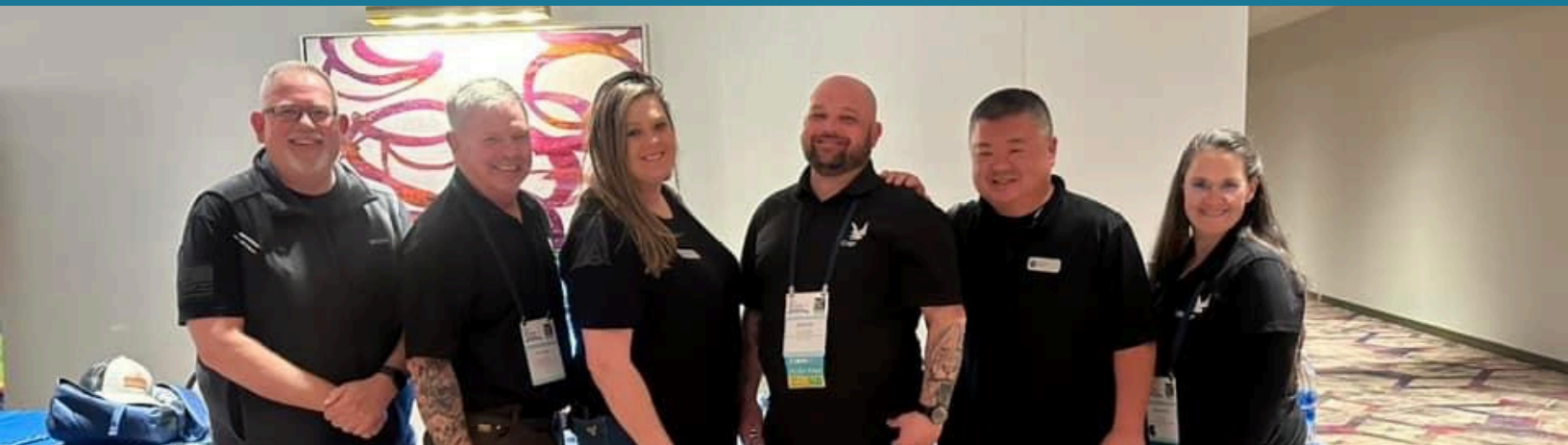


Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation



OFFICER SAFETY NEWSLETTER



Welcome

SPRING 2025 - After using an online blog version of the newsletter for two quarters, we are back to the original design! This year is off to a great start! The CEOSEF team is going strong with numerous trainings and conferences scheduled. We are thankful for new partners and sponsors. Check out the big news out of Georgia with our partnership and House Bill 483 is getting closer to the finish line!

Our Mission Statement:

"The Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation exists to promote best practices for the safety of Code Officials across the world; to provide a resource for officials; report incidents; provide up-to-date training and to encourage a high standard of professionalism within our chosen profession."

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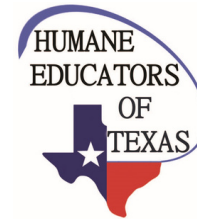


Thank You Partners!

CEOSF wants to thank all of our partner associations and sponsors! We appreciate state associations supporting the Foundation and the topic of officer safety for their members. It is important to recognize these associations for their commitment to their membership and keeping them safe.



INTERNATIONAL
CODE
COUNCIL®



Virginia Association
of Zoning Officials



MISSOURI
ASSOCIATION
OF CODE
ENFORCEMENT



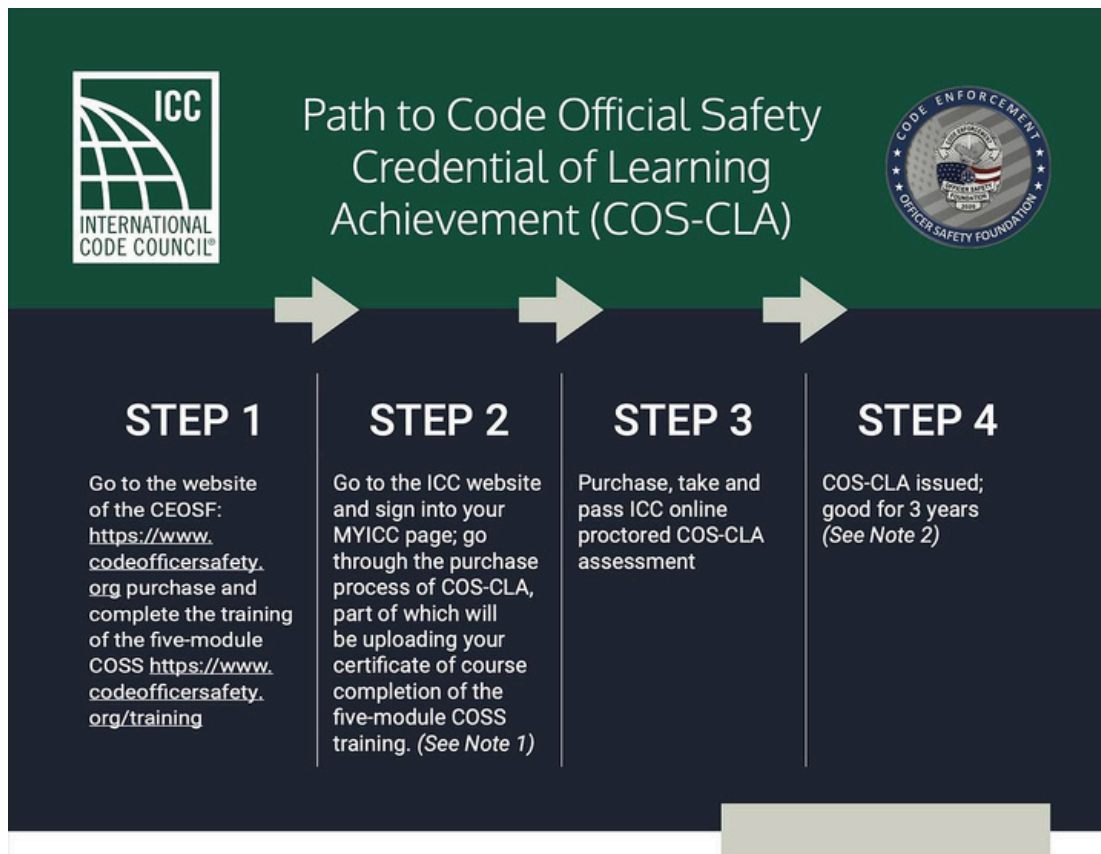
CALIFORNIA
FIRE PREVENTION OFFICERS



CEAT
CODE ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS



ICC Credential of Learning Achievement



Note 1: If you do not already have an ICC account, you will need to create one at this link <https://www.iccsafe.org/register>

Note 2: After 3 years from issuance of the CLA, a minimum 3-hour training on the subject of code official safety offered by ICC or CEOSF will be required to renew the COS-CLA

The International Code Council (ICC) partnered and sponsored CEOSF in May of 2021. Since then, the two organizations have collaborated to promote safety of code officials across the globe. In November, we officially launched the Credential of Learning Achievement (CLA) through ICC. This reinforces the support ICC has for officer safety and the Foundation.

Current and future graduates of the COSS training can log into their MyICC account under credentials and take the 1-hour exam for \$65. **You will need to upload your official COSS certificate prior to taking the exam.** Once you pass, you will receive an ICC credential certificate and digital badge to show with pride! Upon completing the training you are permitted to use the COSS acronym on your business cards, emails, etc.

Learn more at:
<https://www.iccsafe.org/professional-development/cla/>



Welcome Our New Regional Representatives



CHRIS CAPRAUN (Region 8)

Chris was appointed by the Board of Directors in November and is a Code Enforcement Officer in South Carolina. He is a Code Official Safety Specialist (COSS) and has earned his ICC Zoning and Property Maintenance certifications. Chris has joined our Charitable Giving's Committee.



