

Law Enforcement I

Course Syllabus

Course Overview

Law Enforcement I is a foundational course that prepares students for careers in local, state, and federal law enforcement. Students develop an in-depth understanding of criminal law, patrol procedures, use of force, crime scene investigation, traffic enforcement, and the constitutional rights that govern law enforcement operations. Emphasis is placed on professional communication, officer safety, ethical decision-making, and the practical skills required of peace officers in Texas.

Course Philosophy: This course bridges academic knowledge and real-world law enforcement practice. Students are expected to conduct themselves with the professionalism, discipline, and integrity required of law enforcement personnel.

Teacher Information

Teacher	William Townsend
Room	206
Conference Period	7:30am - 8:15am
Email	wtownsend@ldisd.net
Tutorial Hours	3:00pm - 4:00pm (Mondays)

TEKS Correlation (19 TAC Chapter 127, Subchapter N)

This course aligns with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Career and Technical Education as outlined in §127.750, Law Enforcement I (One Credit), Adopted 2015. The following strands guide instruction and assessment throughout the semester.

Strand 1: Career Development, Professional Standards & Safety

- Demonstrate professional conduct including punctuality, reliability, appearance, and ethical use of technology consistent with law enforcement standards
- Develop a career plan within the Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security career cluster including post-secondary pathways and certifications
- Identify, analyze, and evaluate hazards and safety risks associated with law enforcement careers
- Demonstrate first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and automated external defibrillator (AED) procedures
- Discuss methods for safe handling of hazardous materials and the importance of physical fitness for law enforcement personnel

Strand 2: Communication Skills in Law Enforcement

- Define and apply technical concepts and vocabulary associated with law enforcement
- Interpret nonverbal communication including facial expressions, voice quality, gestures, and body positioning in law enforcement contexts
- Employ active listening skills to obtain and clarify information in the field
- Contribute to group discussions and meetings using effective verbal communication skills

- Recognize and respect cultural diversity when communicating with the public

Strand 3: Use of Force & Officer Safety

- Identify and explain the legal framework governing the use of force by peace officers
- Describe and compare various force options and non-force alternatives available to peace officers
- Explain the elements an officer must recognize and control in every encounter
- Analyze scenarios involving use of force and evaluate officer decision-making

Strand 4: Criminal Law & Constitutional Rights

- Identify and apply provisions of the Texas Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure relevant to law enforcement
- Explain the constitutional rights of individuals including Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Fourteenth Amendment protections
- Describe the legal standards for stop and detention, search and seizure, and arrest
- Analyze legal responsibilities and liabilities associated with roles and functions within law enforcement organizations

Strand 5: Patrol Procedures & Operations

- Describe the duties and responsibilities of patrol officers in municipal, county, and state law enforcement agencies
- Explain standard patrol techniques, call response procedures, and report writing
- Demonstrate safe and effective approaches to residences and buildings
- Explain techniques to safely enter, search, and clear a residence or building
- Demonstrate tactical entry procedures and room-clearing methods

Strand 6: Victims' Rights, Juvenile Law & Family Violence

- Identify the legal basis for law enforcement's responsibilities to crime victims' rights
- Summarize legal requirements for providing victims with written notice of their rights
- Explain the steps in processing status offenses involving juvenile offenders
- