SANTA FE POLICE DEPARTMENT | NEW MEXICO

THE ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRAINING UNIT

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Why the Training Unit exists

The Training Unit helps ensure employees are prepared to perform their duties safely, lawfully, competently, and professionally.

- **Prepare personnel** — Provide the knowledge, skills, and practical judgment needed for the work officers and employees perform.
- **Maintain readiness** — Keep required certifications, qualifications, and recurring training current.
- **Strengthen consistency** — Promote common expectations, sound decision-making, and department-wide standards.
- **Support public trust** — Quality training supports professional service, accountability, and safer outcomes for the community.

Training across an employee's career

Training is not limited to the academy or the first few months of employment.

Onboarding	Pre-academy preparation, orientation, and transition into department expectations.
Basic preparation	Coordinate the department's pre-academy activities and liaison with the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy.
Field training	Coordinate structured, supervised application of skills for new and lateral officers.
Ongoing development	Provide in-service, advanced, specialized, remedial, and leadership development opportunities.
Continuous improvement	Evaluate needs, update content, and respond to changes in law, policy, tactics, and technology.

Cadet preparation & academy coordination

The department's Training Unit supports the pathway from applicant to academy graduate and field-ready officer.

- **Pre-academy preparation** — Help prepare cadets for the physical, academic, and professional expectations of basic training.
- **Academy coordination** — Maintain communication and coordination with the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy and relevant training partners.
- **Progress monitoring** — Track milestones, testing, attendance, readiness, and transition points.
- **Transition to SFPD** — Coordinate the move from academy completion into department onboarding and field training.

Field Training Program (FTO)

Field training bridges classroom instruction and the realities of working independently in the field.

- **Structured coaching** — Pair trainees with qualified Field Training Officers for supervised, progressive learning.
- **Practical application** — Develop patrol skills, communication, report writing, investigations, officer safety, and sound judgment.
- **Evaluation & documentation** — Use phase evaluations, daily observation reports, feedback, and documented performance expectations.
- **Remediation & progression** — Identify strengths and deficiencies, provide opportunities to improve, and document readiness for advancement.
- **FTO development** — Support FTO selection, certification, guidance, and consistency in the evaluation process.

Field Training Program (FTO)

- 14-week Program.
- 3 Phases of 1-month long training with a different training officer per phase.
- 2 week long Shadow Phase with the First Phase training officer to evaluate progress and ability to work as a solo beat officer.

In-service & mandatory training

The Unit coordinates training required by state standards and department priorities.

- **State requirements** — Monitor applicable New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy Board and statutory training requirements.
- **Department-wide instruction** — Schedule and coordinate required topics, practical exercises, and make-up opportunities.
- **Certification & qualification** — Support required renewals, re-certifications, and recurring skill maintenance.
- **Documentation** — Maintain accurate attendance, course, instructor, and completion records.
- **Compliance follow-up** — Identify outstanding requirements and coordinate with supervisors to address training gaps.

Annual Topic	Annual Hours (Minimum)		In-Person Required	Biennial Topic	Biennial Hours	In-Person Required
	2026	2027			2026-2027	
Child Abuse	2	2		Hate Crimes	2	
Domestic Violence	1	1		Legal Updates	2	
Ensuring Child Safety	1	1		Interactions with Persons with Mental Impairments	2	Y
Missing persons / Amber Alert	1	1		Day & Night Firearms Training (not qualifications)	Exactly 4 (1hr lecture, 1.5 hrs. exercises day, & 1.5hrs exercises night)	Y
Tourniquet & Trauma Kit	0.5	0.5	Y	Safe Pursuit	4	
Handling a Crisis	4	4	Y	DWI/SFST Refresher (Required for officers involved in DWI stops/ arrests as art of normal/daily duties)	4	Y
Peer-to-Peer Intervention	1	1		A.R.I.D.E. (Can be used for DWI/SFST Refresher)	16	Y
Stress Management	1	1		Total Biennial Hours if DWI applies:	18	
Racial Sensitivity	1	1		Total Biennial Hours if DWI is Non-Applicable:	14	
Use of Force w/o Neck Restraints	4	4		Total Biennial Hours /.A.R.I.D.E.	30	
Total Hours Per Year	16.5			Total Biennium w/DWI	**51**	
Total Annual Hours Accrued	**33**			Total Biennium w/o DWI	**47**	
				Total Biennium A.R.I.D.E.	**63**	

Core skills & high-liability training

A major responsibility is helping personnel maintain proficiency in skills that directly affect safety and decision-making.

- **Firearms & less-lethal systems** — Coordinate qualification, refresher instruction, and approved less-lethal training.
- **Defensive tactics & officer safety** — Reinforce safe tactics, control techniques, de-escalation, and scenario-based decision-making.
- **Emergency response** — Support training for critical incidents, vehicle operations, medical response, and other operational needs.
- **Legal & policy updates** — Translate changes in law, court decisions, and department directives into relevant instruction.
- **Scenario-based learning** — Provide opportunities to practice judgment, communication, and tactics in realistic settings.

The work behind every training day

Successful training requires substantial planning, administration, coordination, and follow-through.

- **Annual training plan** — Prioritize training based on legal requirements, department needs, risk, and available resources.
- **Scheduling & logistics** — Coordinate facilities, instructors, equipment, rosters, course materials, and employee release from duty.
- **Training records** — Maintain centralized records of department-provided and approved outside training.
- **Communication** — Notify personnel and supervisors of requirements, schedules, changes, and completion status.
- **Evaluation** — Collect feedback, assess course effectiveness, and identify improvements.

Examples of training coordinated

- **Basic & field training** — Pre-academy, academy coordination, cadet FTO, lateral-officer onboarding and FTO.
- **Department-wide refreshers** — Firearms, Taser, defensive tactics, less-lethal, OC/baton, first aid/CPR/AED, and safe-pursuit instruction.
- **Specialized courses** — Detective training, crime-scene skills, DWI/SFST, digital forensics, K-9, EOD, SWAT, and drone-related training.
- **Professional development** — FTO certification, instructor development, first-line supervision, and other leadership courses.