

## Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation



# OFFICER SAFETY NEWSLETTER



## Welcome

Fall 2021 - CEOSF celebrates one year as a Foundation! We are excited to see what is ahead and continue to advocate for the safety of our profession. The overwhelming support and interest in our Code Official Safety Specialist (COSS) certification program is truly humbling. CEOSF also welcomed several new volunteers onto the team. And we continue to look for more! If you are interested in getting involved in the Foundation, just reach out to us!

### Our Mission Statement:

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

### Sponsors



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## CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER SAFETY FOUNDATION

[www.CodeOfficerSafety.org](http://www.CodeOfficerSafety.org)

# CODE OFFICIAL SAFETY SPECIALIST (COSS)

The National Standard on Code Official Safety - 15 hours of virtual instruction on Officer Safety topics where participants get certified.



### OPTION 1 LIVE WEBINAR

Earn your COSS designation by watching all 5 courses live with our instructor. You will have a chance to ask questions, receive the PDF workbooks, and get certified. Classes are every two weeks from January to early March 2022.

Jan 12, Jan 26, Feb 9, Feb 23, Mar 9

### OPTION 2 ON DEMAND

Watch the recorded five courses on your own time within a 30 day period. You will have access to all the workbooks and exams to get certified. On demand begins December 1st and you can sign-up anytime to get certified.

Starts December 1st



#### Topics that Matter

- Tactical Mindset
- Fear Management
- Verbal De-escalation
- Three Phases of a Contact
- Surviving a Violent Encounter



#### Get Credit

Our classes count for ICC CEU's and several state associations also recognize our classes for credit. Total of 15 hours means 1.5 CEU's for ICC.



#### Certification

Don't just go to a training where they talk on the surface. Get in-depth, critical, and expert training by vetted instructors. The COSS certification is one to be proud of!

**DISCOUNTED  
AT ONLY \$250**



PREFERRED  
EDUCATION  
PROVIDER

[www.codeofficersafety.org/certification](http://www.codeofficersafety.org/certification)

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# Welcome Our New Representatives!



## JODI WELCH - REGION 5

Jodi will represent the states of IN, KY, MI, and OH. She is an Ordinance Enforcement Officer in Michigan. Jodi is currently in our inaugural COSS class! When asked why she supports CEOSF, she said "In this challenging time, the support for Code Inspectors safety and awareness is vital both to those in the field and our communities. As someone who has 15+ years in law enforcement and code compliance, I feel it is essential for Code Inspectors to be prepared with tactical knowledge and tools to serve their communities to the best of their abilities. As a Code Inspector I directly impact personal property, which can create a negative public opinion and possible confrontation situation. I support CEOSF for raising awareness of the dangers within the Code profession, to help better prepare fellow inspectors/officials to provide a higher standard of professionalism."

## CHRISTOPHER ALLEN - REGION 7

Chris will represent the states of DE, MD, NJ, PA, VA, and WV. He is currently a Code Compliance Inspector III in Maryland. Chris is currently in our inaugural COSS class! When asked why he supports CEOSF, he responded "I support the CEOSF because they are raising awareness and training for code enforcement professionals across the country. As with many professions, code enforcement professionals can often be targeted while performing our duties and we all must ensure our personal safety to get home safe each night. "



## JENNIFER DAMMANN - REGION 9

Jennifer will represent the states of FL, AL, MS, and LA. She is a Code Enforcement Official in Florida. Jennifer is currently in our inaugural COSS class! When asked why she supports CEOSF, she said "My motivation behind volunteering for the Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation is ensuring that our profession goes home safe. Law Enforcement has the tools and training they need to assist their daily functions, but for years, I have not only received death threats from the Public, but have watched others receive the same, with little or no training on how to react to such threats. It is more than just "walking away" when you feel uncomfortable, it's having the knowledge and skills to know and be aware of when to not even approach. When I discovered the Foundation, my heart and soul lit up-that getting involved and being a part of this group could provide me the tools needed to promote not only fellow Code Enforcement Officer safety, but also to our Building Inspectors, Animal Services, Fire, and other municipalities, collectively. In Florida, Code Enforcement Officers, and the such are currently not considered "high risk positions", and they should be. The more involvement we have, the more education we can obtain, we can hopefully one day, keep us safe, and allow us to return to our Families, unscathed. "

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# Welcome Our New Representatives!



## **KORBIN WEESE - REGION 10**

Korbin will represent the states of TX, OK, and AR. He is a Code Enforcement Officer in Texas. When asked why he supports CEOSF, he stated "I support CEOSF because I believe everyone should have the resources and equipment to defend, prevent, and protect themselves in the event of the unthinkable occurring. I want my brothers and sisters to go home to their families every night after work. CEOSF provides the necessary curriculum and training that every Code Official should have. I will always advocate for the safety of my officers and those directly in the line of danger – CEOSF provides that information."

