

## ANALYSIS

### Item 22: Department of Public Safety Standards and Training Basic Police Course Pilot Program

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**Analyst:** John Terpening

**Request:** Acknowledge receipt of a final report on the implementation of the 60-student Basic Police Course pilot program operated by the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training.

**Analysis:** The Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) has submitted a final report pursuant to a budget note approved in the budget report for SB 5533 (2023):

***Basic Police Course Pilot Program:** The Department is directed to report back to the first meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means with a detailed safety plan for the successful operation of the 60-student course and an update on recruitment and staffing for the necessary positions to safely operate the pilot. The Department is further directed to provide a status report on the implementation of the 60-student course pilot during the February 2024 session, with a final report on the pilot program at the first meeting of the Emergency Board after February 2024 session. The status report and final report should include information on the number of students who completed the course, any safety incidents that occurred and corresponding agency actions, the impact of the pilot on the basic police course enrollment backlog, and an updated basic police course forecast.*

The pilot includes three 60-student courses that are in addition to, and run concurrently with, the 40-student Basic Police Courses that are already operating at DPSST, as well as other courses offered at the academy. The three courses began in November 2023, December 2023, and January 2024 and follow the same 16-week timeframe of other basic police courses. With these three larger cohorts, assuming full capacity for each, the Department would be able to train 1,100 students over the 2023-25 biennium. This is the third and final planned report on the program. The first report including a safety plan and staffing update, and the second report provided a status update on the implementation of the program and an update on the basic police course forecast.

The final report indicates that the pilot program has been successful in reducing the backlog from over seven months to within the 90-day statutory timeframe requirement. The Department was able to implement this through development of a schedule template that provides flexibility between training venues and instructors, without compromising safety. Two challenging areas for implementation has been dorm capacity, requiring a separate block of hotel rooms for instructors, and overall staffing high-risk training areas, which required administratively adding seven positions to ensure safe operation and proper student-instructor ratios. The ability to maintain this flexibility will be important if the Department is to be responsive to hiring trends in the future where the forecasted enrollment is between 880 and 1,020 students next biennium.

**Recommendation:** The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that the Emergency Board acknowledge receipt of the report.

**Request:** Report on the 60-student basic law enforcement training courses pilot program by the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST).

**Recommendation:** Acknowledge receipt of the report.

**Discussion:** This is the final report required by a budget note included in the budget report for Senate Bill 5533 (2023), which directed DPSST to report on the implementation of a program piloting basic police training courses with larger class sizes.

Previously, basic police courses at the DPSST Training Academy were capped at 40 students per class. Post-COVID, several factors combined to drive up demand for these courses: local law enforcement officers retiring, difficulty recruiting, and high turnover. By statute, the Academy is directed to offer a spot to a new officer within 90 days of hire by a local law enforcement agency. As the number of new officers grew, the academy faced a backlog and was not able to move students through the academy in a timely manner. The pilot program was funded by the Legislature as part of a solution to this issue. In addition to funding larger class sizes, the Legislature also funded seven additional courses per biennium.

DPSST reports that the pilot program has been successful in eliminating the backlog of local law enforcement officers waiting to complete basic training. The current wait time is again within compliance with statute, under 90 days of hire.

DPSST was also directed to report on any safety incidents that occurred in the larger classes. The training injury rate was approximately one percent of all students, which is consistent with the smaller courses and does not indicate an increase in injury or safety incidents because of the larger number of students.

DPSST forecasts the higher level of demand for basic police courses is the new normal, as a generation of police officers reach retirement age and turnover in the profession remains high.



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

4190 Aumsville Hwy SE

Salem, OR 97317

503-378-2100

[www.oregon.gov/dpsst](http://www.oregon.gov/dpsst)

April 29, 2024

Senator Rob Wagner, Co-Chair  
Representative Julie Fahey, Co-Chair  
State Emergency Board  
900 Court Street NE  
H-178 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs:

### **Nature of the Request**

The Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) was directed to provide a final report on the 60-student Basic Police Course pilot program to the Emergency Board at the first meeting after the 2024 Legislative Session.

### **Agency Action**

The attached report for the Emergency Board includes information on the number of students who completed the course, any safety incidents that occurred and corresponding agency actions, the impact of the pilot on the basic police course enrollment backlog, and an updated basic police course forecast.

### **Action Requested**

DPSST respectfully requests the Emergency Board acknowledge receipt of this report.

### **Legislation Affected**

There are no changes to Oregon Laws. The following laws are noted for reference only. Senate Bill 5533 (Chapter 482, 2023 Laws) provided DPSST with a \$6,417,983 Other Funds expenditure limitation and nineteen permanent positions (19.00 FTE) to support the pilot program. SB 5533 included the budget note for reporting requirements related to the pilot program. House Bill 5029 (Chapter 598, 2023 Laws) provided the allocation from the Criminal Fine Account.

