

Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation



OFFICER SAFETY NEWSLETTER



Welcome

SPRING 2024 - Over the last several months, CEOSF has continued to build relationships and interact with professionals across the country. We are excited to see more volunteers join our team to promote safety and get involved! CEOSF received the 2023 Excellence in Workplace Culture for Nonprofits Award! If this first quarter is any indication, 2024 will be another strong year for us. Our volunteers will be attending several conferences and regional trainings in the coming months. We will see you out there!

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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Sponsors



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.



Virginia Association
of Zoning Officials



MISSOURI
ASSOCIATION
OF CODE
ENFORCEMENT



Welcome Our New Regional Representatives



JESSICA GREEN (Oklahoma)

Jessica was appointed as the Region 10 Representative by the Board of Directors in March 2024. Jessica is a Senior Code Enforcement Officer in Oklahoma and serves as 3rd Vice President of the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association (OCEA). She earned his Code Official Safety Specialist (COSS).



BRIAN HENRY (Oklahoma)

Brian was appointed as the Region 10 Representative by the Board of Directors in March 2024. He is a Community Development Director in Oklahoma and currently serves as 1st Vice President of the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association (OCEA).

NEW PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCED!

The Missouri Association of Code Enforcement (MACE) partnered with the Foundation to promote officer safety in the profession! We commend the MACE Board of Directors for their support and for partnering with us to assist their members.



**MISSOURI
ASSOCIATION
OF CODE
ENFORCEMENT**

Body Armor Donated this Quarter - 5 Vests



59 Body Armor Vests Total = \$41,300+ 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!



2024 EduCode - Las Vegas

We are grateful for our relationship with EduCode and their support for having us booth each year! Shout out to Alan! Our CEOSF Regional Representatives that attended included: Jodi Welch, Layne Chamberlain, and James Straws! We also had Matthew Meanea and Brian Morris attending the conference.



COSCI Teaching 4 hours of Officer Safety Training

CEOSF Officer Safety Certified Instructors Darrell Revier and Tim Sun presented on High Risk Case Management and Understanding Animal Behaviors. Over 30 participants took part in both sessions. A brand new body armor vest was selected to be donated to a Code Enforcement Officer in California. We want to thank the American Association of Code Enforcement (AACE), especially Tana Bryant, for their support and partnership each year!



Live COSS in Huntington Beach, CA

In March, we hosted a live Code Official Safety Specialist training in Southern California. Lead Instructor Scott Kirshner provided 2 days of instruction to 40 students. The group was made up of Code Enforcement, Fire Prevention, Building Inspectors, and Public Works. Our farthest traveler was from Washington D.C. Building Department. Vice President Tim Sun and Region 1 Representative Cheynne Sanderson were in attendance as well. A special thank you to the City of Huntington Beach and the Code Enforcement Manager, Jimmy Hoang, for their amazing hospitality!



CEOSF Receives Excellence in Workplace Culture Award!

[Awards.com](https://www.awards.com) initiated the "Excellence in Workplace Culture" program to recognize and celebrate organizations that prioritize and excel in fostering positive workplace environments. This program was launched to acknowledge the crucial role that Workplace Culture plays in driving organizational success, attracting top talent, and fostering employee engagement and satisfaction. By honoring companies that prioritize their employees' well-being and create inclusive cultures, [Awards.com](https://www.awards.com) aims to inspire others to emulate these best practices and elevate workplace standards across industries.



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
(80th anniversary - Murder)

April 13th – **Charles Askew**, Texas
(70th anniversary - Murder)

April 17th – **Mickey Wright**, Tennessee
(23rd anniversary - Murder)

April 29th – **Jacqueline Summer Beard**, Alabama
(2nd anniversary - Murder)

April 30th – **Andrea “Dre” Garcia**, California
(2nd anniversary - Medical)

January 24th – **Joe Schier**, Oklahoma
(2nd anniversary - COVID-19)

June 1st – **Hugo Rojas**, Wisconsin
(4th anniversary - COVID-19)

June 1st – **Jean J.J. Tellier**, Quebec
(62nd anniversary - Murder)

June 13th – **Michael “Pee Wee” Walker**, Texas
(19th anniversary - Murder)

June 21st – **Jean Hillery**, California
(24th anniversary - Murder)

June 21st – **Tom Quadros**, California
(24th anniversary - Murder)

June 21st – **Bill Shaline**, California
(24th anniversary - Murder)



Physical Fitness - It's Not Optional

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

“You've got to keep yourself in prime physical condition, because fatigue makes cowards of us all.”

