



Law Enforcement Training Injury Prevention Program



Content Credit: CIS extends sincere appreciation to the League of Minnesota's Cities Insurance Trust for their valuable contributions to this program. Portions of the content presented herein have been adapted from their original materials and are used with their permission. Their expertise and partnership have enhanced the quality and depth of this publication offered to CIS members.

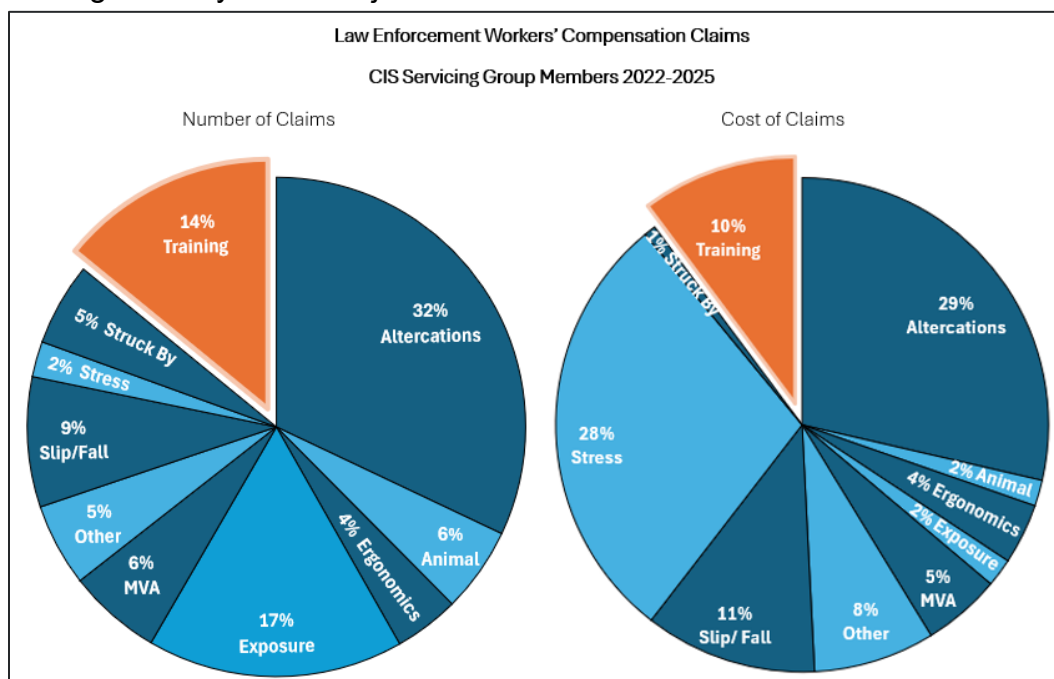
Purpose and Rationale

Law enforcement training is essential for officer readiness, but it carries inherent risks. Data from CIS law enforcement members shows that **14%** of all on-the-job injuries occur during training, despite these sessions being conducted in controlled environments. These injuries cost Oregon agencies an average of **\$464,454 annually** in direct expenses, not including indirect costs such as overtime, lost productivity, and diminished morale.

The Training Injury Prevention Program was developed to reduce preventable training-related injuries without compromising the realism or effectiveness of the training. Modeled after Minnesota's successful program created by the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust, CIS adapted the material for Oregon agencies to enhance safety during physical and scenario-based training.

Why This Matters

- **High Injury Rates:** Training-related injuries are a significant source of workers' compensation claims for law enforcement.
- **Financial Impact:** Direct and indirect costs strain budgets.
- **Limited Resources:** Injuries to officers and deputies limit the personnel available for critical duties, which negatively impacts operational capacity.
- **Preventability:** Because training occurs in controlled settings, proactive measures can significantly reduce injuries.



Training Injury Prevention Program Overview

The program introduces a Training Safety Officer (TSO) who works alongside a training instructor to identify hazards and coordinate interventions before injuries occur. The concept is like firearms range safety, where agencies have institutionalized practices around firearms safety, rangemaster authority, and contingency plans for emergencies, but this protocol would apply to all physical training.