Sincerely,

Philip Castle  
Agency Director  
Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

# Final Report on 60-Student Basic Police Course Pilot

Pilot Completion

April 2024

## Purpose of Report

Senate Bill 5533, the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) agency budget bill, included a budget note directing DPSST to provide updates regarding the 60-student pilot training program for the Basic Police (BP) course. The budget note states:

The Department is directed to report back to the first meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means with a detailed safety plan for the successful operation of the 60-student course and an update on recruitment and staffing for the necessary positions to safely operate the pilot.

The Department is further directed to provide a status report on the implementation of the 60-student course pilot during the February 2024 session, with a final report on the pilot program at the first meeting of the Emergency Board after February 2024 session. The status report and the final report should include information on the number of students who completed the course, any safety incidents that occurred and corresponding agency actions, the impact of the pilot on the basic police course enrollment backlog, and an updated basic police course forecast.

The safety plan was submitted and presented to the Public Safety Subcommittee on Ways and Means on Sept. 28, 2023. A report on the implementation status was presented on Feb. 13, 2024. Although the pilot is not yet complete, this serves as the final report as required in the budget note.

## Pilot Status

With additional funding provided by SB 5533, DPSST has increased the number of students attending mandated Basic Police training. Package 090 increased the Current Service Level (CSL) from 16 classes to 20 classes per biennium. This is a total of 800 students per biennium, an increase of 160 students from the previous CSL.

Additionally, to reduce the backlog of students waiting to attend the academy and meet the forecasted future enrollments, Package 801 provided funding for a pilot project to increase the number of students trained this biennium from 800 to 1100. This increase is being achieved by a combination of two strategies:

1. Add three 60-student classes (BP434, BP436, BP437).
2. Add three 40-student classes (BP435, BP442, BP453) in collaboration with the Oregon State Police (OSP).

Strategy 1 is nearly complete. To quickly reduce the backlog, DPSST implemented and executed this strategy in an expedited manner. Accommodating larger classes of 60 students required DPSST to build a new training template, which maintains instructional ratios by sub-dividing classes into smaller cohorts that match the traditional 40-student training model. DPSST also added full-time instructors, adapted facilities to expand classroom and training space, extended training sessions into the evening hours, and secured additional training resources to achieve this strategy. The first 60-student class began the 16-week academy training in November 2023, the second began in December 2023, and the third began in January 2024. The first cohort completed training on March 29, and the second followed on April 26. The final cohort completes training on May 24.

Strategy 2 is ongoing. These three classes are dispersed across the biennium to align with OSP hiring plans and enrollment forecasts. The first of the three cohorts, a combination of OSP and Portland Police Bureau (PPB) students, completed training on April 5. The second cohort, again an OSP/PPB combination, is

currently being enrolled for a July 29 start date. The third cohort will be held in 2025.

## Number of Students Completing Training

Quality is one of DPSST’s two guiding principles. While assessing quality involves complex metrics, one simple measure is the successful completion of training. Based on data from January 2003 to the present, the average completion rate for the Basic Police Academy is 91%. Enrolled students may not complete basic training for multiple reasons, including resignation, academic failure, injury, or being removed by their agencies. These are represented as Departed in the Non-Completion Notes column of Table 1 below. Students who have not yet completed all training requirements, or who need to remediate a skill post-academy, are represented as Incomplete.

If an enrolled student departs early in training, DPSST attempts to backfill the spot with a student enrolled in a future class. If the departure timing does not allow for backfill, or if there are no students available to take the spot, classes run with reduced enrollment. This backfilling is represented below with enrollment numbers that exceed class size.

At the time of this report, three pilot cohorts have completed training. The completion rate for the pilot cohorts remains within the average range.