Vince Lombardi, Super Bowl Winning Coach

As code enforcement professionals, we aren't usually called on to “chase someone through the hood” or wrestle an offender into handcuffs, but in order to remain effective, we should strive to be as physically fit as possible. Why? It just makes sense. Being physically fit helps the code officer both physically and mentally. On the physical side, it helps to control weight, combat certain physical ailments and diseases, and gives one confidence in handling a tense situation. Mentally, it reduces stress, improves mood, and boosts energy. Code enforcement is a stressful job. Code officials have to deal with politics, angry and aggressive citizens, aloof management and often the elements. Physical fitness, in this author's opinion, is the most neglected component of Officer Safety.

The statistics are alarming. In 2022, 77% of military-age young people could not join the military due to fitness issues. Most notably, obesity. Likewise, 42% of US adults are considered obese and have above-average incidences of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. Also, in 2022, 52% of government workers felt some degree of burnout on the job; workplace stress is estimated to contribute to 120,000 deaths per year! While being physically fit cannot address hereditary issues, it certainly can go a long way in addressing some of the physical and mental ailments mentioned.

Admit it, you often run into the ol' convenience store and grab some roller grill food and a sugary soft drink. Both contain two things most of us don't need: high-saturated fat and sugar. Nutrition is a must, not a maybe. It's been suggested that the “Mediterranean diet,” or a balanced diet high in fiber and low in sugar and saturated fat, is a good way to start. Don't forget hydration. Like nutrition, staying hydrated is a must, not a maybe: drink more water and less high-caffeine, high-sugar soft drinks. Always consume alcohol in moderation and avoid tobacco products.



When it comes to exercise, pick something you like to do and do it regularly. Walking, jogging, running, yoga, weight training, martial arts, or a combination thereof. Personally, I combine cardiovascular and strength training. I jog two miles twice per week and do a circuit workout of push-ups (25), crunches (33), dumbbell curls (15 reps), unweighted squats (25), and kettlebell shoulder raises (12 reps) three times per week. I perform three sets of the circuit for each workout, which last between 20 and 30 minutes per session. My heavy lifting days are way behind me. You don't have to attain Special Forces or Olympian fitness; rather, aim to get to a healthy weight and build some cardiovascular endurance.



Physical fitness is an important component of officer safety. Being in decent shape allows you to better respond to stressful situations, perform work more efficiently, reduce incidences of injury, recover from illness faster, and reduce stress and tension. Ask yourself: Could I defend myself from an irate citizen for 3 minutes while waiting for backup? If you're not sure, or the answer is no, then it's time to get serious about physical fitness. Until next time, stay alert and don't get hurt.



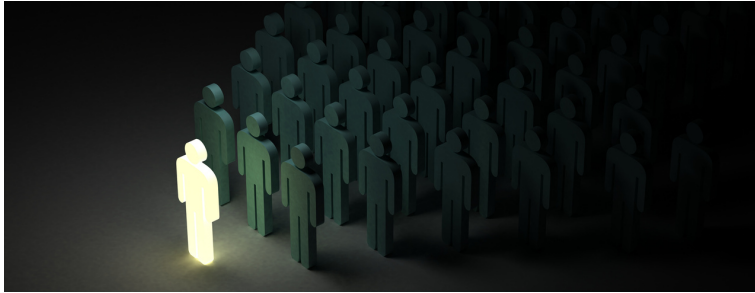
About the Author

Kirk Palmer, COSCI is a Master Code Officer (GA) with 28 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 and Gangs.

Make Officer Safety a Personal Goal

by Justin Edson, CCEA, COSS

We have one life to live. Live it to the fullest and count each day you wake up as a blessing. Working in government is a job and hopefully a passion for most of us. But it is not our life. I feel we need constant reminders to shake us loose from the daily grind of groundhogs day. I get in the routine of waking up and going to work. Whether you work four days or five; or you are an army of one or part of a team of a hundred; we get into the daily cycle of routines.