## **JEREMY KOVINCHICK - REGION 11**

Jeremy will represent the states of AZ, CO, NM, and UT. He is a Code Enforcement Officer in Colorado. He is currently in our inaugural COSS class! When asked why he supports CEOSF, he said "I support the CEOSF because I believe every officer should have access to the training, resources, and equipment to feel safe when they report to work each day."



## **VALERIE ESCALANTE TROESH - LEGAL DIRECTOR**

Valerie joined our team as our volunteer Legal Director. She will assist the Foundation as it relates to Code Enforcement and laws. Valerie is a partner at the law firm of Silver & Wright LLP in California and gives frequent trainings to code enforcement officers in various aspects of the law and practice through various groups, including the California Association of Code Enforcement Officers. When asked why she supports CEOSF, she said "Code enforcement officer safety should be a top priority given the important work our CEOs do. Helping CEOs get the protection they deserve in court helped me see first-hand the great impact the law has on our teams. CEOSF is already making strides in officer safety and I wanted to be part of that team to bring what expertise I have to help on a national scale. I look forward to connecting with colleagues near and far and advancing safety in our profession!"

## Interested in Volunteering?

Are you interested in volunteering with the Foundation? We are still looking for Regional Representatives and others who are passionate about moving this topic forward. No matter your skill set, reach out to us to inquire. Commitment is minimal in terms of time and you get to be a part of a growing non-profit Foundation. Check out our Volunteer page at [www.codeofficersafety.org/volunteers](http://www.codeofficersafety.org/volunteers)



# California - Code Enforcement Appreciation Week

## Proclamation

### Code Enforcement Officer Week – 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of October



**WHEREAS**, Code Enforcement Officers provide for the safety, health and welfare of citizens in communities throughout the state of California through the enforcement of local, state and federal laws and ordinances dealing with various issues of building, zoning, housing, animal control, environmental, health and life safety; and

**WHEREAS**, Code Enforcement Officers have challenging and demanding roles and often do not receive recognition for the job they do in improving quality of life for residents and businesses of local communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the role of many Code Enforcement Officers has expanded in recent years with jurisdictions increasingly relying on the expertise and training of Code of Enforcement Officers in their communities, and

**WHEREAS**, Code Enforcement Officers are dedicated, highly-qualified and highly trained professionals who share the goals of preventing neighborhood deterioration, enhancing communities and ensuring safety, and preserving property values through knowledge, training and application of housing, zoning, and nuisance laws; and

**WHEREAS**, Code Enforcement Officers often have a highly-visible role in the communities they serve and regularly interact with the public and a variety of federal, state, county, and local officials in their capacity as a Code Enforcement Officer; and

**WHEREAS**, the state of California wants to recognize and honor Code Enforcement Officers that serve our community and acknowledge their role in leading the way to improve quality of life within our communities; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** by the California State Legislature, that second week of October be known as Code Enforcement Officer Appreciation Week in the State of California and call upon its residents to join in recognizing and expressing their appreciation for the dedication and service by the individuals who serve as our Code Enforcement Officers.

# Colorado - Code Enforcement Appreciation Month



## October is Code Enforcement Officer Appreciation Month

The CACEO Board of Directors wants to thank each and every one of our members for the tireless work and dedication you contribute to our profession. Your professionalism and effort is undoubtedly appreciated by your communities. Keep up all the great work you do each and every day.



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# Elements of Violence: Time-Distance-Environment

by Scott Kirshner, M.Ed., SAS-AP®

All violent encounters are bound by the elements of time, distance, and environment. Having an understanding of these elements can help you plan for and respond to contacts that turn violent. Acts of violence often occur very fast, very close, and are very dynamic. Many times these attacks occur with little to no warning. In regard to an ambush attack, you must survive the ambush in order to respond. An ambush is the worst-case scenario.

Realities of Violence	Elements	Response
Very Fast	Time	Time: Is the Same for Everyone; Use Time Effectively
Very Close	Distance	Distance: Control it
Very Dynamic	Environment	Environment: Use it to your advantage

Let's look at the basics of these elements to see how they work together and how you can best be prepared to prevail should you encounter a violent attack. Following is a high-level overview to introduce you to the foundation of these concepts. There are many other layers to be explored.