EXCELLENCE IN WORKPLACE CULTURE - SECOND YEAR IN A ROW

Thank you [Awards.com](https://www.awards.com) for providing this distinction for a 2nd year in a row! "This prestigious 'Excellence in Workplace Culture' honor is a testament to your exceptional workplace environment and commitment to fostering a positive culture."

The Foundation is truly grateful for the amazing volunteers we have across the country that promote safety! Between the meetings, committees, annual awards, and travel opportunities; we have a great team dynamic!

NEW PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCED!



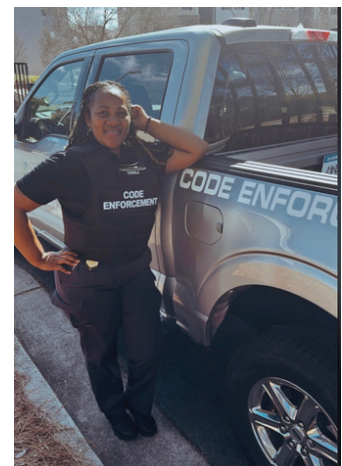
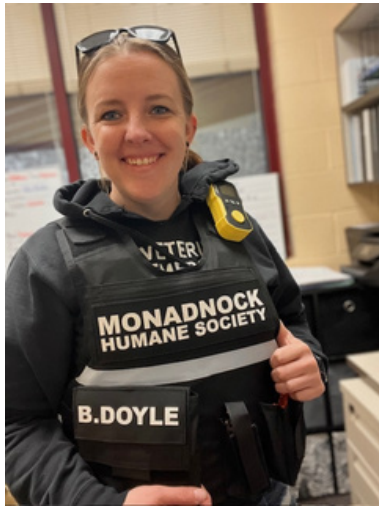
The Foundation is excited to introduce two new state partners! The **Georgia Association of Code Enforcement (GACE)** Boards of Directors unanimously voted to approve our partnership and to donate \$2,000 for body armor in Georgia. We thank them for their support of officer safety and the CEOSF Mission.

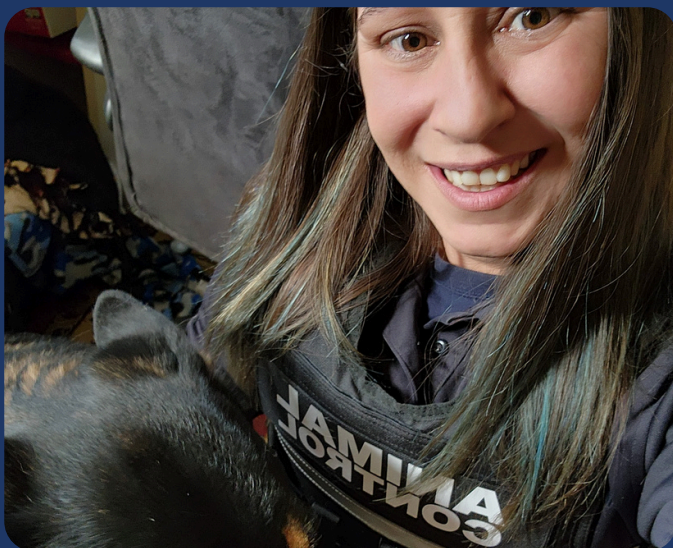


Body Armor Donated

77 Body Armor Vests Total = \$55,218+ by CEOSF

Thanks to all of our Angel Donor's who make a generous donation of \$8.09 a month and every agency that signs employees up for the Code Official Safety Specialist (COSS) training! These proceeds assist us in buying more armor!





REQUEST A VEST PROGRAM

Apply Online!

EduCode - Las Vegas, NV

We had another amazing Conference at EduCode in February! Thank you to Alan Ellis for the support and all the attendees who visited our booth! We had a record turnout of our Regional Representatives and Board of Directors.



GACE Spring Conference - Savannah, GA

Thank you Georgia Association of Code Enforcement for inviting us! Regional Representative LaQuita Alexander hosted our booth and interacted with the 400+ attendees and a record of 100+ first time attendees. Board Member Kirk Palmer taught two classes on Extremist Groups and Homeless Camp Hazards with 98 attendees.



Upcoming Events for CEOSF

The Foundation is excited to participate at these upcoming events across the country:

Mar. 27 - Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association (OCEA) Conference

Apr. 1 - Utah Ordinance Compliance Association (UOCA) Conference

Apr. 15 - Animal Care EXPO in Las Vegas

Apr. 17 - Colorado Association of Code Enforcement Officials 2-day COSS Training

Apr. 23 - Code Enforcement Symposium: Advancing Safety Through Collaboration (sponsor)

Life Saving Awards

On February 25, 2025 at the EduCode Conference, an attendee suffered a cardiac event and lost his pulse near the CEOSF booth. Board Members **Jeanette Loven** and **Jeremy Kovinchick** immediately jumped into action to perform CPR and retrieve an AED. They performed life saving measures until paramedics arrived. The attendee was transported to a local hospital where he fully recovered and was back to work the next week.

"...helped save my life at Educode 2025. These people are hero's and deserve recognition. The hospital did every test you can think of regarding my heart and every thing checked out as normal and no damage. Without their quick response, it could have been a different outcome. I walked out of the hospital on the 27th. Back to work today."



For their heroic actions, they have both received the CEOSF Life Saving Award. In addition to this, as Colorado Association of Code Enforcement Officials (CACEO) members, they were nominated and awarded the inaugural **CACEO Rodney Morales Life Saving Award** by the Board of Directors. "Your actions exemplify the important role code enforcement officials have in our communities and we are excited to recognize your efforts. Your quick thinking, courage, and selflessness have made an incredible impact, and your actions serve as an inspiration to us all."

BE CAREFUL

Be safe, stay alert, and get home!

In Memory

From April through June we remember and honor those who have died serving their communities.

April 6th – Gail Braden, Kansas

(81st anniversary - Murder)

April 13th – Charles Askew, Texas

(71st anniversary - Murder)

April 17th – Mickey Wright, Tennessee

(24th anniversary - Murder)

April 29th – Jacqueline Summer Beard, Alabama

(3rd anniversary - Murder)

April 30th – Andrea “Dre” Garcia, California

(3rd anniversary - Medical)

January 24th – Joe Schier, Oklahoma

(3rd anniversary - COVID-19)

June 1st – Hugo Rojas, Wisconsin

(5th anniversary - COVID-19)

June 1st – Jean J.J. Tellier, Quebec

(63rd anniversary - Murder)

June 13th – Michael “Pee Wee” Walker, Texas

(20th anniversary - Murder)

June 21st – Jean Hillery, California

(25th anniversary - Murder)

June 21st – Tom Quadros, California

(25th anniversary - Murder)

June 21st – Bill Shaline, California

(25th anniversary - Murder)



A Discussion of Defensive Tools for Code Enforcement Officers

by Dean Phaneuf, CCEA, COSCI

There is often a “clear” distinction made between code enforcement officers and law enforcement officers. In practical terms, the “distinction” amounts to semantics and treatment. According to Merriam-Webster, a code is “a systematic statement of a body of law, especially: one given statutory force.” The same reference defines a law as a “binding custom or practice of a community: a rule of conduct or action prescribed or formally recognized as binding or enforced by a controlling authority.”

In application, law enforcement tends to infer generalist responsibility for enforcement of “all” laws, to include preserving (or restoring) the peace, and other public safety-oriented functions. Upon closer examination, there are many layers to the division of labor. The classic divisions typically include administration, patrol, and investigations. These, of course, are further divided into bureaus of more specific responsibility. Administration has responsibility for such functions as personnel, budget, recordkeeping, training, policy, and the like. Patrol, sometimes more appropriately referred to as “field operations,” is the more visible division. Staff are typically in uniform, drive distinctively marked vehicles, and are responsive to immediate requests, whether routine or emergency in nature. Common bureaus within patrol include district assignments, traffic, evidence collection, and tactical response. Calls for service run the gamut from addressing hazards, disturbances, and traffic infractions, to thefts, assaults, and murder. All these responses are randomly driven by human activities and decisions, except for “acts of God,” such as natural disasters or weather-driven events.

