



Bi-ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENT

MARYLAND POLICE TRAINING AND STANDARDS COMMISSION

PURPOSE

Effective July 1, 2022, all certified police officers in the State of Maryland, as defined by Public Safety Article § 3-201 must submit to a mental health assessment as determined by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (Commission). A police officer is required to submit to a mental health assessment every two years to establish continuing fitness to carry out the officer's assigned duties as a police officer.

AUTHORITY

Public Safety Article § 3-209 requires a mental health assessment to be completed every two years by all certified police officers in the State of Maryland. The evaluation components listed below are required for certification of a police officer by the Commission pursuant to Public Safety Article Section § 3-209. This authority does not preclude or limit an agency from administering for employment purposes a separate wellness or mental health program and/or standards in addition to this assessment.

MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The Commission has determined that a mental health assessment is a comprehensive process that can assist in determining if the police officer has adequate support mechanisms in place to ensure emotional well-being. An assessment will determine if an area of concern exists, the nature of the concern and follow up recommendations if needed.

A mental health assessment is not the same as mental health evaluation although it may include the completion and review of a mental health screening as part of the assessment process. At a minimum, a mental health assessment should address:

- How to tell if you are thriving, surviving, struggling or in crisis.
- The "normalization of trauma and trauma reactions."
- Explore possible activities to mitigate job stress.
- Psychoeducation of trauma and the impact of job stress (not talk therapy).
- Resources



MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

The mental health provider will define the meaning of "mental health screening" in accordance with their specific area of expertise. The following mental health professionals are qualified to conduct mental health assessments, including clinicians practicing under their licensure.

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| 1 | Psychiatrist licensed to practice medicine as defined in Health Occupations Article, §14-101, Annotated Code of Maryland. |
| 2 | Psychologist licensed to practice psychology as defined in Health Occupations Article, §18-101, Annotated Code of Maryland. |
| 3 | Licensed certified social worker-clinical authorized to practice clinical social work as defined in Health Occupations Article, §19-101, Annotated Code of Maryland. |
| 4 | Certified professional counselor licensed to practice clinical professional counseling as defined in Health Occupations Article, §17-101, Annotated Code of Maryland. |

The mental health provider will provide the agency head (or designee) with sufficient information to determine if the officer has the appropriate mental ability to carry out assigned duties. If an area of concern is identified, follow-up recommendations will be provided.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

Each law enforcement agency must arrange for an individual to submit to a mental health assessment every two years for recertification as a police officer. Upon completion, each agency head (or designee) must attest in writing that each officer has the appropriate mental ability to carry out the officer's assigned duties.

COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

As part of the certification process, the Commission will review whether a law enforcement agency has the mental health assessment process in place and whether all certified officers have participated. The Commission will then review agency documentation attesting to each certified officer's continuing fitness to carry out assigned duties.

FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE

Officers who fail to submit to a mental health assessment will be ineligible for initial certification or re-certification. Each agency must maintain documentation for each certified officer's mental ability to carry out the officer's assigned duties. In the absence of such documentation, the officer will be ineligible for initial certification or re-certification.

