



# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## Recognition of Authorized Independent Credentialing Bodies

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### **Q. What is an authorized, independent credentialing body (AICB)?**

A. On May 25, 2022, President Biden signed Executive Order 14074 on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety. Section 19 of the Executive Order tasked the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) with promoting law enforcement agency accreditation by an authorized, independent credentialing body (AICB) and with developing and publishing standards for determining whether an entity is an authorized, independent credentialing body. Designation as an AICB is recognition that a credentialing body's accreditation program meets or exceeds the National Standards for Independent Credentialing Bodies.

### **Q. What are the National Standards for Independent Credentialing Bodies?**

A. The framework for the National Standards for Independent Credentialing Bodies can be found in Executive Order 14074, which called for the inclusion of policies on police recruitment, selection, hiring, and promotion; officer wellness; use of force; no-knock warrants; and data collection and reporting, among other areas. In formulating the standards, DOJ consulted with professional accreditation organizations, law enforcement organizations, civil rights and community-based organizations, civilian oversight and accountability groups, and other appropriate stakeholders. The National Standards were first published in May 2023 and revised in November 2023.

### **Q. How does a credentialing body become recognized as an AICB?**

A. The AICB recognition process is managed by the DOJ Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), and final decision on recognition rests with the COPS Office Director. Interested parties should contact [COPS\\_AICB@usdoj.gov](mailto:COPS_AICB@usdoj.gov) for further information.

### **Q. Does this mean that the U.S. Department of Justice will begin accrediting law enforcement agencies?**

A. No, the DOJ does not accredit law enforcement agencies and recognizes that accreditation is best when done by an independent body. AICB recognition is a way for the department to identify independent credentialing bodies that follow the National Standards for Independent Credentialing Bodies.

### **Q. Is adherence to only the National Standards sufficient for an accreditation program to be recognized as an AICB?**

A. No, in order for an accreditation body to be recognized as an AICB they must integrate the National Standards into a comprehensive law enforcement accreditation program. The National Standards should represent a small subset of a much larger number of standards for a law enforcement accreditation program to be considered comprehensive. Assessment of only the National Standards is not sufficient for an accreditation program to be recognized as an AICB.

**Q. What happens if a law enforcement agency is already accredited by a credentialing body that becomes an AICB?**

A. If a credentialing body becomes recognized as an AICB, the body does not need to retroactively assess compliance with any changes made to reflect the National Standards; however, the body must make sure that all member agencies are aware of the National Standards and are assessed accordingly during the reaccreditation process.

**Q. What are the benefits of AICB recognition?**

A. Just as agency accreditation helps to ensure accountability and transparency that can enhance confidence and trust in law enforcement among the communities they serve, AICB recognition helps to enhance confidence and trust in the accreditation process and the entities that independently grant accreditation to law enforcement agencies.

**Q. Does a law enforcement agency need to be accredited to receive federal grant funding?**

A. No, accreditation is not a requirement to receive federal grant funding; however, DOJ may prioritize accreditation by an AICB in funding decisions for certain grant programs.

**Q. What about law enforcement agency certification under Executive Order 13929 on Safe Policing for Safe Communities?**

A. Executive Order 14074 superseded Executive Order 13929 and rescinded any rules, regulations, guidelines, or policies implemented under that order.

**Q. What else is the COPS Office doing to promote law enforcement agency accreditation?**

A. The AICB recognition process is just one part of the COPS Office's broader effort to promote law enforcement agency accreditation. In the past three years, the COPS Office has funded more than 150 law enforcement agencies with more than \$12.5 million to support law enforcement agency accreditation. An additional \$5.6 million has been awarded to credentialing bodies to either enhance the capacity of an existing body or establish an accreditation program in a state where none exists.