



**TEXAS BOARD
OF
PARDONS AND PAROLES**

Number: BPP-DIR. 141.356

Date: September 1, 2021

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Supersedes: None

BOARD DIRECTIVE

SUBJECT: TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE: To establish and clearly define the responsibilities of the Staff Development Department as well as the training requirements for employees of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles.

AUTHORITY: Texas Government Code Sections 508.035(d), 508.0362, 508.041, 508.042, and 656.041-049
Board Directive BPP-DIR. 141.300
Texas Department of Criminal Justice Executive Directives ED-12.10 and PD-97

POLICY: It is the policy of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board) to provide employees the opportunity to participate in training, staff development, and educational programs designed to improve job-related skills, work-related capabilities, and competency, as well as to prepare employees for changes in job duties resulting from technological and legal developments or procedural improvements.

DISCUSSION: As part of the cooperative effort between the Board and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), Board employees are required to participate in training, staff development, and educational programs offered by both agencies. The Board also provides its employees the opportunity to attend programs conducted by other state agencies, including the Office of the Attorney General. Department heads, administrators, and supervisors are responsible for supporting training programs offered by or through the Board.

DEFINITIONS: Curriculum – refers to a course offered through the Board’s Staff Development Department and includes the content of information and skills to be taught, the methods of instruction and training aids, and the means of assessing the students’ acquisition of knowledge and skill.

Department Employee Human Resources File – a paper file maintained by local Human Resources representatives that contains a copy of any document submitted to the employee’s Master Human Resources File as well as additional documents related to payroll, performance evaluations, activity, insurance and retirement, and miscellaneous documents.

Educational Program – a formal educational process that focuses on the teaching of academic knowledge and skills.

Employee – any person employed by the Board in a full-time position at a minimum of 40 hours per week or a part-time position at a minimum of 20 hours per week on a non-contract or non-temporary basis.

External Training – a training, staff development, or educational program provided by sources outside of the Board.

Formal Training – training courses that are registered with TDCJ and entered in the TDCJ Training Database by the Staff Development Department for inclusion in Master Human Resources Files.

In-Service Training – a Board-specific training that designated employees are required to attend every fiscal year to reinforce required job-related skills or knowledge.

Informal Training – internal supplemental training courses that are recorded on TNG-99A Supplemental Training Records (Attachment A) by department heads and submitted to local Human Resources representatives for inclusion in Department Employee Human Resources Files.

Instructor – a person who provides special knowledge, information, or skills in a particular subject or field and: (a) has completed a Board-approved trainer development course; or (b) is able to demonstrate competence in determining training and staff development needs, curriculum design, and evaluation of the training and staff development courses delivered.

Internal Training – a training, staff development, or educational program developed or presented by the Board.

Master Human Resources File – an electronic imaged file maintained by Employee Services, Human Resources Division, which contains documents regarding an employee's payroll status, employment, performance evaluations, employment activity, retirement, deferred compensation, and miscellaneous information.

On-the-Job Training – a Board-specific training that designated employees are required to complete that is conducted by the immediate supervisor or designated trainer and consists of performing job duties under supervision of the immediate supervisor.

Pre-Service Training – a Board-specific training that designated employees are required to attend prior to or immediately following initial assignment and begins or takes place during the employee's first 30 calendar days of employment.

Staff Development Program – learning opportunities on various job-related topics provided to employees designed to prepare employees for prospective duties and responsibilities.

Training – instruction based on documented assessment of training needs that is delivered according to lesson plans or similar documentation and provided in order to increase proficiency or correct any deficiency in an employee’s ability, skill, or knowledge to perform a particular job function.

Training Database – a component of the TDCJ Payroll/Personnel System that identifies available training courses and is used to document an employee’s registration, participation, and completion of those courses.

Webinar – a virtual training conducted over the internet that allows participants in different locations to see and hear the presenter, ask questions, and answer polls.

PROCEDURE:

I. Staff Development Department Responsibilities

A. Training Development

The Staff Development Department is responsible for identifying training needs. The Director of Staff Development (Director) shall design training courses and register the courses on the TDCJ Training Database, for the course to be reflected in the employee’s Master Human Resources File. Any department desiring to implement a new or revised curriculum must submit the training materials to the Director. The Director will determine whether the proposed training courses are approved and meet the criteria to be registered in the training database. Upon request, the department submitting the materials must provide assistance in the preparation or modification of instructional components.

B. Training Schedules

The Staff Development Department shall ensure that schedules of training courses, including descriptions of courses, are available to employees. Availability of such schedules shall ensure that employees are aware of opportunities to enhance their professional development.

C. Designation of Instructors

1. Formal Training – The Director will designate staff from various departments, including but not limited to the Staff Development Department, to conduct training courses registered with TDCJ.