Core Objectives:

- Maintain training realism and effectiveness while improving safety.
- Reduce injuries through structured planning, observation, and intentional intervention.
- Foster collaboration between instructors, training safety officers, and agency leadership.

Five Key Steps

1. **Partnership & Planning** — Review training plans in advance with the instructor, training safety officer, and agency administrator to identify risks and develop risk mitigation plans.
2. **Site Setup and Inspection** — Prepare and inspect the training area to remove hazards and stage Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and first-aid supplies.
3. **Safety Briefing** — Conduct a briefing with participants before training begins, explaining the role of the TSO, safety rules, and emergency procedures.
4. **Training Observation** — TSO monitors the training session for signs of fatigue, horseplay, off-script behavior, and applies interventions, as needed, to maintain safety.
5. **Review** — Facilitate a post-training debrief to review applied interventions, identify what worked well, where change is needed, and update lesson plans to improve the safety of future training sessions.

Implementation Guidance

- Start Small: Even partial adoption can reduce injuries.
- TSO Role: Does not need to be a sworn officer; consider admin staff, retired officers, risk managers, a trusted member of the safety committee, or neighboring agencies.
- Vendor Expectations: Require third-party trainers to integrate safety measures into contracts and training delivery.
- Lesson Plans: Review training plans before training sessions to identify hazards and develop risk mitigation strategies.

- Time Restrictions: Consider limiting defensive tactics (combat tactics) training to no more than 2–4 hours in any 24-hour period.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will this make training less realistic?

A: No. The program leverages controllable aspects of training without reducing effectiveness.

Q: Do we need all five steps?

A: Full implementation yields the best results, but even one or two steps can be helpful.

Q: What should the TSO watch for?

A: Off-script behavior, signs of fatigue, PPE misuse, mismatched partners, horseplay, unsafe improvisation, or indications a participant is injured or suffering a medical event.

Q: How do we handle staffing challenges?

A: Use non-sworn personnel as the TSO or collaborate with neighboring agencies for reciprocal support. What's most important is to have someone monitoring the training that is looking specifically for hazards and safety risks.

Benefits

- Reduced Injuries: Agencies in other jurisdictions have reported a significant decline in training-related injuries after implementing the 5-step program.
- Lower Costs: Fewer claims, less overtime, improved loss history for insurance pricing.
- Improved Morale: Demonstrates commitment to officer safety.
- Operational Efficiency: Officers perform essential duties instead of being sidelined while recovering from preventable training-related injuries.

Next Steps for Oregon Agencies

- Designate a Training Safety Officer (TSO) for all physical training sessions.
- Incorporate use of the 5-step framework into agency training policies.
- Utilize the worksheets, samples, templates and implementation guidance in the Appendices to customize the 5-step Training Injury Prevention Program in your agency.
- Contact CIS Risk Management for support at Riskmanagementteam@cisoregon.org

Note: The following materials are provided as a starting point to help agencies adopt a culture of safety and risk mitigation when conducting physical law enforcement training. Materials should be customized and updated to reflect each agency's policies and procedures.

Appendix A

Expanded Guidance for Program Implementation

Guidance for Step 1: Partnership & Planning

- Obtain and review lesson plans prior to training, especially with external instructors.
- Hold a pre-event planning meeting with instructor, TSO, and agency leadership.
- Discuss intervention strategies, looping (regular check-ins), and fatigue management.
- Agency leadership informs employees about the confidential means to report medical, health, or disability-related issues that may affect their ability to participate in the upcoming training, clearly identifies the appropriate person to receive those reports, and explains the importance of notifying the appropriate person of any concerns before the training begins.
- Agency leadership communicates any modifications or accommodations to the instructor that need to be incorporated for specific participants. Supervisors should address medical issues prior to the training, in a confidential manner, and in partnership with the Human Resources (HR) department. HR can advise on accommodation procedures and documentation requirements.
- Define off-script behaviors (horseplay, improvisation, unapproved techniques, unsafe PPE use) and discuss potential intervention strategies.