**Table 1: Basic Police Enrollments and Completions**

Class	Start Date	End Date	Class Size	Students Enrolled	Students Graduated	%	Non-Completion Notes
BP 424	01/23/2023	05/12/2023	40	39	34	87%	5 Departed
BP 425	02/20/2023	06/09/2023	40	40	36	90%	3 Departed/1 Incomplete
BP 426	03/20/2023	07/14/2023	40	40	37	93%	2 Departed/1 Incomplete
BP 427	04/17/2023	08/11/2023	40	41	37	90%	3 Departed/1 Incomplete
BP 428	05/15/2023	09/15/2023	40	42	40	95%	2 Departed
BP 429	06/12/2023	10/13/2023	40	40	39	98%	1 Incomplete
BP 430	07/17/2023	11/10/2023	40	40	36	90%	2 Departed/2 Incomplete
BP 431	08/14/2023	12/15/2023	40	40	35	88%	2 Departed/3 Incomplete
BP 432	09/18/2023	01/26/2024	40	40	38	95%	2 Departed
BP 433	10/16/2023	03/01/2024	40	40	35	88%	1 Departed/4 Incomplete
<b>*BP 434</b>	11/13/2023	03/29/2024	60	61	56	91%	2 Departed/3 Incomplete
<b>*BP 435</b>	11/27/2023	04/05/2024	40	36	32	89%	1 Departed/3 Incomplete
<b>*BP 436</b>	12/18/2023	04/26/2024	60	60	56	93%	4 Departed
<b>*BP 437</b>	01/29/2024	05/24/2024	60	59			3 Departed as of 4/26/24
BP 438	03/04/2024	06/21/2024	40	40			
BP 439	04/01/2024	07/26/2024	40	40			
BP 440	04/29/2024	08/23/2024	40	40			
BP 441	05/27/2024	10/4/2024	40	36			
<b>*BP 442</b>	06/24/2024	11/01/2024	40	12			
BP 443	07/29/2024	12/06/2024	40	15			
BP 444	09/09/2024	01/17/2025	40	0			
BP 445	10/07/2024	02/14/2025	40	0			
BP 446	11/04/2024	03/21/2025	40	0			
BP 447	12/09/2024	04/18/2025	40	0			

*\*Pilot project cohorts*

## Safety Incidents and Actions

One of DPSST’s two guiding principles is to assure the safety and wellbeing of staff and students. To ensure its strong safety record continued through the pilot program, DPSST developed an updated safety plan, created two Safety Specialist positions, provided additional staff training, and made changes around campus to mitigate safety risks.

DPSST provides mandated basic training for nearly 1,000 students across all disciplines every year at the Oregon Public Safety Academy in Salem. Almost all academy students participate in high-risk training, with a relatively small number of injuries or safety incidents. DPSST categorizes injuries as minor or major. A minor injury log is maintained for each cohort and includes strains, pain, pops, and cuts and scratches. These are typically resolved by low-level care such as bandages and ice. Major injuries include any instance when medical care is sought, the potential exists for training to be missed, or there is the potential that the injury can turn into something more serious later. It is DPSST’s practice to call for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) out of an abundance of caution. For example, the agency’s concussion protocol has three base indicators; if even one indicator is present, Emergency Medical Services are called for an evaluation, and it is considered a major injury.

During the dates of the pilot program, the training injury rate is approximately 1% of all students who are engaged in a program that includes high-risk training. No safety anomalies have occurred despite the increase in student numbers. Table 2 displays all major safety incidents that have occurred during this time.

**Table 2: Major Injuries Since Beginning Pilot Class Expansion**

Date	Incident	Venue	Actions
11/29/2023	Student experienced an allergic reaction to food item containing nuts.	Classroom	Student used EpiPen. Staff called EMS; student was transported for evaluation.
12/7/2023	Role Player fell on stairs and hit head while walking to training location.	Village	EMS called, role player transported and released same day.
12/8/2023	Student dislocated shoulder during defensive tactics training.	Village	EMS called; student was transported.
12/12/2023	Role Player hit head on open car hatch causing laceration.	Village	Bandages applied and concussion protocol initiated. Further medical treatment declined.
12/19/2023	Student injured knee during pre-ORPAT when planting foot to change direction.	Gym	Student was transported to hospital by staff for evaluation and released same day to return to full training.
12/19/2023	Student injured knee during physical fitness training.	Gym	Student sought treatment after conclusion of training, removed from training at agency’s request.
01/02/2024	Instructor injured knee during defensive tactics training.	Mat Room	Staff sought treatment after conclusion of training, returned to work on limited duty.
01/24/2024	Student injured hamstring during use of force scenario training.	Mat Room	Student was transported to hospital for evaluation and released same day to return to full training.
02/01/2024	Student injured ankle during defensive tactics training.	Mat Room	Staff provided initial first aid, then transported student to hospital. Student withdrew from training due to injury.
02/27/2024	Student experiencing headache and blurry vision outside of training.	Dorms	EMS was called but student improved. Declined transportation. Later went to the ER on own and was released same day with no restrictions.
02/27/2024	Role Player injured eye from sim round debris during a scenario.	Village	Eye was flushed and role player returned to training. RP was wearing eye protection as required. Students were advised to lower aim. For drill.

