



Kim Vickers  
Executive Director

# TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

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## Technical Assistance Bulletin

To: All Texas Law Enforcement Agencies/Contract Training Providers/Licensees  
From: Kenny Merchant/Director, Credentialing and Field Services  
Regarding: **Retired TCOLE Licensees**  
Date: October 2, 2019

Persons retiring from positions requiring a TCOLE license often have questions about the status of their licenses and any rights or privileges they may have as a result of their service time. Here are a few of the more common questions and their answers:

**1. How do I apply to be a Retired Peace Officer/Jailer/Telecommunicator?**

There is no official status of "retired" attached to a TCOLE license. Simply put, a license is either active or inactive. An active license means that the licensee is eligible for appointment to that position. An inactive license means that the person is not eligible for appointment to that position. Allowing the license to go inactive is the normal course of events at some point after retirement or separation- it carries no penalties or negative connotations.

**2. How do I keep my license active?** To keep a license active, simply complete the legislatively mandated training for that license. No appointment is necessary to keep the license active. When the mandated training is not completed, the license will go inactive.

**3. If I do let my license go inactive, can I get it back?** Yes, as long as you continue to meet the minimum eligibility requirement for a licensee, you may reactivate the license by following the instructions on the applicable Reactivation Packet on our website. The requirements vary, according to how long you served and how long since your last appointment to that license type.

**4. I've been a peace officer for 20+ years, when I retire, can I still carry my handgun and act as a peace officer?** NO! With any TCOLE license, your authority to act in that capacity comes from your appointment, NOT from your license. If you are not currently appointed or do not go through a specific process to carry your firearm, you may be subject to criminal charges. If you represent yourself as a peace officer and take action reserved to peace officers, you may also be subject to criminal charges.

**5. I am a retired peace officer, what must I do to be able to carry my handgun?**

If you were a Texas state or local peace officer with a TCOLE license, you may go to your last appointing agency, or any agency where you worked for 20yrs, and apply for a Qualified Retired Law Enforcement Officer Firearms Certification (QRLEO). Out-of-State/Federal/Military peace officer retirees will make application directly to TCOLE for the Certification using the form on the website. In brief, the Certification requires that you have at least 10 years of cumulative



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honorable service, sign an affidavit stating that you are physically and psychologically fit to properly use a handgun, meet the applicable policy at the certifying agency, and perform the standard firearms qualification. See Occupations Code 1701.357 for full information.

- 6. My old agency (or another agency) wants me to come back and work part-time as a licensee for them on occasion, can I do that?** As long as your license is active and they take the proper appointment steps through TCOLE, you may return to work in a licensed position. Doing so without an active license and without being appointed subjects both you AND the agency head to potential criminal charges and administrative penalties.