Up until about 50 years ago, U.S. law enforcement agencies carried out most, if not all functions through employees classified as “sworn” officers or deputies (“peace officers”), empowered by statute and appointment to enforce the laws of the land and to perform “other duties as assigned.” Smaller, or more rural jurisdictions tended to operate with leaner resources (and thus, leaner staffing), driving more generalist responsibilities. Larger, and more densely populated jurisdictions tended to have more resources, and thus more staff, driving an evolution of more specialized assignments. With few exceptions, “sworn” staff were authorized to carry and use firearms and other weaponry or equipment to address threats to both personal and public safety.

As law enforcement evolved from a “job” to a “profession,” both costs and competencies escalated. Hiring standards, formalized training, and state certifications all contributed to rising costs and competencies. As a product or service is refined, value is added. As value is added, cost accompanies. Budgets are finite, and as the cost of “law enforcement” increased, economies were necessarily explored. Administrators identified tasks viewed as requiring less training, less discretion, and posing less frequent safety risks. These tasks began to be shifted from “sworn” staff to “civilian” or non-sworn personnel. The notable distinctions were that “civilians” were unarmed, and more conservatively compensated. Specialized classroom and on-the-job training mirrored that provided to sworn staff who previously (or continued to) perform the same tasks. The expenses and liabilities of “general” law enforcement training (notably, weapons and defensive tactics) were reduced, in addition to filling positions at lower pay grades. Examples of “civilianized” tasks include dispatch, front desk, traffic investigations, property and financial crimes, and forensic investigations. While not tasked with making physical arrests, staff classified as “paraprofessional” continued to enjoy exposure to risk, and to the dangers inherent to policing functions. (Think, VIOLENCE.)

As one might expect, from a safety perspective, things generally went well. “Civilian” employees would face some degree of hostility and abuse but would typically accomplish their assigned tasks without direct exposure to violence. Virtually all “civilian” staff wore uniforms and drove “marked” vehicles, both resembling those of sworn staff, while typically distinctive in some way to separate them from the “real cops.” Also, as one might expect, most members of the public could make the distinction between sworn and civilian staff, while with others, the distinction was lost. This distinction alone was found to have varied affect, depending upon the perspective, mental state, and motives of the “clients” encountered. Over time, similarities between sworn and non-sworn staff seemed to intensify, with badges mirroring those of the sworn staff (but with appropriate title ribbon), and utility belts sprouted various tools, such as portable radios, flashlights, defensive sprays, voice recorders, and the like. The main difference became the lack of a firearm, ammunition, impact weapon, and perhaps “ECD” or Taser®. Even so, some agencies and assignments authorized “civilians” to carry impact weapons or ECDs as “less lethal” means of personal defense, a subtle acknowledgement of the inherent risks associated with their jobs.

The main distinctions in determining whether an employee was a “sworn peace officer” or a “civilian” typically boiled down to whether on duty use of firearms was authorized. Of course, along with carrying a firearm, comes additional statutory authority and duty to make arrests, serve warrants, and similar functions. Empowering an individual to utilize deadly force as an agent of the government is not an issue to be taken lightly. Pre-employment screening for character, responsibility, and psychological make-up are important elements of selecting persons to be entrusted with use of force decisions. Initial and on-going training and qualifications are also critical, for both perishable skills maintenance and to minimize liability.

The great power (and liability) of a peace officer is the authority and means to deprive accused parties of life, liberty, or property. Attorney, risk management guru, and retired CHP commander Gordon Graham popularly describes a peace officer as “that unique category of employee that is able to create liability on behalf of their employer anywhere within the State.” (Paraphrased based upon my best recollection.) That is because by California law, the most general categories of peace officers possess legal authority to carry a weapon and make arrests anywhere within the state, even though that authority is based upon their appointment by a specific jurisdiction. By contrast, while the position of Code Enforcement Officer is referenced within various codes and chapters of California state law, the actual jurisdiction, responsibilities, and authorities are defined (limited) by the actual employing jurisdiction.

Code Enforcement Officer typically refers to an employee with responsibility for enforcing local ordinances, and limited state laws, generally addressing matters of health, safety, and welfare. More specific examples include zoning, building, environmental, animal regulation, graffiti, business tax, cannabis regulation, and similar issues. Violations are most often classified as criminal misdemeanors or infractions but are also frequently addressed using civil or administrative remedies, rather than criminal prosecution.

Most would agree that low-level violations typically investigated by code enforcement officers would never justify the use of physical force, and certainly not deadly force. This really goes without saying. Likewise, neither do low-level violations typically investigated by (armed) peace officers. In fact, use of force in its most palatable applications, occurs only in the immediate defense of self or others, and even in those instances, is the subject of nearly universal debate, often accompanied by civil and/or criminal litigation. The catch here is that the need for immediate defense of self or others is generally preceded by the commission or attempt of a violent, felonious assault. While a code enforcement officer is never tasked with seeking out such a serious crime, or even intervening if witnessed, there may be instances where they become the victim of such a crime and possess the innate and lawful right of self-defense.

There is an interesting comparison to be made between code enforcement and what has been described as California's "premier law enforcement agency," the California Highway Patrol. The primary charge of the CHP is traffic enforcement. The body of law within their primary responsibility is the California Vehicle Code...which is dominated by technical regulations governing the equipment and operation of motor vehicles...the majority of which are infractions, punishable only by fine. While there are numerous misdemeanors, and some felony offenses within the Vehicle Code, most violations are classified as infractions. Some violations have been decriminalized altogether, such as parking regulations, which are only punishable by fine, and have been excluded from contest in court. That said, CHP officers are issued high-capacity handguns, shotguns, and automatic rifles. While it is true that the CHP has full peace officer authority and may be called upon to augment or assist local law enforcement, their greatest, and perhaps the most frequent risk of exposure to violence comes from approaching the driver's window of a car to discuss a minor violation of the law. This scenario parallels the risk exposure of a code enforcement officer, knocking on the door of a violator, not knowing who may answer, their mental state, weapons at their disposal, or more serious offenses occurring – known to the violator, but unknown to the officer. Traffic stops typically occur within public space, where resistance or "acting out" is likely to be well within the view of others. Code enforcement contacts are more likely to occur within more private space, less conspicuous to public view, and almost universally in areas where a variety of potential weapons are certain to be present. In the traffic context, the risk exposure for a violator is typically limited to payment of a fine, and perhaps impoundment of their vehicle. Many code violations create much higher risk exposure for the violator, in terms of cost, time and complexity to resolve, and stress on close relationships. While both traffic enforcement contact and the code enforcement contacts are intended to provide an educational opportunity and an incentive to "do better," they can both elicit strong emotions, and the accompanying risk of assault. There is no logical reason why a traffic officer should be afforded greater protection from the risk of assault than an officer assigned to (other) code enforcement. "Other" code enforcement, because at the end of the day, the CHP is the State's premier code enforcement agency.

Conflict avoidance is always the most desirable and effective means of maintaining personal safety. The investigation and enforcement of codes (laws), however, is inherently intrusive, adversarial, and often emotionally charged. Correction of code violations almost always requires expenditure of time, money, and effort that was unanticipated, or at least, not intended. Depending upon the means or mindset of the violator, a "minor" issue may be overwhelming to their resources and/or their coping skills. Given the right set of circumstances, all humans are capable of both ultimate good, and ultimate evil. The challenge is not knowing what circumstances or what timing may be in play when the code officer arrives or takes enforcement action. A code enforcement officer represents a disturbance of equilibrium, a threat to the status quo. Being held accountable may disrupt the ego, lifestyle, income, savings, plans, or future of a violator. Reactions to such an encounter may be less than cordial and certainly have the potential for violence. There are many examples of "minor" triggers initiating heinous outcomes.

There is no clear answer to the conflicts discussed here. There are options. Not all incumbent or prospective code enforcement officers have the desire, will, or disposition to be armed, whether on duty or off. Not all jurisdictions or managers are willing to "arm" code enforcement officers. Clearly, there is substantial cost and liability involved in arming employees, both initial, and on-going. Conversely, there may be substantial costs, monetary or otherwise, to sending employees into unknown, unsafe, or uncontrolled environments. Risk of violence is not limited to the field though, as there are numerous incidents that have occurred within government buildings and offices, and while in or about a work vehicle. Occupational safety and health laws require employers to provide a "safe" work environment. While absolute safety can never be assured, practices, policies, training, equipment, and supervision all have important roles to play in providing safety and security and mitigating known risks.

The California Legislature, in the preamble of Senate Bill 296 (signed into law October 7, 2021), stated, “The Legislature finds and declares that code enforcement officers are disproportionately at risk for threat, assault, injury, and even homicide due to the nature of their obligations.” These “disproportionate risks” mirror those risks inherent to peace officers. The authority to use force, and possession of weapons or other force options exists solely to address those risks, but for the additional “general duty” to protect the public from such risks as well.

A question to consider is this: When is it appropriate to limit the safety options available to staff? If the limitation is based upon a personal preference, perhaps decisionmakers should consider the employee's preference to be free from harm or injury. If the limitation is financial, creative funding options might be considered. If the limitation is legal, consider advocating for a change in law. If the limitation is personal capacity, consider reassignment to more appropriate work, or incentivizing personal improvements. If the limitation is availability of training, reach out to resources that will come alongside you and assist.

If employees have a legal right to self-defense (which they do!) and have a legal right to possess and use defensive tools (many, if not most do!), and training and funding options are available (they are!), is the personal preference of management or politicians a satisfactory reason to limit lawful self-defense options? One form of liability may be unintentionally exchanged for another when employees are knowingly, willingly, and intentionally placed in danger which could have (should have) been mitigated.

Carrying a firearm does not equate to being aggressive or trigger-happy. I've carried a concealed firearm for over 40 years and only fired a single round at a human within a span of more than 14,000 days. Carrying a firearm has caused me to be more measured in my interactions with hostile people, as I know the potential endgame, and the high costs that using deadly force – or even drawing a weapon – may have for everyone involved.

There are ways to train, equip, and deploy staff without creating a more adversarial climate – and without sending them into the proverbial gunfight with only a knife (or less), either! There are reasons why American law enforcement is armed. The American public is armed. No one that I know wants to return to a “Wild West” environment or mentality. Likewise, no one I know wants to give up their personal safety, or their very life, for what often seems like a thankless job.

My personal preference is for concealed carry of defensive tools. Just as not all threats to our safety are wearing black cowboy hats, there's no reason why we should “tip our hand” to show all our capabilities. There's an expectation that the police will be armed, but that's not generally the case with code enforcement. To have a conspicuously armed agent of the government show up regarding an over-height fence or non-permitted construction may be perceived as provocative. Showing up with a polite, concerned, and helpful persona – but with the capacity to do battle if necessary – can help to balance the scales a bit. There is a reduced risk of an adversary attempting to take control of an officer's weapon if they don't know that one is being carried. Being conspicuously armed creates a requirement to take charge and maintain some degree of control over violators, simply because of the obligation to maintain control of the (exposed) weapon. An aggressive or controlling manner may reduce the spirit of cooperation that might otherwise help resolve a “minor” violation.

While there's no substitute for a firearm for overcoming an adversary's use of deadly force, not every hostile conflict begins or ends in that extreme. Sometimes, an intermediate or “less lethal” defensive weapon is appropriate. I'm a huge fan of impact weapons. In my opinion, to be effective, they benefit greatly from the element of surprise...and skillful, practiced technique.

That said, the display of, or threat to use an impact weapon never lowers the temperature in the room. If a threat arises that warrants use of an impact weapon, but not a firearm, you're likely better off delivering a quick and effective blow than getting in a wrestling match for control of your displayed or brandished baton. In my opinion, except for creating distance between you and a vicious dog, impact weapons may be more trouble than help within the scope of most code enforcement interactions.

Electronic Control Devices, or ECDs (also known as Conducted Electrical Weapons, or CEWs), prominently represented by Axon's Taser® market share), may have a larger potential role within the code enforcement community than generally recognized. My preference with this option would also be for concealed carry to avoid creating unnecessary tension. As violence occurs quickly, "off-body" carry – such as in a purse, bag, or briefcase – or worse yet, back in the vehicle, is a bad option. In my experience, when aggression escalates, the display of a Taser® is often sufficient to reduce aggression, and deployment may be sufficient to pause aggression and allow time for other options (think, ESCAPE!). ECDs are evolving in their capacity to address multiple adversaries, with multiple-cartridge models now available. Combination flashlight/ECD models, may be limited to the use of "drive-stun" mode, requiring direct physical contact, rather than firing barbs and wires. A deterrent "arc" may be displayed in "drive-stun" mode, which may be useful to discourage escalating aggression (although your mileage may vary). ECDs may also be of use against vicious animals.

Personal body weapons (think, elbows, hands, feet, etc.) are typically an available option, but escape is still preferable...unless attempting escape will create a greater risk of harm. While diligent, on-going training helps, there's always someone out there that has been training harder than you have. If you find yourself entangled with that guy, fight all-out (not "fair"), and with the will to prevail at all costs.

In California, the minimum training requirement to "exercise the powers of a peace officer" is completion of "PC 832" training, including passage of "an appropriate examination." The training course described in California Penal Code section 832 is a two-part program, consisting of 40-hours on Arrest and Control, and 24-hours on Firearms. This training is duplicative of or included within the Basic Peace Officer academy curriculum but satisfies the minimum training standard for California peace officers holding positions that do not require full academy certification.

Well, those are some ramblings from a guy with a lot of opinions, and a little experience. The opinions stated herein are my own, and not necessarily reflective of my employers, past or present.

When you can, get good legal counsel before acting. When you can't, get good legal counsel after acting.

Whether or not you're classified as a peace officer, code enforcement is law enforcement. Be polite, professional, but always have a plan as to how you'll get past anyone or anything that stands between getting work done and getting home safely...including management and your local legislative body!

About the Author

Dean Phaneuf, COSCI has over 44 years experience in law enforcement and currently serves as a Code Enforcement Manager in California. Dean was a Police Sergeant, Bomb Squad Commander, SWAT Member, and a Detective. He also served as a Special Deputy U.S. Marshal assigned to a FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force. He is an AACE Certified Code Enforcement Administrator, CACEO Certified Code Enforcement Officer, and has numerous trainings related to explosives, including the FBI Hazardous Devices School. Dean is a CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor.

Ambush! The Charles “Chip” Case Incident

by Kirk Palmer, Master Code Officer (GA), COSCI, COSS

“There is no such thing as a ‘routine call’; each call, however benign it may seem, has its own set of dangers; you pull a car over for a busted taillight, but the guy driving murdered someone two counties over, and you haven’t got the BOLO. You’re pulling him over for a busted taillight; he thinks it’s for murder; can you see the problem here?”

Officer Survival Instructor, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, Forsyth, Georgia circa 1997

On the morning of August 20, 2020, around 10:00 AM, Charles “Chip” Case, a Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Augusta, Georgia, was on a “routine” call to placard a condemned residence. After placarding the residence, Officer Case returned to his vehicle but didn’t leave the area immediately. Unbeknownst to Officer Case, the owner of the residence, Smitty Oliver Melton, was silently approaching Officer Case’s vehicle from behind while wielding a 12-gauge shotgun. According to witnesses, there were “4 shotgun blasts,” and Officer Case was seen lying in the street, bleeding from wounds received from being hit multiple times by Buckshot. Lifesaving efforts were unsuccessful, and Officer Case succumbed to his injuries around 10:25 AM.