## TIME

Violent encounters often happen very fast which speaks directly to the element of time. Being that time is the same for everyone the person who acts first or uses their time more effectively tends to have an advantage when it comes to surviving an attack. Remember that your actions must be legally justified and within the confines of department policy. There are many factors that can slow down or completely stop your response to an attack. One common factor is hesitation. Oftentimes this is due to not knowing what actions you are permitted to take to protect yourself and not knowing the application of department policy or state law. These issues can be mitigated through training. When you encounter violence you must respond in a timely and decisive manner or you will rapidly be overcome by the attack. During a violent attack you cannot be thinking about what department policy allows.

## DISTANCE

In cases of violence where a weapon is not involved the threat must be in close proximity to injure you during an attack. As a code professional you will almost always be working with a citizen at a distance that is unsafe should violence erupt. If a citizen wants to harm you he will use distance to his advantage by getting into a position that allows him to be in an effective range for an attack. Code professionals must always be aware of distance and control it as much as possible. The more distance you have between yourself and a threat the more time you have to assess what is happening and respond appropriately. In such a situation we are generally talking time increments of less than one second. Increased distance buys you more time and even though the time increment is very small it may be enough for you to act sooner which increases your chance of a successful outcome.

## ENVIRONMENT

The environment, whether indoors or outside, will dictate the attributes of the space you inhabit. This can impact your ability to move, place a barrier between you and the threat, utilize cover or concealment, and use weapons of opportunity if available. Weather can also be a factor if it is raining or snowing. Ground conditions can be impacted by wet, snow, dirt, and debris. Other people in the environment are also a factor.

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# Elements of Violence: Time-Distance-Environment

## SITUATIONAL AWARENESS – THE GLUE THAT BINDS

Maintaining Situational Awareness helps with the elements of time, distance, and environment by having an understanding of the space you inhabit and people in that space so you can increase your perception speed and decrease your reaction time.

- The sooner you see a threat and respond the better chance you have for a positive outcome. (Time)
- The more effective you are in controlling distance the more difficult it is for a threat to injure you. (Distance)
- The better understanding you have of the environment the more likely you are to use it to your advantage. (Environment)

Situational awareness is not a guarantee that you can successfully avoid all acts of violence. But not having situational awareness significantly increases the odds that you will be victimized should a threat decide to attack. The reality is that you cannot respond to a threat you do not know exists.

The concepts of situational awareness are very easy to understand. The application of those concepts takes time and practice in order to become proficient. Situational awareness is routinely taught and discussed at the conceptual level but it is the functional application where personal safety can be increased. Never confuse simplicity for easy. When you have awareness and choose to be proactive with your safety you can be more successful in the space between stimulus and response. When the stimulus is violence your rapid response is critical.

### About the author

*Scott Kirshner, M.Ed., SAS-AP® 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. The author can be reached at: [info@dedicatedthreatsolutions.com](mailto:info@dedicatedthreatsolutions.com) or to learn more visit: [www.dedicatedthreatsolutions.com](http://www.dedicatedthreatsolutions.com)*



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## Cast Your Historic Vote!

CEOSF is taking the initiative to finally solidify a thin line flag color for ALL Life Safety Inspectors across the country. There are three colors to choose from and we are excited to see the amount of votes coming in. This color will represent all Code Enforcement, Building, Housing, Health, and Fire Inspectors for their efforts to keep their communities safe. The time is now to be represented!

Cast your vote: [www.codeofficersafety.org/thinline](http://www.codeofficersafety.org/thinline)

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# Understanding The Sovereign Citizen Threat (Pt. 4)

**by Kirk Palmer, Master Code Officer (GA)**

In our last installment, I discussed the incident that put Sovereign Citizens on Law Enforcement's radar: "The West Memphis (Arkansas) Incident." The perpetrators of that incident, Jerry and Joe Kane, were reputed members of, or associated with, a Sovereign group known as RuSA. RuSA is arguably the most dangerous Sovereign Group operating in the United States. There have been many documented cases of its members being involved in "deadly force" encounters with Law Enforcement. Who are they? What do they believe? Read on...

According to the FBI/DHS: RuSA is an extremely anti-government, radical "Patriot" movement. RuSA is an acronym for "Republic for the united States of America." The small "u" in RuSA signifies that the group is comprised of independent, "free state" republics, loosely joined in a confederation. Its members claim to be "constitutionalists" that represent the "real" American government. They argue that the "real" United States of America was replaced in 1871 with a "corporation." This was the result of the ratification of the 14th Amendment in 1868.