Some agencies have amazing leadership and political support where employee safety is seen as a priority. You might have access to extra training, equipment, and procedures that are well thought out. However, many are either solo officers for a small town or work for leadership that doesn't see dangers in the world we live in. In cases like this, I urge you to take YOUR SAFETY personal! This can include being strategic and smart about building support of safety in your organization or using the legal resources you have through your union and OSHA to push the risk management concern. The best advice I can share is be strategic, thoughtful, and focus on building bridges of ideas and not scorched earth. Build a consensus amongst your peers and start sharing data, incidents, and concerns with management. Start small with training like COSS and develop policies. Then work your way up to equipment.



Luckily we have seen some great reminders like "Every Inspection," or "Every Day, Every Contact," to remind us that every situation we are in is different than the last. Take your safety personal - how you think, how you act, situational awareness, and the proactive thought to stay alert (OODA loop). I think about my family and plans I have for the weekend or an upcoming trip. Those are the things that keep me in check so I don't fall into the routine of seeing every inspection as the same. When you head out to your first inspection or complaint of the day, think to yourself about your personal safety. Wear your seat belt, tell a colleague where you are going, and listen to your instincts when you make those contacts. Please use this article as a reminder to check yourself - are you taking your safety serious with every situation at work?

About the Author

Justin Edson is a Public Safety Manager in California and previously served as a Building, Neighborhood Services, and Code Enforcement Manager across several cities. He is an ICC Certified Code Enforcement Administrator and a POST Field Training Officer. Prior to his 8+ years in Code Enforcement, he was with a Police Department for nearly 10 years. Justin is currently the President of the Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation.

Instructors Corner

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

Training for Retention and Transfer in a Contextually Relevant Environment

The trainers chief responsibility is to capture, keep, and direct the student's attention in a manner that supports performance and learning.

The role of an officer safety instructor is important. The ability for a code official to learn is, in part, dependent on the instructors knowledge, skills, ability, experience, and competence to relay information and skills in a manner that leads to retention and transfer. The content of what is taught, how it is taught, and why it is taught are important factors that contribute to the code officials ability to avoid, de-escalate, or prevail in a violent encounter. This is a heavy responsibility for an officer safety instructor knowing that an officer's life may depend on the quality of instruction provided. Code officials who attend safety training courses require and demand that instructors be competent, qualified, and experienced. These are reasonable expectations.

CONTEXT RELEVANCE MATTERS

A lack of transfer of skill from the practice environment to the criterion environment is often the result of incongruent learning where the context of the first is uncoupled from the second.

Effective instructors must understand the subject matter and deliver information and skills that facilitates retention and transfer. Retention means the knowledge or skill remains in memory and the officer can recall and implement the skill when required. Transfer is the ability to perform a skill in a similar but different (novel) context. Retention and transfer are highly dependent on training methodology especially pertaining to motor skill learning. The goal is to achieve a transfer of skills between the training environment and the criterion environment where those skills need to be applied. This is why training must be representative of encounters that code officials experience.

The core element of representativeness is the relationship between perceptual-cognitive, motor, and emotional conditions (Broadbent et al. 2015) among which users interact with their environment in real-world incidents.

Koerner, Swen & Staller, Mario. (2018). From system to pedagogy: towards a nonlinear pedagogy of self-defense training in the police and the civilian domain. Security Journal. 31. 10.1057/s41284-017-0122-1.

Violence ranges from non-lethal to lethal and comes in many forms from harassment to homicide. Code officials do not know when violence is going to occur, the perpetrator, the method of attack, if a weapon will be used, the number of assailants, and other factors. Therefore, instructors must have a comprehensive understanding regarding conflict and violence to include response options. Failure to understand the subject matter results in the instructor having knowledge gaps that will not benefit their students. While there is a wide diversity in safety training and equipment provided to code officials, instructors may require training in topics to include: situational awareness, de-escalation strategies, defensive tactics, OC spray, expandable baton, electronic control device, lethal force tactics, policy/law, report writing, etc. Competent instructors understand the connectivity between these topics rather than viewing them as individual silos.

Training code officials in officer safety skills requires that training be conducted in a contextually relevant environment supported by current evidence-based training methodology especially pertaining to motor skill learning.