The suspect, Smitty Oliver Melton, fled the scene but was apprehended by U.S. Marshals and Sheriff’s Deputies hours later in Aiken County, South Carolina. He was extradited back to Georgia, charged with murder and possession of a firearm in commission of a crime, and denied bond. Before he could be brought to trial, Smitty Oliver Melton died in custody at the age of 68 on September 20, 2022, exactly two years and one month after the murder. Melton had a criminal history dating back to the late 1990’s



The incident location of Officer Case’s murder in Augusta, Georgia.

What are the lessons to be learned from this tragedy?

As mentioned in the opening statement, there aren’t any “routine” calls or tasks. Human behavior is unpredictable, particularly when the person is in a heightened state of mind or upset. In addition to his home being condemned, the suspect in this case was also aware that the tax commissioner’s office was levying against it for unpaid taxes—which undoubtedly added fuel to the fire. Second, just because you “look” doesn’t mean you “see.” You have to be keenly aware of your surroundings at all times. Melton, no doubt, observed Officer Case while he was placarding the house.

Third, no matter what function you're performing, leave the area immediately after finishing it. Administrative tasks like paperwork can wait until you get back to the office. A person is more likely to respond negatively the longer they think about or "stew" on a matter, and if you're still present, you'll be the object of their wrath be it verbal, physical or both.

A couple of questions...

- According to media reports, Melton had a criminal history that included accusations of possessing a weapon and aggravated assault. Was any type of background check conducted on Milton prior to Officer Case's visit? Perhaps a 911 call audit of the address? Had any officers had negative contacts with Melton in the past? Was this a high-crime area? Knowledge of Melton's background or previous negative contacts with Code or Law Enforcement may have changed the way the issue was handled.
- Did Officer Case or his superiors know that Melton might be in the neighborhood, possibly still attempting to live in the house that was being condemned? Officer Case was unarmed and lacked body armor, so if this was just suspected, it would have definitely been worth sending police officers or sheriff's deputies to the scene to standby.

Such a tragedy...

Officer Case, by all accounts, was well respected and liked by fellow officers and supervisors. Per media reports: a family friend described Officer Case as "an upstanding guy. I mean, he was a veteran; he loved his family, he loved his kids, and he loved his animals..." Prior to transferring to Code Enforcement, Officer Case worked for Augusta Animal Services, whose supervisor described Officer Case as "a man of integrity, morals, and principles. You could always count on Officer Case to do things by the book, even if it meant making his job a little bit more difficult. Augusta Animal Services will truly miss Officer Charles Case and want to extend our deepest condolences to his family." Officer Case was also an honorably discharged US Marine Combat Veteran with five tours of duty in the Middle East. There is no question that Officer Case was truly an asset to his community and country.

After Officer Case's murder, Augusta Code Enforcement adopted new safety measures to better protect its officers, to include:

- Body Armor;
- Two-way radios;
- Additional officer safety training; and finally,
- Making sure the Richmond County Marshal's and Sheriff's Offices have personnel available to assist in high risks situations.



As a retired Georgia POST Certified Law Enforcement Field Training Officer (FTO) and current Code Officer Safety Instructor, I've frequently questioned why critical incidents like the one discussed in this article are necessary for upper management to alter a policy or purchase equipment that personnel should have already had. I guess the title of an old 1950s-era game show says it best—that's the \$64,000 question.

The following is a link to a news report on Officer Case's murder: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_LrV0aTz6A . Until next time, stay alert and don't get hurt.

About the Author

Kirk Palmer, COSCI, is a Master Code Officer (GA) with 29 years of public safety experience. He is currently the Senior Code Official for White County, Georgia. In addition, he is an officer safety instructor for the Georgia Association of Code Enforcement Officials (GACE), specializing in extremist groups, gangs and in-field safety tactics.

The Uphill Battle & Victory for Body Armor

by Justin Edson, CCEA, COSS

"What costs more? A bulletproof vest or my hospital stay or paying my family for my funeral?"

Code Enforcement Officer Sophia Valenti

Recently I sat down for a **Lifeline Podcast** interview with two passionate and dedicated women in Code Enforcement. After seeing Sophia's post on LinkedIn regarding a tragic incident in February 2024 and a year-long fight for body armor, I knew her story had to be shared. I had also heard from the CEOSF Marketing Chair, Jessica Green, about her difficulty getting her team body armor in Oklahoma. I share these stories to hopefully guide others and offer support for their push for safety in the workplace. If you have not heard the episode, listen to the **Lifeline Podcast** on Apple Podcast or on the CEOSF website.

Sophia's Story

On a fateful day in February 2024, Sophia went to work like any normal day. While driving around the city she worked for in California, she noticed a vehicle following her turn by turn. As a Code Official Safety Specialist, she was using her training and intuition to make random turns to determine if this was a dedicated threat. In hopes of him passing, she pulled to the side of the road with no police radio or body armor, unlike when her agency used to have them when they were under the Police Department. The vehicle came to a stop next to her where **a man with a ski mask lifted his shirt and showed her a handgun in his waistband**. He said, "Fuck you you pig, stop following me around or I will end you the next time I see you."

She returned to the office in tears and sought help from management and the employer. Sophia stated they had nothing in place for an incident like this and struggled to get mental health resources. She was eventually able to get access to therapy and began her uphill battle to get body armor for her team. Sophia worked with the union as it was the time of the year they were doing MOU negotiations.

She stated that she faced push back from the City and was told one of the reasons was budget. This did not stop her or the union and they were finally able to get the body armor approved for the entire Code Enforcement team. Almost a year later in January 2025, they had their body armor fitted and issued. She admits it was not easy, but she was persistent. The CEOSF Board of Directors unanimously approved a **Certificate of Recognition** for her dedication to mitigate risk in the workplace.



Jessica's Story

Jessica is a Senior Code Enforcement Officer in Oklahoma, who after nearly five years with the City, saw the growing concern about officer safety. Tasked with homeless camps, vacant structures, demolition of nuisance properties, and other hazards; Jessica went to her management for body armor. There were also incidents where she was concerned about her families safety and removed family photos from her social media. She shared the national statistics and incidents to help her case. Initially, she was sent over to the Police Department to get their used and expired vests. Jessica knew more had to be done and she was persistent in her push for new armor. After debating management's concerns that they would look like Police Officers, she was able to get approval for the new body armor. Her difficulty was centered around the optics of body armor and not employee safety.

This whole optics thing is such a setback; I think for the profession and for risk management for employees. I have said this before, body armor has no liability to the City as an offensive weapon. It can save an employees life though! The concern over optics can easily be squashed with a logical and reasonable discussion about all the different colors and styles on the market. I urge Risk Managers, city leadership, and Code Enforcement supervisors to have an open mind and support the risk management of their employees. This can be enforced by CalOSHA Law Enforcement Branch in regards to Senate Bill 296 in California.



“Code Enforcement has changed. Transitioning code enforcement to interact with vendors, homeless camps, and vacant properties; where you are out there alone.” The old days of property maintenance and zoning violations is behind us. While we still handle these violations, agencies have added all of these riskier duties that once was handled by law enforcement. When I speak at conferences, trainings, and to fellow managers; I urge them to focus on establishing policies and procedures related to safety and in compliance with OSHA Injury Illness Protection Plan (IIPP). There are templates available and resources to assist in implementing these policies and procedures. Trust me, I understand there are budget and political concerns. Start small and work your way up, but BE PERSISTENT! **Begin with an IIPP and officer safety training.** Then pursue a Police radio and OC spray. Add these to your policy and procedure manual. Then tackle the body armor. One of the easiest options is the concealed vests under the uniform so there are no “optics” issues. Or show the decision makers the rainbow of vests - neon green, red, blue, tan, gray, and uniform styles. I beg you to not be complacent and timid to support your team. You will also notice a morale boost amongst the team when they see you fighting for their safety. You can do it - one step at a time!