*RuSA members refer to themselves as "Rangers" and often wear Law Enforcement type tactical khakis and polo shirts with badges. Officers should always expect them to be armed with sidearms at a minimum; however, officers should assume they have semi-auto, "assault style" rifles close-at-hand. RuSA members are notorious for conducting counter-surveillance against law enforcement and other government officials such as Mayors, Council Members, Commissioners and even Judges. Therefore, never, ever leave any documents in your trash that contain personal information.*



*To the left of this paragraph is the Sovereign Citizens "Title 4" Flag. RuSA Members may have stickers of it on their vehicles, near the front door of their homes or fly small replicas in their yards. The flag is a variation of the American flag in which the stripes are vertical, not horizontal, and the stars are blue-on-white instead of white-on-blue. If you see one of these flags it's a great indicator that it's owner, or the one displaying it, has Sovereign ideals. EXTREME CAUTION ADVISED!*

RuSA members sanction more Sovereign Citizen seminars than any other Sovereign group. The topics normally include tax evasion techniques, mortgage elimination techniques, procurement and production of fraudulent documents and how to file false liens (paper terrorism). Many identify with militia movements.

On June 6, 2014, in my current jurisdiction, Forsyth County (Georgia): Dennis Marx, a sovereign citizen and reputed member of RuSA, attacked the Forsyth County Courthouse with a cache of weapons before being killed by Forsyth County Deputies. Marx had a long running feud with the Forsyth County Sheriff, alleging civil rights violations. In an attempt to get the last act, Marx had rigged his home to explode when entered by law enforcement after his death. **Their willingness to be ruthless should never be taken lightly!**

## About the Author

*Kirk Palmer is a Master Code Officer (GA) with 26 years of public safety experience. He is currently the Code Compliance Supervisor for Forsyth County, Georgia. He also serves as the Sergeant-at-Arms for the Georgia Association of Code Enforcement Officials (GACE) and is an instructor for GACE as well.*



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# Best Practices On Documenting Threats And Possible Measures for Court Action to Obtain Protection

by **Valerie D. Escalante Troesh, J.D. & L.L.M.**

From various publications, studies, news reports, to the information collected and shared by California Code Enforcement Officer Foundation, one thing is clear: too many of our code enforcement officers receive dangerous threats to their safety while on the field, even sometimes off-work. It is imperative that enforcement officers use their skill and know-how to document these threats for their safety—it will create a record of the threats, can help inform colleagues and put them on alert, it can even be utilized in Court actions should legal intervention become necessary. Enforcement officers are trained and informed on how to document their code enforcement cases, so using those skills to document threats of harm will serve officers in their role and their public agency. While public agencies may have different practices and policies on how to document threats, some may have none, the same should hold true across the board: create a record with key details. This may mean in an email to a supervisor, in a written or electronic case log, or other method for your agency's documentation systems; if you are unsure, confirm with your public agency so there may be uniformity and clarity in your department.

## Context

One key to documenting threats is to lay the background as to how the threatening situation arose. So, note key details such as:

- Location, date and time;
- Purpose of contact, e.g., you were conducting a follow up public right-of-way inspection as per your duties to follow up on compliance with an administrative citation.
- If you have had prior incidents with the aggressor in the past or other history.

## Witnesses

Ensure you document any witnesses who may have overheard or seen the threatening situation. For example:

- Agency participants, e.g., anyone from your public agency that may have accompanied you on the inspection;
- Public observers, e.g., members of the public in the vicinity, e.g., neighbors who were present.

## Your Observation And What You Experienced

Making sure you document what was said and what occurred is imperative. Memories fade, so having a written record will help tremendously. What you should try to note:

- Any verbal exchange and threatening words said;
  - This could include any efforts on your part to de-escalate the situation and the aggressor's continued threatening words.
- Demeanor of the aggressor, e.g., tense hands, heavy foot steps when walking towards you, angry or red face, loud voice, waving of their arms, heavy breathing;
- Any physical threats from the aggressor, e.g., blocking your path to exit;
- Situational awareness, e.g., was it dark outside, were you alone with the aggressor, did the aggressor have any weapons or access to weapons you could perceive, was there a size differential between you and the aggressor;
- How you felt and any changes to your feelings over the course of the encounter or changes in circumstance, e.g., intimidated when aggressor first yelled, then scared when aggressor started making personal attacks against you and your family, extremely fearful when aggressor claimed he had a gun.
- Your reaction and how you extricated yourself from the situation, e.g., left immediately in agency issued vehicle.

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# Best Practices On Documenting Threats And Possible Measures for Court Action to Obtain Protection - Continued

When your safety is no longer in jeopardy and you are in a safe location it is imperative to document what occurred and what was said. Having such contemporaneous note is generally recognized as more trustworthy than documentation put together later, weeks or months after the fact. Having such contemporaneous note is generally recognized as more trustworthy than documentation put together later, weeks or months after the fact.

Documenting threats made mindful of the above will help complete the full picture of the threat made, and if the threat ever proceeds into a legal matter, will help any attorney understand the full context of the situation to convey the situation to the Court. It will also help identify potential witnesses that may be needed. It will also help if any criminal investigation and enforcement commences.

