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TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

Technical Assistance Bulletin

To: All Texas Law Enforcement Agencies, Chief Administrators
From: T.J. Vineyard, Compliance and Standards
Regarding: FACT Clearinghouse Fingerprint Submissions of Appointed Licensees
Date: August 12, 2025

Effective August 1, 2025, TCOLE rule § 217.7 was amended to require all applicants and licensees to be fingerprinted and subjected to a fingerprint-based criminal background check before being appointed by a law enforcement agency. Adoption of this amended rule increases the likelihood that agencies will identify disqualifying criminal charges or offenses during the background investigation, resulting in fewer appointments of ineligible individuals. It also ensures that all licensees are eligible for enrollment for FBI Rap Back monitoring.

The specific rule was amended to read, in part:

§217.7. Reporting Appointment and Separation of a Licensee.

(a) Before a law enforcement agency may appoint a person licensed or seeking a license as a peace officer, county jailer, or telecommunicator the agency head or designee must:

...

(9) have the person fingerprinted and subjected to a search of local, state, and U.S. national records and fingerprint files to disclose any criminal record;

...

(e) The effective date of this section is August 1, 2025.

Previously, agencies were not required to obtain new fingerprints of licensees with a break in service of less than 180 days prior to appointing them. This rule change now requires agencies to obtain fingerprints, and the return of the criminal record search, prior to the appointment of ALL licensees, regardless of the duration of any break in service.

FACT Clearinghouse Access, FAST Enrollment, and Processing Timeline:

Since 2014, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has provided updated criminal history information “Rap Back” on the national level. The only way an agency can receive the FBI “Rap Back” is to utilize the Fingerprint-Based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT) Clearinghouse, which is a repository of Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and FBI fingerprint-based criminal history results. The FACT Clearinghouse allows an authorized entity access to a response of the DPS and FBI criminal history fingerprint results within approximately 72 hours from the time the applicant is fingerprinted.

In order to receive results from the FACT Clearinghouse, agencies must be enrolled in the Fingerprint Applicant Services of Texas (FAST) system.

Agencies that are not already authorized FACT Clearinghouse access must contact the DPS Fingerprint Services Unit at (512) 424-2365, Option 6 or by email at: fingerprint.service@dps.texas.gov to request to have your agency ORI number programmed into the FAST scheduling system.

For additional information on the FAST system and the FACT Clearinghouse, please visit the [DPS website](#).

FACT Clearinghouse Access and Appointment Procedure Through October 1, 2025:

To ensure time for agencies to gain access to the FACT Clearinghouse, TCOLE will allow agencies to appoint licensees through October 1, 2025, after fully complying with TCOLE Rule §217.7 requirements, to include receiving the results of the criminal record search.

Once an agency obtains a FACT Clearinghouse account, they must process electronic fingerprint submissions through the FACT Clearinghouse for all licensees appointed on or after August 1, 2025.

For additional information regarding this Technical Assistance Bulletin, contact your Field Service Agent. For questions regarding the FAST processes, contact the DPS Fingerprint Services Unit at fingerprint.service@dps.texas.gov or (512) 424-2365, Option 6.