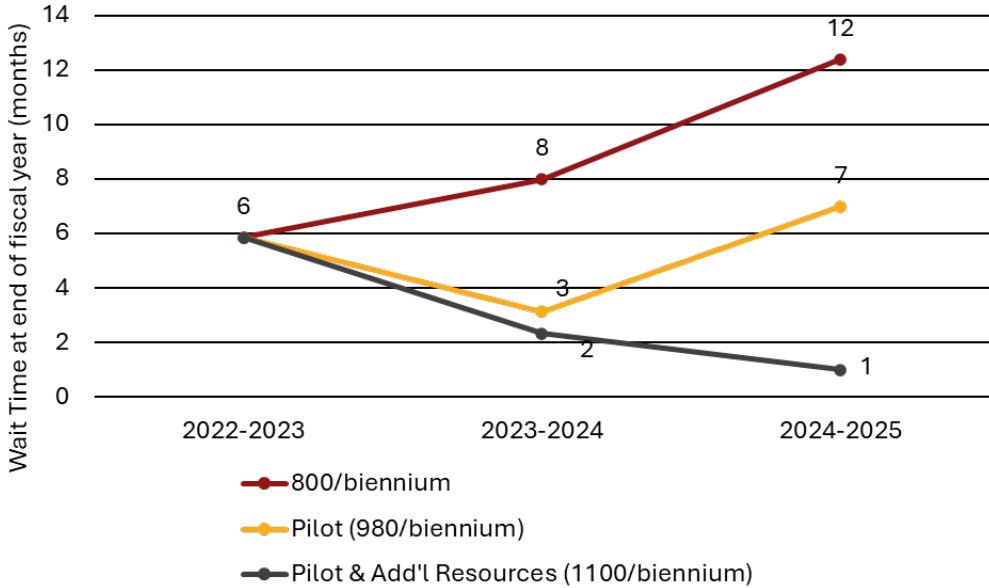
03/11/2024	Student in distress (dizziness and elevated heart rate) after CORPAT (BCL).	Gym	EMS called; student was transported to hospital.
03/14/2024	Student was elbowed in the head during use of force scenario training.	Mat Room	Concussion protocol initiated and EMS called.
03/29/2024	Student injured ribs during defensive tactics training	Mat Room	D-Building Student was transported to hospital for evaluation and released same day to return to full training.
04/01/2024	Student injured thumb during an obstacle on the ORPAT course.	Gym	Student applied ice and later went to hospital for evaluation. Agency removed the student from training
04/03/2024	Student experienced pain in the abdomen area while doing a physical training exercise.	Gym	Student went to ER a week later and diagnosed with hernia. Agency pulled employee from class

### Impact of Pilot on Backlog

The pilot has been successful in eliminating the backlog. At its peak, the wait time for new officers to enter Basic Police training was over seven months. As of April 2024, the current wait time to begin the Basic Police academy is between one to three months, as enrollment is open for BP 441 (starting in May) through BP 443 (starting in July). This window provides agencies with options based on their hiring needs and processes. For an officer hired today, the opportunity to attend the BP academy within 90 days of hire is readily available.

### Updated Basic Police Course Forecast

Forecasted enrollment numbers fluctuate as new data is added each quarter, but the clear message of wait times remains the same: a budget that supports teaching only 800 students per biennium will not sustain the statutorily required maximum wait time of 90 days. Based on the estimated 2024-25 wait times for the 980 and 1100 student models, the ideal scheduling model is one that is scalable and increases class sizes in response to forecasted hiring peaks, maintaining a 90-day or shorter wait time.





## Conclusion

The pilot program continues to be a success. At the time of this report, expanding class sizes has significantly reduced the wait time for new officers to enter the Oregon Public Safety Academy, eliminating the Basic Police training backlog and bringing the wait time to within the 90-day statutory requirement.

While greatly expanding the number of students in training, DPSST has adhered to its guiding principles of providing high-quality training while ensuring the safety and well-being of students and staff. Students are graduating from the program within the normal completion range and there have been no anomalous safety incidents during this time.

Additionally, the pilot has yielded a highly successful partnership between DPSST and the Oregon State Police. It has also resulted in the creation of a dynamic training template that allows DPSST to nimbly respond to hiring trends in law enforcement by flexing between 40- and 60-student class sizes.

Based on current forecasting data, long-term projections to 2025-27 anticipate Basic Police enrollment of between 880 and 1020 students. DPSST will monitor enrollment numbers and will potentially need to adjust class sizes to keep the Basic Police training enrollment time within statutory requirements.

The need to be highly responsive to the market will remain for the foreseeable future, and DPSST is poised to be able to accommodate that need in a dynamic way. DPSST is grateful to the Oregon Legislature for its support of the agency and for providing the opportunity to successfully carry out this pilot program.