State law may offer code enforcement officers formal protection from individuals who make such threats, often when employers take the initiative to seek protection, i.e. your public agency. For example, under California law, courts can make orders to protect employees from unlawful violence or credible threats of violence at the workplace; this Workplace Violence Restraining Order ("WVRO") must be requested by an employer on behalf of an employee who needs protection and the WVRO can last up to three years, may also extend to protect family members of the employees and other employees at the employee's workplace. (California Code of Civil Procedure, § 527.8). Having the proper documentation of the threat will help the public agency's attorney establish the legally required showing to obtain the WVRO, including "unlawful violence" or "credible threat of violence", which is defined as "a knowing and willful statement or course of conduct that would place a reasonable person in fear for his or her safety, or the safety of his or her immediate family, and that serves no legitimate purpose."

Other states may have their own statutory schemes to protect individuals from threats; consulting with legal counsel in those states is best to determine what if any protections may be in place. (For similar statutes to California's that may be currently in effect, see e.g., Arizona Revised Statute, § 12-1810; Arkansas Code, Labor and Industrial Relations, § 11-5-115; Georgia Code Annotated, Labor and Industrial Relations, §34-1-7; Indiana Code, Civil Law and Procedure, § 34-26-6; Nevada Revised Statute, §33.200-360; North Carolina General Statute, § 95-261.)[1]

There also may be criminal prosecutions under State law in criminal court if the threats rise to the level of criminal conduct. Documenting the threat, particularly if you determine to submit a police report, will help give the detail to the law enforcement agency to investigate the case and possibly recommend criminal prosecution.

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*[1] This list may not be exhaustive of all other State laws. This author is not a legal practitioner outside of California, thus consult a practitioner in your state of interest to confirm what laws, if any, may apply and be in effect.*

*This article is not intended to provide legal advice. It is provided for informational purposes only.*

## About the Author

*Valerie D. Escalante Troesh is a specialized code enforcement attorney and partner with Silver & Wright Law LLP in California. She has extensive experience litigating in California and Federal courts and has represented public agencies in matters ranging from affirmative nuisance abatement actions, receiverships, to defensive suits when code and law enforcement officers are challenged in their duties on the field. Valerie has also helped public agencies obtain WVROs in California State Court to protect employees from threats of violence in the workplace. She is also the Legal Director of Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation. The author can be reached at: VEscalanteTroesh@SilverWrightLaw.com.*

# Code Official Safety Specialist (COSS)

Our inaugural Code Official Safety Specialist certification program is almost done! We are honored to have Directors, Building Officials, Fire Inspectors, Code Enforcement, and Building Inspectors in this class of well over 100 students and from dozens of states. When we started the Foundation, we never thought we would be hosting our own classes. But, due to a lack of quality officer safety training out there, we decided to put the time and effort in to develop solid curriculum with an experienced instructor. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive! We thank our students for making their safety a priority and for supporting our non-profit Foundation.



CEOSF now has two options for professionals to get certified across the country. In both options you will have 15 hours of instruction, detailed PDF workbooks 50-80 pages in length, and ICC credits. Get certified today!

- **Option 1 - LIVE WEBINARS** - Participate in live webinars from January through March every other Wednesday 12pm-3pm EST and ask questions to the instructor.
- **Option 2 - ON DEMAND** - Watch recorded courses on your own time! Whether at work or on your weekend, go through all 5 courses and take the exams at your pace in a 30 day period. You will have all the same workbooks and exams as the live webinars. Starts December 1st!

**Discounted price of only \$250 for all 5 classes.**

- Tactical Mindset - (3 hours)
- Fear Management - (3 hours)
- Verbal De-escalation - (3 hours)
- 3 Phases of a Contact - (3 hours)
- Surviving a Violent Encounter - (3 hours)

**GET CERTIFIED.**

Earn your COSS designation and ICC CEU's! Attend our live webinar series for a total of 15 hours of instruction.

Learn. Improve. Practice.

- Tactical Mindset 1/12
- Fear Management 1/26
- Verbal De-escalation 2/9
- Three Phases of a Contact 2/23
- Surviving a Violent Encounter 3/9

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- Tactical Mindset
- Fear Management
- Verbal De-escalation
- Three Phases of a Contact
- Surviving a Violent Encounter

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# Recent Incidents

**July 2nd (N/A)** - Code Enforcement Officer was physically assaulted during a property maintenance inspection.

**July 9th (FL)** - According to Opa-locka police, a code enforcement officer's truck has been shot at with bullets. Police say the officer was parked on the corner of 2005 Ali Baba Avenue in Opa-locka when she was shot at. The code enforcement officer was not injured.