About the Author

Justin Edson is a Code Enforcement Manager in California and previously served as a Building, Neighborhood Services, and Public Safety Manager across several cities. He is an ICC Certified Code Enforcement Administrator, Certified Workplace Violence & Threat Specialist, and a POST Field Training Officer. Prior to his 10 years in Code Enforcement, he was with a Police Department for nearly 10 years. Justin was the Founding President of the Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation.

Situational Awareness Must Lead to a Timely Decision

by Scott Kirshner, M.Ed., COSCI, INCI

There is no universally accepted definition of Situational Awareness.

An important component of safety is situational awareness (SA) which is why it remains a topic that garners so much attention. There is a unique duality of simplicity and complexity in the understanding and application of situational awareness. Oftentimes, SA is reduced to a pithy statement such as “be aware of your environment” but this is much too simplistic to be helpful. If you were told to “be aware of your environment” what does that specifically entail in its application?

The answer to such a question is where complexity enters the picture. The application of SA is significantly more complex as it requires a multitude of skills and concepts. Too often SA is viewed as one skill when in reality it requires the amalgamation of a variety of skills to include: mindset, observation, perception, attention, focus, concentration, sense-making, critical thinking, and decision-making. This is not an inclusive list but one that provides a general overview of components that comprise effective situational awareness.

DEFINING SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

To the surprise of many, there is no universally accepted definition of situational awareness. A common definition is:

“Perception of the elements in the environment within a volume of time and space, the comprehension of their meaning, and the projection of their status in the near future.”

Endsley, M. R. (1995). Toward a Theory of Situation Awareness in Dynamic Systems. Human Factors, 37(1), 32-64.

Even though there are a variety of definitions of SA, most share the following commonalities:

- Understanding of the Environment
- Use of Perception and Attention
- Concepts of Time and Space
- Projection to the Future

A cursory view of these bullet points can lead one to believe that the application of situational awareness is easy. Yet, each bullet point is rich in content and context. In this article, I specifically focus on the last bullet point of “projection to the future” but before doing so let’s briefly discuss the goal of situational awareness.

GOAL OF SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

The goal of situational awareness is to identify dangerous situations as early as possible, preferably prior to contact, to provide time to use sense-making and critical thinking skills to decide on response options with the primary objective of avoiding a violent encounter.

Situational awareness provides the best opportunity to avoid conflict by early identification of danger and leaving prior to contact. Once contact is initiated the ability to leave is more challenging. This is why it is important to be goal-oriented towards safety so you are making proactive decisions to choose safety!

PROJECTION TO THE FUTURE

Projection to the future can be a bit esoteric. Let's assume you understand the environment, perceive danger, maintain attention, and understand the implications of time and distance.

Questions to consider:

- **What does 'projection to the future' mean?**

Projection to the future is the synthesis of perceived cues to **predict** potential future outcomes and the implications to your safety. This requires the use of **sense-making** and **critical thinking skills** to not only project the outcome but to reach a **decision** pertaining to **response options** that allow you to avoid, mitigate, or respond to the situation.

- **How far into the future is this referencing?**

Context is always a relevant factor. In the case of an imminent attack within close proximity the time span can range from **milliseconds** to **seconds**.

- **What are the implications for failure to project to the future?**

Failure to project to the future can lead to lack of a decision on a course of action. Failure to respond to a threat may result in **victimization** to include serious bodily injury or death.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO YOUR SAFETY?

It is possible to have awareness of a threat and know you are in a dangerous situation but fail to use sense-making and critical thinking skills to arrive at a decision to determine response options. Victimization results when there is a failure to reach a decision or when a response is implemented too late to be effective. To increase safety you must make decisions that lead to a timely response.

EXAMPLE

In June 2023, there was an incident in Bordeaux, France where a 73 year old grandmother was standing by her front door with her 7 year old granddaughter when a homeless man chose to victimize them in a violent unprovoked attack.



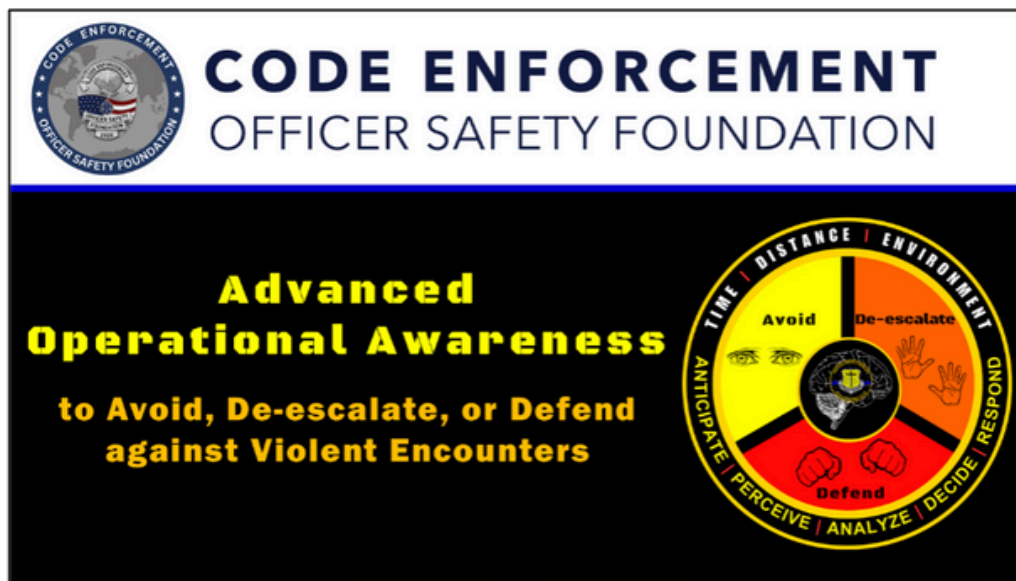
Considerations:

1. Grandmother observes man and perceives him as a threat. She uses her left arm to open door. In this image consider how the factors of time and distance impact response time
2. Grandmother attempts to enter residence but her decision was too slow and her response indecisive
3. The threat is assertive and aggressive in using his left foot to prevent the door from closing
4. Threat forcefully and violently assaults the grandmother and child with complete disregard for their safety
5. The child is violently handled by the threat
6. The threat makes his escape

The grandmother identified the threat but was slow with her decision and indecisive in her response to enter her home and close the door before the threat could block the door with his foot. The attacker was arrested within an hour of the assault and was reported to have 15 prior convictions. This example is not to victim blame but to show that failure to decide on a course of action and decisively implement a response can result in victimization. This is especially important in a time compressed, high-stress, dynamic, and ambiguous encounter. There is zero benefit to your safety to identify a dangerous situation but not decide on a course of action or fail to respond in a timely manner due to indecisiveness.

Situational Awareness provides the ability to identify danger so you can be proactive with safety. When you lack awareness you have no chance of using avoidance strategies. If you **fail to decide on a course of action, fail to implement a response, or implement the response too slow** then you are not safer.

ADVANCED OPERATIONAL AWARENESS



The ability to effectively “Operationalize” Situational Awareness is going to be covered in a new soon to be released training course through the CEOSF called:

Advanced Operational Awareness to Avoid, De-escalate, or Defend Against Violent Encounters

This comprehensive course covers the **APADR Model of Awareness** and how it's implementation can significantly improve your safety in a time compressed and high-stress encounter by maximizing the factors of time, distance, and environment.

APADR is an acronym that stands for: **A**nticipate, **P**erceive, **A**nalyze, **D**ecide, and **R**espond. Avoidance is always stressed as the primary goal. When avoidance and de-escalation strategies are not possible - based on the actions of the threat - then the goal is to respond in a manner that is legal, moral, ethical, and within department policy.