Guidance for Step 2: Site Setup & Inspection

- Arrive early to set up and inspect the site.
- Ensure all protective equipment is in good condition; mats are clean and disinfected.
- Mark training boundaries and eliminate slip/trip hazards (cords, curled rugs, wet spots, protrusions, unsecured props). Be aware of windows or other hazards to avoid.
- Keep emergency exits clear and emergency equipment accessible.
- Inspect first-aid supplies and position emergency aid station near the training area.
- Protect other property, especially at acquired/off-site locations.

Guidance for Step 3: Safety Briefing

- Conduct immediately before training.
- Introduce training safety officer and explain the role.
- Review safety rules, signal word for immediate stop, and emergency procedures.
- Encourage reporting of any observed safety concerns and/or injuries that occur during the training.
- Adapt briefing to each training situation and discuss specific safety risks that may be encountered.
- Respect privacy related to personal medical conditions. Injuries and medical accommodations should be reviewed with the supervisor, in partnership with Human Resources, prior to the day of training (in Step 1). The instructor or TSO may explain modifications to the training but should not disclose medical diagnoses.

Guidance for Step 4: Training Session

- Instructor facilitates warm-up exercises and stretches prior to the training activities.
- The Training Safety Officer (TSO) observes the training participants for signs of fatigue, horseplay, off-script behavior, improvisation, unnecessary roughness, mismatched partners, or other unsafe behaviors or situations that could lead to injury.
- TSO will engage in looping (check-ins) with the instructor to touch base on observations, any risks or hazards developing, and interventions that may be appropriate.
- Wear high-visibility vest to remain visible and remind participants of safety focus.
- Intervene discreetly (switch partners, short breaks, reminders); avoid public callouts unless necessary.

Guidance for Step 5: Review of Training Session

- Debrief after training: document off-script behaviors that were observed, interventions used, effectiveness of interventions, accidents, and near misses.
- Use root-cause analysis to identify and address underlying issues and causes of injury.
- Revise lesson plans and safety procedures based on findings.
- Focus on facts and prevention — identify main causes, contributing factors (fatigue, inattention, misuse of PPE), and root causes (were contributing factors in place?)

Appendix B

Templates

Sample Training Safety Plan Worksheet (Completed Example) — Use in Step 1

Area	Prompts	Completed Example
Goals & Objectives	What should participants be able to do at the end of training?	Safely execute defensive tactics and demonstrate proper use of PPE.
Risk Hotspots	Where do injuries historically occur? Highest exertion drills? Activities near windows?	High risk during takedown drills and ground defense; previous sprains reported.
Off-Script Controls	How will you deter horseplay, improvisation, roughness?	TSO monitors off-script actions; instructor reminds group before each drill.
Fatigue Strategy	Break cadence, hydration points, post-shift attendees?	10-minute breaks every 45 minutes; water stations; lighter drills for post-shift staff.
PPE Matrix	Required PPE by drill, sanitized, inspection method?	Headgear, mouthguards, TSO inspects before session.
Partnering Rules	Size/fitness parity	Partners matched by weight class
EMS Response Plan	First-aid location, supplies, roles, 911 trigger, bloodborne pathogen exposure response?	First-aid kit at entrance; TSO is responder; instructor calls 911; admin EMS greeter.

Privacy & Accommodations	Voluntary disclosures path; supervisor coordination?	Supervisors work with HR to address any medical accommodation that may be appropriate based on employees' reported concerns and coordinate with the TSO & instructor.
Post-Session Review	Who documents incidents; lesson plan changes?	TSO and instructor complete log and review lesson plan for improvements.

