**

Cities employ the majority of our state’s law enforcement officers. Access to basic training is vital for our ability to provide public safety. Departments are facing a wave of retirements; right now, over a quarter of the state’s officers are eligible to retire. Recently, basic academy wait times have neared the statutory six-month requirement. Long waits add to the already lengthy—and costly—period between when an officer is hired to when they are an effective presence on the street.

## Strong cities need:

- A responsive funding model to ensure newly-hired law enforcement officers and corrections officers have timely access to basic training.
- Sufficient funding for at least 19 Basic Law Enforcement Academy classes and at least seven Corrections Officers Academy classes per year.

## More details

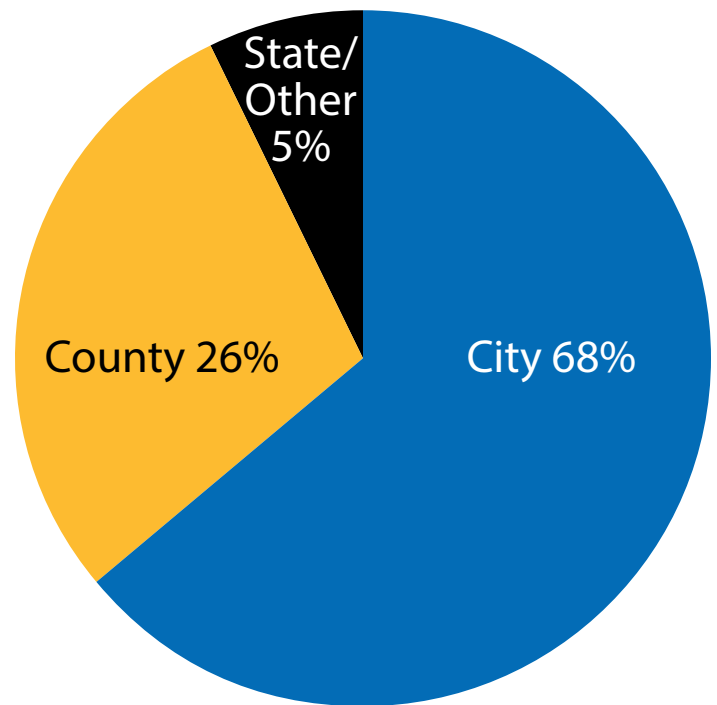
### Why was the Criminal Justice Training Commission created?

In the early 1970s, numerous basic law enforcement trainings were held around the state – independently taught without standardized curriculum. In response, the Washington Legislature established the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC), to provide standardized, mandatory training for law enforcement agencies statewide. Washington was the first state in the nation to provide mandated law enforcement training through a centralized, standard model and is considered a national pioneer.

### What is the Basic Law Enforcement Academy?

Newly-hired law enforcement officers must receive training at BLEA within six months of hire per Washington law. Each class of 30 recruits spends five months on basic training with instruction on criminal procedure, cultural awareness, traffic enforcement, crisis intervention, defensive tactics, firearms, and more.

## Cadets in FY 2017



**577 cadets enrolled**

[more details on back](#)

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## How is the Basic Law Enforcement Academy funded?

State and local governments originally agreed that training would be funded through a portion of local law enforcement traffic ticket revenue. In 1984, the state created a dedicated account for this purpose—the Public Safety and Education Account (PSEA). In 2009, the state eliminated the PSEA account and moved the traffic ticket revenue into the state’s General Fund. The General Fund is the state’s largest fund and, unlike the PSEA, it is not dedicated for specific purposes. Cities and counties contributed over \$22 million in traffic ticket revenue into the General Fund in FY 2016.

## How much do cities pay for basic training?

For over 30 years, local traffic ticket revenue was used to pay for the full cost of training new law enforcement officers. In 2009, during recession-era budgets, the state required local law enforcement employers to pay 25% of the cost of basic training and also required that they reimburse CJTC for the costs of a recruit’s ammunition. In FY 2019, the average cost to train a BLEA recruit was \$11,445 with the employer paying \$3,143. These costs are in addition to the salaries and benefits recruits are paid while they wait for and attend basic training.

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