**July 16th (TX)** - At around 8:30am this morning, Fort Worth police officers along with City Code Compliance workers knocked on the man's door to resolve an ongoing issue regarding his high grass. Authorities were serving a warrant and were attempting to notify the homeowner of the necessary action. They were unable to reach the homeowner. As an independent lawncare service began mowing the yard, the homeowner opened a window from the front of his home and starting firing shots at the lawncare workers and officers. None of the lawncare workers or officers were injured. They moved back from the house and called for additional officers. Eventually, around 10:30am, SWAT was notified to assist in the apprehension of the armed suspect.

**July 30th (GA)** - Code Enforcement Officer observed vehicles parked on the lawn. As he approached to take photos, a man came out of the garage and became irate. He even smacked the Ipad out of his hand. The Officer backed up to gain distance and radioed for help. Violator was arrested for assault.

**July 30th (GA)** - Code Enforcement Officer had a dog unleashed on her while conducting an inspection.

**August 11th (CA)** - On 8/11/21 at approximately 1815, I was talking with a co-worker in the rear parking lot of city hall. A vehicle entered the lot and drove through very slowly. As the vehicle approached us, I could see the driver glaringly directly at me. As he drove by us, he slowed and made direct eye contact with me for several seconds in a rather menacing manner. I recognized the driver immediately as the tenant of a property where I had a very long and contentious case last year of which his actions contributed significantly to the problems. As he drove away, I could see he was still glaring at me in his sideview mirror. He slowly drove out of the lot, glaring at me the entire time, and turned onto the street. He continued to glare at me while driving towards the four-way stop. I called out to him by name hoping that would acknowledge me thus verifying his identity and also in hopes that it may dissuade him from any future menacing activities. He acknowledged me by saying only "Hey" as he drove through the intersection. I later drove through his neighborhood and saw him and the same vehicle, his assigned company vehicle, parked in front of his address. I have seen that same vehicle parked at his house during my normal travels in his neighborhood.

**September 14th (IL)** - I responded to a complaint at a rental property (we do tri-yearly and complaint inspections on interior and exterior rentals) back in February. Long story short, citations were issued and this has been in our adjudicative court for 7 months. An attorney was hired by the owners of the apartment building to represent them a couple months ago. An inspection was scheduled for this morning, 9/14/21, with the attorney and he was present for the inspection. During the inspection, we were not able to gain access to the two units we needed. There have been a lot of issues between ownership and the tenants. As I went to leave, the owner's son blocked the vestibule door leading to the outside and started recording me. He started yelling about what just happened and wanted me to explain everything for the video. I asked him to stop recording and I started to exit the building. He then stepped in front of me, forcing me to back up, and he slammed the door shut. He continued to yell questions in an aggressive manner and refused to let me leave. I did have a witness with me who had started to call 911 but the attorney stepped in and physically moved him out of the way so we could leave. The entire time walking back to my vehicle, he had the phone in my face, yelling questions at me. As we got to the vehicle, the attorney once again had to physically move him away from the vehicle to allow us to leave. A police report was later filed to document the incident and going forward police will be with us when we need to inspect the building.



# 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. It is exciting to gain the support of the International Code Council (ICC). The Board of Directors met with their executives and were thrilled to hear of ICC's passion for the safety of the professionals in the building safety industry.



## In Memory

From October through December we remember and honor those who have died serving their communities.

October 14th – **WILLIS "ANDY" WINGERT III**, California  
(1st anniversary - Medical)

November 13th – **RODNEY MORALES**, Colorado  
(13th anniversary - Murder)

November 27th – **MICHAEL TRIPUS**, Pennsylvania  
(3rd anniversary - Murder)

December 24th – **DON JUENEMANN**, Minnesota  
(24th anniversary - Murder)



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# CA Senate Bill 296: Code Enforcement Safety Standards...Finally.



by **Matthew Silver, Esq., CCEO**

Code enforcement officers all over the United States increasingly are being tasked with community quality of life and safety duties that put them at risk. In addition, in my states, with the public shift away from policing, code enforcement officers are asked to fill the gap, and consequently, are dealing with nuisances and other issues that were traditionally in the realm of police departments.

As a result, code enforcement officers face heightened physical threats as well as health threats. By definition, code enforcement officers put themselves in dangerous situations dealing with problem issues like substandard housing, bed bug and rodent infestations, mold and lead abatement, illegal cannabis grows, environmental hazards and discharges, and seeking compliance from hostile violators, some of whom have criminal histories and do not appreciate government inspectors on their property or otherwise requiring them to comply with the law.