Sample Site Setup & Inspection Checklist (Completed Example) — Use in Step 2

Item	Yes	No	Action
Space organized for safe movement; visibility	X		Moved chair to side wall
Floor/wall mats installed & secured	X		Taped mats to prevent movement
PPE staged, labeled, and in good condition	X		
First-aid station stocked, accessible	X		
Boundaries marked; public access controlled	X		
Slip/trip hazards removed	X		
Egress routes clear; AED/fire extinguisher	X		
Lighting adequate	X		

Protruding/unnecessary objects removed/guarded	X		
Nearby property protected/relocated	X		

Sample Safety Briefing Script — Use in Step 3

"Hello, I am **[training safety officer name]**, and I will be the training safety officer for today's training. If you need the training to stop, say 'time out.' If you hear 'time out,' stop immediately and repeat the words. I will be observing the entire session. Please see me with any safety concerns or if you become injured. First-aid is at **[location]**. PPE is staged at **[location]**. If you came from shift or feel fatigued, tell me or the instructor. For serious emergencies, I'll tend to the victim and **[Instructor]** will call 911 and assign a greeter for EMS."

Sample Looping Log (TSO ↔ Instructor) — Use in Step 4

Time	Observation	Risk Level	Intervention	Owner	Outcome
09:40	Fatigue in group B	Medium	3-minute break + hydration	Instructor	Improved focus
10:15	Horseplay on back line	High	Reminder of safety rules	TSO	Risk removed
10:35	Mismatched partners in size	Medium	Partner switch	Instructor	Risk removed

Sample Incident & Near Miss Report (Completed Example) — Use in Step 5

Date/Time	2025-11-15, 10:30 AM
Location	Mat Room, Training Center
Activity	Defensive Tactics Drill

TSO	Mark Jennings
Description	Fall on outstretched hand during takedown drill; sprained wrist
Analysis	Main cause: Loss of balance Contribution: Fatigue Root: Insufficient breaks
Corrective Actions	Immediate: Ice pack Long-term: Increase breaks, enforce rotations.
Emergency Response Review	What Worked: Quick response Improve: More breaks, monitor partners, just-in-time reminders of fall techniques
Sign-off	TSO: Mark Jennings; Instructor: Lisa Masters; Date: 2025-11-15

Sample Post-Training Review Worksheet — Use in Step 5

Topic	Notes
Risks Observed	Horseplay during downtime; fatigue after 45 minutes;
Interventions	Partner switch and hydration breaks were effective.
Incidents/Near Misses	Sprained wrist due to loss of balance and fatigue.
Root Causes	Insufficient breaks, mismatched partners; corrective actions: increase breaks, enforce rotation.
Lesson Plan	Add balance drills to warm-up, clarify partner rules.
Follow-Ups	Update lesson plan, brief staff on new break schedule.

Sample Policy Language

Training Injury Prevention Policy

Purpose:

To establish procedures for preventing injuries during law enforcement training activities.

Scope:

This policy applies to all agency-sponsored training sessions involving physical activity.

Policy Statement:

It is the policy of this agency to minimize the risk of injury during training by implementing a structured injury prevention program, including the designation of a Training Safety Officer (TSO), pre-training planning, site inspection, safety briefings, continuous observation, real-time intervention (as needed), and post-training review.

Procedures:

Designation of TSO:

A TSO shall be assigned to every physical training session.

The TSO is responsible for observing training, identifying hazards, and intervening as needed.

Pre-Training Planning:

The instructor and TSO shall conduct a planning meeting to review lesson plans, identify risks, safety strategies, and develop an emergency medical response plan.

Health disclosures and accommodations shall be managed confidentially with employee supervisors in accordance with applicable laws and agency policies.

Site Setup & Inspection:

The training site shall be inspected for hazards, and all PPE and emergency equipment shall be staged and checked for condition.

Safety Briefing:

A safety briefing shall be conducted before each session, covering rules, off-script behavior, signal word for immediate discontinuation of activity, PPE, and emergency procedures.

Training Observation:

The TSO shall continuously monitor for signs of fatigue, off-script behavior, horseplay, mismatched partners, and other risks, using discreet interventions and looping (check-ins) with the instructor.

Incident Reporting & Review:

All injuries and near misses shall be documented using the agency's incident report form.

A post-training review shall be conducted to analyze causes of injury and update lesson plans and procedures to prevent future incidents and injuries.

Compliance:

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in corrective action in accordance with agency disciplinary procedures.

Review:

This policy shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect best practices and lessons learned.