About the Author

Scott Kirshner, M.Ed., COSCI, INCI, has been a Parole Administrator, Supervisory Probation Officer, and a Corrections Officer. He has extensive experience as an officer survival trainer and has been a lead defensive tactics instructor, firearms instructor, and use of force instructor. He is the author of Officer Survival for Code Enforcement Officers. Mr. Kirshner is the owner and Lead Instructor of Dedicated Threat Solutions, LLC. He can be reached at: info@dedicatedthreatsolutions.com

You Have Seen It - Human Trafficking

by Jeanette Loven, CCEO, COSS

Human Trafficking... Do You Know It When You See It?

This is the first in a series where we will explore human trafficking, delve into its nuances, and address common misconceptions. Today, we begin with a basic overview of what human trafficking is and what it looks like.

What Is Human Trafficking?

There are a lot of myths surrounding human trafficking, and it's important to distinguish fact from fiction. For instance:



Human trafficking always involves moving people from one place to another.

- Not quite true. While trafficking does often involve the movement of people, it can also occur within their own homes. In fact, it's estimated that 41% of trafficking cases involve familial trafficking. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), nearly half of child trafficking cases involve family members.

Human trafficking victims are always young women.

- False. Human trafficking doesn't discriminate based on age, gender, race, or financial status. Victims can be male or female, young or old.

Victims of trafficking will always ask for help.

- Not necessarily. Many victims don't even see themselves as victims due to the mental manipulation and trauma they've experienced. In some cases, victims may even return to their traffickers after being rescued.

Trafficking only occurs in low-income areas.

- False. Human trafficking can happen anywhere, including during large events like sporting events, corporate conferences, or even in the wake of natural disasters. It's not confined to one geographic or socio-economic area.

Human trafficking only affects children and women.

- False. While the majority of victims are women and children, studies show that about 25% of trafficking victims are men and boys.

Traffickers are always men.

- Not true. In fact, about 25% of traffickers are women, and sometimes, these women were previously victims of trafficking themselves.

There's always violence involved.

- Not always. Traffickers often prey on vulnerable individuals—those who are homeless, addicted, or facing financial instability. Traffickers promise to meet their needs, which makes these individuals particularly susceptible.

Human trafficking is always sexual.

- Not true. Although sexual exploitation is a major form of trafficking, it's not the only one. We'll discuss this further below.

The Reality of Human Trafficking

It's estimated that approximately 50 million people are currently being held in modern-day slavery. Contrary to popular belief, modern slavery isn't always a dramatic scene with white vans kidnapping people off the street. Instead, it can be much more subtle, and it involves many layers. The top five types of human trafficking include:

1. Domestic Servitude: Victims are forced to work inside private homes—such as housekeepers, nannies, or cooks. But not every domestic worker is being trafficked.
2. Child Soldiers: Children are forced into combat roles, often in war zones. Many service members have witnessed this firsthand.
3. Sex Trafficking: Individuals, often forced into prostitution or the sex industry, including strip clubs or escort services. It's important to note that not every escort is trafficked.
4. Forced Labor: Victims work long hours with little or no pay. Their debts to traffickers—often for transportation or visas—are never repaid, and they are trapped in the cycle of labor.
5. Forced Marriage: People, including children, are coerced into marriages for various reasons, including economic survival. In some cases, families marry off children to alleviate financial burdens.

Why Does Human Trafficking Continue?

The simple answer: Money.

Human trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar industry. It generates approximately \$173 billion annually—far surpassing the revenue of major corporations. To put it in perspective, the combined revenue of Starbucks, SC Johnson, and the NFL (\$67.68 billion) doesn't even come close to the scale of human trafficking.

Recognizing the Signs of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking isn't always obvious, but there are signs to watch for:

- **Avoidance of Eye Contact:** Victims may avoid eye contact, fearing their trafficker is watching them. They may only interact with a limited number of people.
- **Physical Abuse:** Bruises, broken bones, or tattoos that resemble branding (similar to livestock markings) are common signs.
- **Large Age Gaps in Relationships:** Watch for significant age gaps in dating patterns that may indicate coercion or control.
- **Unusual Living Conditions:** Multiple individuals living in small, crowded spaces (e.g., bunk beds in hotels, closets, storage units). Victims may say they live with their “relative” or “employer” who controls their living arrangements.



What Can You Do?

If you suspect trafficking or see signs of exploitation, don't ignore it. There are resources to help.

- **Local Law Enforcement:** Always contact local authorities if you believe trafficking is occurring in your area.
- **Department of Homeland Security Center for Countering Human Trafficking:** Call 1-866-347-2423.
- **National Human Trafficking Hotline:** Call 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to 233733 (BEFREE).

Conclusion: Human trafficking is a dark reality, but together we can work toward recognizing the signs and making a difference. In future newsletters, we'll dive deeper into the complexities of this issue and discuss how we can continue to help victims and prevent trafficking.

About the Author

Jeanette Loven is a Lead Code Enforcement/Animal Control Officer and Field Training Officer in Colorado. She has experience as an Emergency Dispatcher for Police, Fire, Sheriff, and U.S. Forest Service. Jeanette is a Certified Training Officer and has been a CPR/First Aid instructor for over 22 years. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for CEOSF.

Angel Donor Program

by Jessica Green CCEO, COSS

Hey everyone,

It's been incredibly cold here in Oklahoma, and I'm beyond relieved to finally see winter coming to an end. As we transition into the warmer months, I hope you're all staying safe and healthy, no matter where you are.

I wanted to take a moment to share an exciting update with all of you regarding the Angel Donor Program. Thanks to your incredible generosity and unwavering support, we've made some truly remarkable progress. So far, we've been able to donate 74 vests, which have amounted to a total of \$52,826 in contributions. Additionally, we've been able to provide 69 scholarships to officers who reached out for assistance, helping to support their ongoing education and training in safety practices.



ANGEL DONOR

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER SAFETY FOUNDATION
501C3 NONPROFIT CHARITY

The Code Officer Safety Foundation's Angel Donor Program is an incredibly impactful initiative, one that is close to my heart. It's designed with a clear and essential mission—to improve officer safety and save lives. By providing life-saving equipment like bulletproof vests, along with scholarships that support officers in acquiring crucial safety training, we're helping to ensure that those who serve and protect us are equipped with the resources they need to do their jobs safely and effectively.

The work we're doing together has a direct and meaningful impact, not only on the officers receiving this assistance but also on the communities they serve. Every donation, whether large or small, makes a significant difference in the lives of those who dedicate themselves to law enforcement. It's all about empowering our officers, equipping them with the necessary tools to face the challenges of their demanding and often dangerous jobs.

I'm incredibly proud of what we've been able to achieve so far, and I'm filled with gratitude for each of you who has played a part in this effort. The progress we've made is a testament to the power of collaboration and the dedication of everyone involved in this cause. Together, we are truly making a difference. Looking ahead, I'm excited to continue working alongside you to further support the amazing work you all do. Let's keep up the momentum, and let's keep working to ensure that our officers have the protection and training they need to remain safe while serving our communities.

Thank you again for your support, and I can't wait to see what we can achieve in the coming months.

About the Author

Jessica is a Senior Code Enforcement Officer in Oklahoma and serves as 3rd Vice President of the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association (OCEA). Jessica is a Code Official Safety Specialist (COSS). She currently serves as Regional Representative for Region 10 for CEOSF and as Marketing Chair.

Georgia House Bill 483

The Foundation commends the Georgia Association of Code Enforcement (GACE) and the State of Georgia for a bipartisan bill aimed at enhancing protections of Code Enforcement Officers. The Foundation supports legislative efforts such as these to enhance the safety and protections of Code Officials nationwide. Passed by the House and now waiting on the Senate. Read more: <https://legiscan.com/GA/bill/HB483/2025>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 5 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to assault and battery, so as to provide for protections for inspectors of code
3 enforcement; to provide for definitions; to provide for enhanced penalties for simple assault,
4 aggravated assault, simple battery, battery, and aggravated battery committed upon
5 inspectors of code enforcement in certain circumstances; to provide for related matters; to
6 provide for an effective date and applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
7 purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 SECTION 1.