Nonetheless, despite the increased risk thrust upon code enforcement officers by virtue of their job duties, it is no secret that code enforcement officers in many jurisdictions lack basic protections. Most code enforcement officers are not peace officers, almost none in California are, and in many places there is little desire to be such – a reflection of the distinct roles and purposes peace officers and code enforcement officers serve. Non-sworn officers, however, still need reasonable protections in order to do their jobs, and if policymakers want to encourage people to enter the profession.

Yet, very few jurisdictions have safety standards specifically applicable to code enforcement officers. This leaves them entirely without safety protocols, training and tools in some agencies, and in others, are subject to inadequate safety standards applicable to dissimilar jobs like building inspectors, planning staff and the like.

Without safety protections for code enforcement officers, they in turn, cannot protect the community or carry out the many priorities reflected in the laws and policies of city councils, county supervisors and state legislatures.

In California, the California Association of Code Enforcement Officers (CACEO), in partnership with Senator Monique Limon, has sought to address this issue with Senate Bill (SB) 296. This bill is simple but effective: every city or county that employs a code enforcement officer must develop safety standards that are specific to code enforcement officers and the threats they face in their jurisdiction.

In California, with its 482 cities and 57 counties, a one-sized-fits-all program would not work; code enforcement officers deal with different issues and face different hazards in each jurisdiction. Further, each employer may have different, but equally effective, approaches to safety standards specific to enforcement officers.

Right now, SB 296 sits on Governor Newsom's desk awaiting signature to become law. It received rare unanimous approval from the Legislature, although it took a significant effort to ensure it passed the Appropriations Committees in both legislative chambers.

Nonetheless, CACEO hopes this will be a model for much-needed and overdue safety standards code enforcement officers. Protect the protectors, so they can protect communities. It's about time.

## About the Author

*Matthew Silver is a partner with Silver & Wright LLP, a law firm specializing in code enforcement, receiverships, land use, zoning and municipal defense. Matt is also a Certified Code Enforcement Officer and serves as 2nd Vice President and Legislative Director for the California Association of Code Enforcement Officers.*

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# CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor



The Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation (CEOSF) is proud to announce the launch of the CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor (COSCI) program to recognize and acknowledge code professionals and trainers who possess qualifications to provide officer safety and survival instruction. These individuals exhibit “best practices” in training delivery by being highly recommended by Department Directors and by maintaining their training skills through the completion of continuing professional education instructor course work. This program is for all professional trainers to include code enforcement officers, building inspectors, fire inspectors, housing inspectors, zoning inspectors, health inspectors, animal control officers, peace officers, sheriff deputies, academic instructors, private trainers, and others interested in improving code enforcement officer safety/survival training and individual instructional skill sets.

The CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor (COSCI) program recognizes and acknowledges qualified officer safety and survival instructors who provide high-quality best practices training to code professionals. The Foundation believes it is extremely important to have instructors who are qualified, vetted, and experienced to facilitate courses on officer safety/survival especially as the topic of officer safety is becoming more prevalent within the code enforcement profession. Time in position, in and of itself, is not a qualification standard to be a trainer especially relating to officer safety. It is also easy for “instructors” to facilitate officer safety classes without having the proper credentials and experience to teach on the topic. The Foundation views such practices as not only unsafe but morally and ethically wrong. By setting a certification standard based on documented instructor qualifications and experience the Foundation can recommend to the profession, with confidence, that training professionals who have the COSCI designation are qualified to facilitate training on officer safety for code professionals. All trainers who have COSCI certification have:

