



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES

COPS

Office of the Director
145 N Street NE, Washington, DC 20530

October 28, 2020

Gary Sipes
Executive Director
Arkansas Association of Chiefs of Police
P.O. Box 251825
Little Rock, AR 72225

Dear Executive Director Gary Sipes,

The Department of Justice today announced Standards for Certification that are a result of President Trump's June Executive Order [13929](#), Safe Policing for Safe Communities. The Executive Order's goal is to ensure that, together, we continue striving to provide transparent, safe, and accountable delivery of services to our communities. Our work on the Executive Order will enhance citizen confidence in law enforcement, and facilitate the identification and correction of internal issues before they result in injury to the public or to law enforcement officers. Thank you for your commitment and help.

Pursuant to authority vested in the Attorney General by the Executive Order, he has designated the agencies listed in Attachment A of the document, titled "Principles on Safe Policing for Communities," as independent credentialing bodies — including your agency. As an independent credentialing body, your agency plays a critical role by conducting the review and certification of law enforcement agencies within your jurisdiction.

An independent credentialing body will certify an applying law enforcement agency if it determines — or, within the past 36 months, has already determined — that the agency is in compliance with two mandatory safe policing principles in the attached document. Certification is a prerequisite to a law enforcement agency's eligibility for Department of Justice discretionary grant funding. Agencies will be required to obtain certification by January 31, 2021 in order to be eligible for federal funds in 2021. The credentialing body will maintain a list of certified agencies within its jurisdiction, and submit this list to the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (or "COPS Office"), which will serve as the repository for the list of all eligible law enforcement agencies.

We appreciate our strong partnership and the work you will undertake to review the policies of law enforcement agencies within your jurisdiction. To help facilitate your review and certifications before federal grant season starts in 2021, we are also enclosing a sample certification letter — which your agency should feel welcome to revise as you see fit — to send to the law enforcement agencies that, in your assessment, meet the mandatory safe policing principles. As an alternative, we are also attaching a confirmation letter that agency heads in your jurisdiction may use to affirm compliance with the mandatory standards. We encourage you to send the sample confirmation letter to agency heads in your jurisdiction.

We value your partnership and look forward to continuing to work with you to implement the Executive Order on Safe Policing for Communities.

Sincerely,

Phil Keith
Director, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