An effective training program must provide officer safety skills that can be applied in a real world, high-stress, time sensitive, ambiguous, rapidly changing, and dynamic environment with the potential for life-threatening consequences.

This requires emotional regulation, attentional control, visuomotor control, cue recognition, goal focus, and heuristic models that support problem solving and decision-making. Training must be:

1. specific to the identified threat environment
2. simulating the specific threat environment
3. physically, technically, and mentally context relevant
4. based upon the principles of psychology, physiology, and kinesiology

Dadelo, Stanislav & Veršinskas, R. & Piwowski, Juliusz & Dadeliene, Ruta. (2015). The most commonly used arrest and self-defence actions arsenal by different officers of internal services. 11. 285-291.

Many code departments do not have a formal officer safety program with a comprehensive training curriculum. When training is provided it often consists of one or two courses that are facilitated in a piecemeal format. The result is training that is not contextually relevant and does not lead to retention and transfer. This is referred to as “check the box” training. Piecemeal training is problematic because the code official lacks the ability to effectively transfer skills in novel encounters. The results may include delayed reaction time, ineffective response, a response that violates department policy or law (i.e., using too much force), freezing (i.e., no response), and possible officer victimization. Check the box training does not benefit code officials and often leads to a gap between what is facilitated in training compared to what a code official may experience during a real encounter. Training that does not result in retention and transfer is ineffective training.

As an officer safety instructor it is important to train code officials in a contextually relevant manner under stress that leads to retention and transfer of skills that can be applied in a novel environment. Training to “check the box” is ineffective and rarely leads to safer staff. While it is possible to see a rapid improvement in performance during a block of training this is typically an “illusion of learning” that will quickly fade over a short period of time. The illusion of learning is a topic for another time. For now, don’t confuse rapid increases in performance with learning.

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

Grab that Topsail Halyard

by Jeanette Loven, CCEO, COSS



My 11th Grandfather was John Howland who was an indentured servant to the Captain of the Mayflower. Per the ship's records during the second month of sailing the ship encountered a terrible storm. With westerly gales causing the ship's timbers to be badly shaken with caulking failing to keep out the sea water and passengers in their berths getting wet. My grandfather was on the deck when he was swept overboard. As the ship was rocked further away over and under waves he and the ship went. No one was able to reach him or turn the ship for his rescue in this violent storm his death seemed imminent. Drownings were common in these days, even in small ponds. However, **due to my grandfather's tenacity and desire to live** he was able to grab hold of a topsail halyard this is part of the top sails and shows how violent the storm was if he was able to grab hold of this part of the ship. He pulled himself back into the water. Yes, HE PULLED himself back into the ship. His rescuers were not able to get him, and he had to fight for himself.

This grandfather fought and was one of the first to step onto America from England and was present when we now recognize the first Thanksgiving. Yes, it isn't fall and we aren't thinking about the turkey or the football games, but the attitude of fighting and thanksgiving is always present. This grandfather fought for his own life in a time no one else could save him.

I asked on social media what some were thankful for as I felt it is important to focus on those times. **Not every day do we have a gun or knife pulled, but every day we have words pulled on us.** Not every day are our tires slashed, and our patrol vehicles involved in a hit and run (true story happened within a couple of weeks of each other to me). Focusing on the positive topsail halyards saves us. Here are some of the answers. Supervisors who have our backs in our decisions, and training opportunities (keep watching there are some exciting ones coming from CEOSF), being able to leave the profession alive and better than they arrived. Local government employees who are trying their best to make things better and supportive. One person said his PW Director literally does jump into the freezing water. Spiritual guidance is another. One official said, "the public are who make it enjoyable and thankful that we are doing our job."

I have said to everyone I train, "I get to take home whatever attitude I choose. Theirs or mine. That decision is mine and mine alone. They get to leave with whatever attitude they choose."

Other respondents expressed their gratitude for each of you. I picture in my mind when my grandfather made it back on the ship to the Captain - who became a close friend of his and soon to be in-laws, and the other passengers even though they too were wet and scared coming to his aid offering their blankets and searching for dry clothing to save the one who fell into the sea and was drowning.