2. Informal Training – The Director will designate instructors from each department to conduct that department’s internal supplemental training courses.

D. Designation of Training Course Proponents

The Director will designate Training Course Proponents, within the Staff Development Department, who will be responsible for the development, presentation, maintenance, and distribution of training materials for courses relevant to their expertise.

E. Designation of Training Database Coordinator

The Director will designate a Training Database Coordinator, within the Staff Development Department, who will be responsible for acquiring database access, registering courses on the database, and ensuring database documentation is appropriately completed.

II. Employee Participation Eligibility and Approval

In order for an employee to be eligible to participate in a training, staff development, or educational program offered by or through the Board, the program shall be related to the employee’s current or prospective duties and the employee shall meet the required prerequisites. Participation in any internal training program shall be approved by the employee’s immediate supervisor, and participation in any external training program shall be approved in accordance with the TDCJ Travel Guide.

III. Employee Obligation to Receive Training

An employee shall attend and satisfactorily complete any training, staff development, or educational program required by the Board. Satisfactory completion of a program may include passing tests, practical application, or adequately meeting other identified performance standards. Employees will be issued a certificate upon satisfactory completion of any internal training program.

IV. Specific Training Programs

A. New Board Employees

1. Newly hired staff, with the exception of those transferring from TDCJ, must attend a Direct Hire Session conducted by Human Resources. This training provides new employees with the opportunity to complete all employment-related forms, obtain ID cards, and view required videos on various employment topics.
2. Newly hired staff, with the exception of Board Members and Parole Commissioners, must complete a pre-service training program that provides an overview of the parole process with a specific focus on Board operations.

B. Voting Members – Board Members and Parole Commissioners

1. Newly hired Board Members and Parole Commissioners must complete a pre-service training program in accordance with Sections 508.0362 and 508.042, Texas Government Code. This program shall provide a comprehensive review of the criminal justice system, with special emphasis on the parole process.
2. Until participation in this training program is complete, Parole Commissioners may not participate in a vote of a panel and Board Members may not participate in a vote of the Board or a panel, deliberate, or be counted as a member in attendance at a Board meeting.

C. Board Designees – Hearing Officers and Analysts

1. Newly hired Hearing Officers must complete a pre-service training program in accordance with Section 508.041, Texas Government Code, prior to conducting a hearing without the assistance of a Board Member or experienced Parole Commissioner or designee.
2. Newly hired Analysts must complete a pre-service training program prior to participating in a revocation hearing vote without the assistance of an experienced designee. This program provides an overview of all Analyst duties outlined in the Board Designee Analyst Manual.
3. All Board Designees must attend an annual in-service training program in accordance with Section 508.041, Texas Government Code, that covers new issues and procedures relating to the revocation process. A procedural manual will be provided to all designees, updated biannually, which includes hearing decisions, laws and court decisions, and case studies that have precedential value.

D. Institutional Parole Officers (IPOs)

Newly hired IPOs must complete a training program in accordance with Administrative Directive BPP-AD. 141.600. This program consists of a 32-hour pre-service training and up to six (6) months of on-the-job training, with the option for remedial training if necessary.

E. Board Assistants

Newly hired Board Assistants must complete a pre-service training program that provides an overview of all Board Assistant duties outlined in the Administrative Directives and Board Assistant Manual.

F. Department-Specific Training

1. Formal Training – Department heads may implement new or revised curriculums by submitting training materials to the Director. These trainings will be department-specific and required only for employees of that department whose job duties directly reflect the training objectives.
2. Informal Training – Department heads may conduct informal supplemental trainings for staff in their respective departments, to focus on mastery of job-specific duties. These trainings will utilize the departments’ operations manuals and administrative directives to clearly delineate the procedures staff are expected to follow. These trainings do not need to be submitted to the Director for approval and will not be registered in the TDCJ Training Database.

G. External Training

In addition to the Board training programs detailed above, external training programs conducted by other state agencies are also available to Board employees. Some of these programs are mandatory, such as those required by the Texas Department of Public Safety, and some are optional. Participation in optional trainings must be approved by the employee’s immediate supervisor.

V. Training Library

- A. The presentation materials used in webinar trainings that do not contain privileged and confidential legal information are made available to all Board employees via the Training Library on the BPP Intranet.
- B. The presentation materials used in webinar trainings that contain privileged and confidential legal information are distributed via email to the original attendees and supervisors only.
- C. The Training Library is designed to promote employee success by reinforcing job-specific skills and enhancing overall knowledge of Board operations.

SIGNED THIS, THE 1ST DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2021.

DAVID GUTIÉRREZ, PRESIDING OFFICER (CHAIR)

**Signature on file.*