10 Article 2 of Chapter 5 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
11 assault and battery, is amended by revising paragraph (9) of and by adding a new paragraph
12 to Code Section 16-5-19, relating to definitions, to read as follows:

13 "(4.1) 'Inspector of code enforcement' means any person employed by or under contract
14 with a municipality, city, county, or consolidated government who performs safety
15 inspections of buildings, structures, and businesses to ensure they are operated in
16 accordance with the law."

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17 "(9) 'Public safety officer' means peace officer, correctional officer, emergency health
18 worker, firefighter, highway emergency response operator, inspector of code
19 enforcement, jail officer, juvenile correctional officer, or probation officer."

20 SECTION 2.

21 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (i) of Code Section 16-5-20, relating
22 to simple assault, as follows:

23 "(i) Any person who commits the offense of simple assault upon a utility worker or
24 inspector of code enforcement while such worker or inspector is acting within the course
25 and scope of ~~their~~ his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the
26 offense shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished for a misdemeanor of a high and
27 aggravated nature."

28 SECTION 3.

29 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (m) of Code Section 16-5-21, relating
30 to aggravated assault, as follows:

31 "(m) Any person who commits the offense of aggravated assault upon a utility worker or
32 inspector of code enforcement while such worker or inspector is acting within the course
33 and scope of ~~their~~ his or her employment or is performing official duties shall, upon
34 conviction thereof, be punished by imprisonment for not less than three nor more than 20
35 years."

36 SECTION 4.

37 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (j) of Code Section 16-5-23, relating
38 to simple battery, as follows:

39 "(j) Any person who commits the offense of simple battery upon a utility worker or
40 inspector of code enforcement while such worker or inspector is acting within the course

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41 and scope of ~~their~~ his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the
42 offense shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished for a misdemeanor of a high and
43 aggravated nature."

44 SECTION 5.

45 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (l) of Code Section 16-5-23.1, relating
46 to battery, as follows:

47 "(l) Any person who commits the offense of battery upon a utility worker or inspector of
48 code enforcement while such worker or inspector is acting within the course and scope of
49 ~~their~~ his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the offense shall,
50 upon conviction thereof, be punished for a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature."

51 SECTION 6.

52 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (i) of Code Section 16-5-24, relating
53 to aggravated battery, as follows:

54 "(i) Any person who commits the offense of aggravated battery upon a utility worker or
55 inspector of code enforcement while such worker or inspector is acting within the course
56 and scope of ~~their~~ his or her employment or is performing official duties at the time of the
57 offense shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by imprisonment for not less than three
58 nor more than 20 years."

59 SECTION 7.

60 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
61 without such approval and shall apply to all offenses committed on or after July 1, 2025.

62 SECTION 8.

63 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.

CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructors (COSCI)

The Foundation created the COSCI program to vet instructor credentials and ensure that a COSCI has the background, experience, and credentials to teach on subjects related to officer safety. They do not need to be about code enforcement, but any subject that is officer safety. Our Certification Committee reviews all applications, interviews the candidate, and makes a recommendation to the Board.



Timothy Sun, COSCI, COSS

Tim is the President of CEOSF and a Code Enforcement Manager in California with 20 years of Code Enforcement and law enforcement experience. He has taught at the CACEO academies on officer safety and been a Chair. Tim teaches several classes in-person ranging from basic officer safety, to self defense, to firearms, and more.



Kirk Palmer, COSCI, COSS

Kirk is a CEOSF Board Member and a Code Enforcement Supervisor in Georgia with nearly 30 years of experience as a Peace Officer and in Code Enforcement. He has taught numerous classes in Georgia on officer safety, gangs, sovereign citizens, and first amendment auditors.



Scott Kirshner, COSCI, M.Ed., INCI

Scott is our Lead Instructor and developed the COSS training curriculum. He has over 30 years of experience teaching about violence, officer safety, and situational awareness. He travels the country teaching different classes for agencies large and small. Scott is President of Dedicated Threat Solutions, LLC.



Darrell Revier, COSCI, COSS

Darrell has over 20 years of experience in Code Enforcement and Animal Control. He is a Code Enforcement Officer in California and previously served as CACEO President for two terms. He has also been the Chair of the Officer Safety Committee. Darrell teaches at the CACEO academy and covers basic officer safety, animal safety, and biohazards.



Dean Phaneuf, COSCI, COSS

Dean has over 44 years experience in law enforcement and currently serves as a Code Enforcement Manager in California. Dean was a Police Sergeant, Bomb Squad Commander, SWAT Member, and a Detective. He also served as a Special Deputy U.S. Marshal assigned to a FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.



Christopher Mandala, COSCI, COSS

Chris has 30 years experience in law enforcement and Code Enforcement in California. He was a Sergeant with LAPD and currently serves as a Code Enforcement Coordinator. Chris specializes in warrants, high risk inspections, and officer safety principles.



Cody Tweedy, COSCI

Cody is a dedicated public servant with over 15 years of public safety experience. He has worked as a firefighter for multiple agencies holding the ranks of Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief. He also became an EMS Supervisor in Colorado. Cody is currently a Police Officer assigned to Traffic.

COSS Training Options

The international Code Official Safety Specialist (COSS) training program started in June 2021. This was a training partnership with Dedicated Threat Solutions, LLC to develop the curriculum for this highly acclaimed training. CEOSF is an ICC Preferred Education Provider so the 15-hour class does receive CEU's. The goal of this training was to provide a basic foundation for YOUR safety as you work in government. This program is divided into 5 subjects and covers what to think about, what to be aware of, and tips to focus on your safety. Participants can also download 5 PDF workbooks that enhance the training. In November of 2022, the Code Council officially launched the Credential of Learning Achievement (CLA) on this training. Students must pass the training in order to take the ICC exam and receive the credential. The CLA costs \$65 and includes a 1-hour exam.

Currently the entire 15-hour course is discounted by 66% at \$250 per person. As a non-profit, CEOSF wanted to offer this important training at the lowest cost while still covering overhead.

ON-DEMAND / VIRTUAL

The COSS training was designed to be accessible to everyone across the globe with this on-demand option. Students enroll at any time online and work through the course within 60 days. You are able to pause as needed and download the PDF workbooks. This has been widely accepted due to this feature so students do not need to miss days of work to go to an off-site location. We have heard from numerous agencies nationwide that use this training for ALL new employees.

This training is great for Code Enforcement, Building Inspectors, Fire Inspectors, Health Inspectors, Vector, Animal Control, CSO's, Permit Techs, and all support roles. Even Directors have gone through this course!



IN-PERSON COSS TRAINING

Reach out to us to inquire about in-person large group trainings. This option is great for groups that are 30-50 per class and we can accommodate 100+ students. This option takes 2 full days of training and CEOSF flies our Lead Instructor Scott Kirshner out to your agency to teach the class.

This option is great for the personal feel where students get to interact with the instructor throughout the 2-day training. Email us: info@codeofficersafety.org

Contact Us



Newsletter

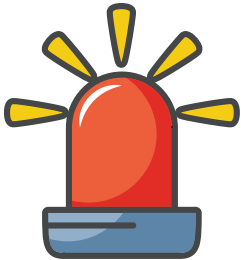
Please contact us if you have a question regarding our newsletter, would like to see a specific topic in the next one, or would like to be a contributor.

For general questions & newsletter requests: info@CodeOfficerSafety.org



Partnerships

If you would like to become a recognized partner as an association that supports us or as a donor, then please contact Justin Edson at justin@codeofficersafety.org



Body Armor Donation Requests

Are you a Code Enforcement Officer in need of body armor and either can't afford it or your agency does not provide one? Please fill out our Request A Vest form at www.codeofficersafety.org/requestavest



Remember to Report

The data we collect is dependent on you reporting incidents when they occur. The data is used by state associations and jurisdictions to make a case on officer safety legislation and equipment. Whether you were threatened, assaulted, stalked, or attacked by an animal; it is all important data. We keep your information and agency information private.

www.CodeOfficerSafety.org