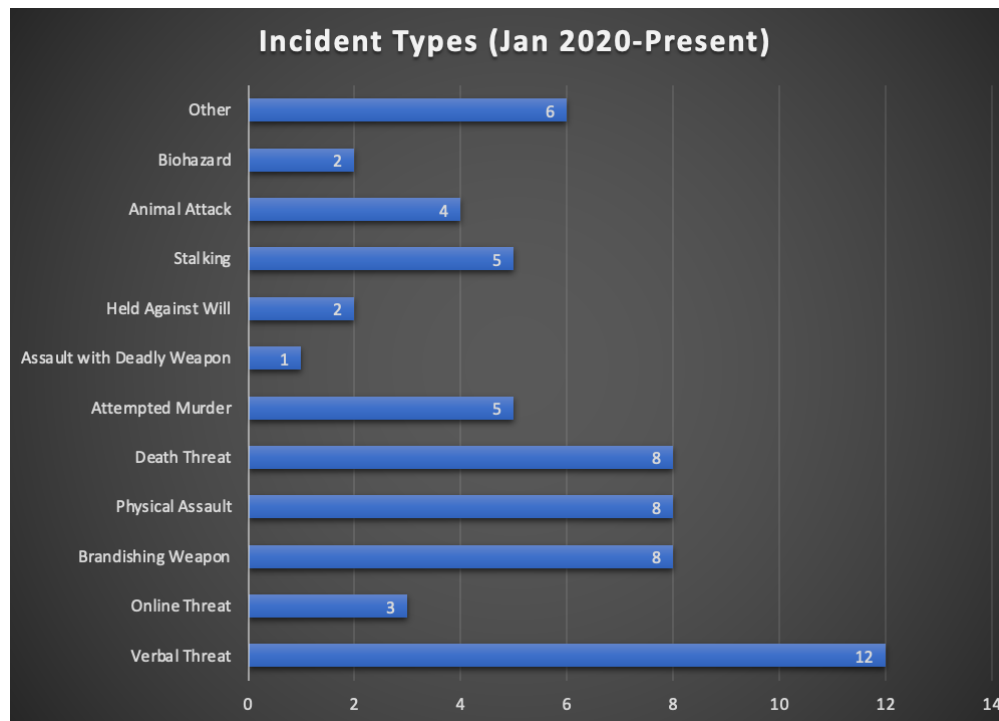
- Successfully completed a general instructor certification program and provided documented proof of completion
- More than 3 years of experience facilitating courses on officer safety/survival
- Provided documentation of officer safety and survival training certifications and courses completed
- Endorsements from a Code Director, POST Director, or Law Enforcement Academy Director, or three references
- A commitment to continuing education regarding instructor development
- An unwavering passion for officer safety

## What are the benefits of becoming a CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor (COSCI)?

- Receive an identification card with the CEOSF seal documenting your Officer Safety Certified Instructor status and expiration date
- Receive a CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor certificate, suitable for framing
- Post your picture and biographical information on your CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor webpage with links back to your webpage if applicable
- Use the COSCI Badge for emails or business cards.
- Use the CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructor Program acronym COSCI on your business cards, letterhead, email signature, etc. Example: Justin Edson, CCEO, COSS, COSCI
- “Charter member” status designated on ID card for the first 50 members

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# Incident Data



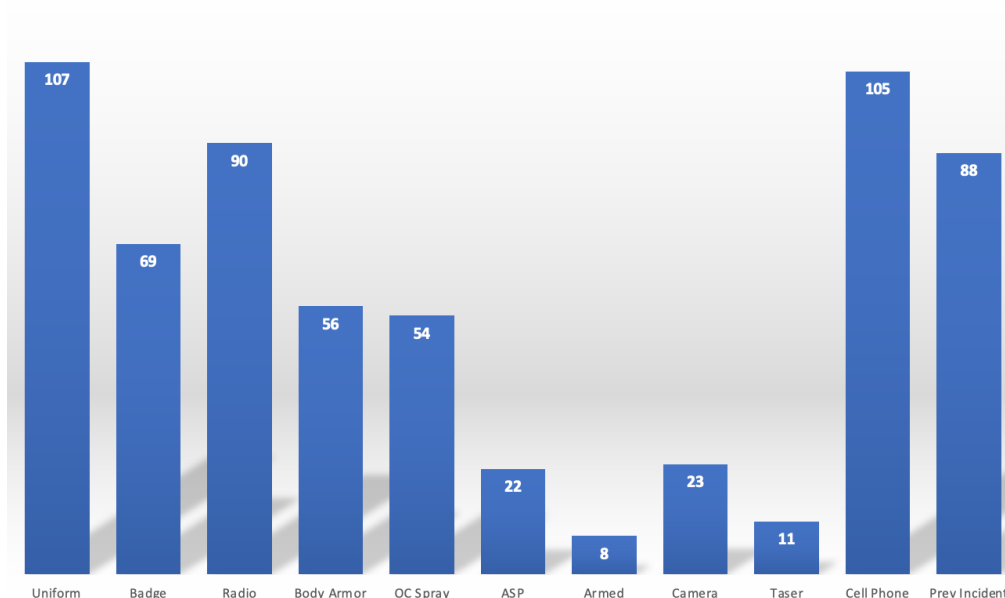
This is data from January 2020 to present that has been reported to CEOSF. A total of 64 incidents have been reported to us nationally during this period. 34 incidents reported in 2020 and 30 incidents so far in 2021. We have an updated feed of these incidents and their details on our "Statistics" page on the website. Please do not forget to report any incidents that occur to you. As you can see on our website, we keep everything confidential and only share the state, date, and description.

Report incidents: <https://www.codeofficersafety.org/report-incident>

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# Equipment Survey Results

Equipment Survey Results





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# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.CodeOfficerSafety.org)**