That is what each of you do for each other. You reach down when you are at your lowest and pull out a little more for someone else to make this world a little better so they too can make it. We as the Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation and your peers thank you and tell those struggling reach out. Grab those topsail halyards and hold on! Fight! Yell for us, we will search for what you need. Don't let go of that topsail halyard!

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 as Regional Representative for Region 11 for CEOSF.

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 Vice 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 42 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.



Justin Gardiner, COSCI, COSS

Justin is a Senior Code Enforcement Officer in California and previously served as a Police Corporal and Field Training Officer. He serves on the CACEO Board of Directors and as Chair of the Officer Safety Committee. Justin specializes in first aid, stop the bleed, and active shooter training.

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!

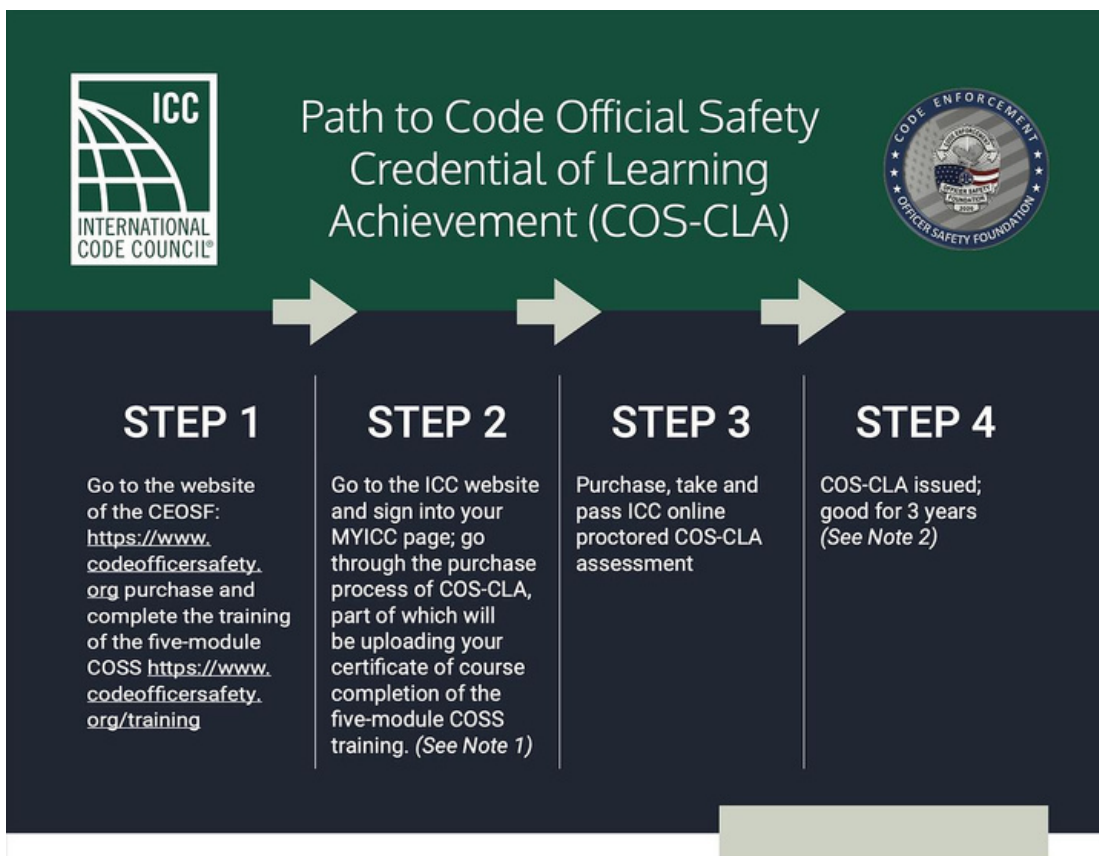


IN-PERSON COSS TRAINING

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

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/>



Contact Us



Newsletter

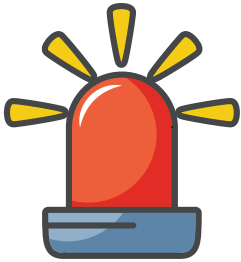
Please contact us if you have a question regarding our newsletter, would like to see a specific topic in the next one, or would like to be a contributor.

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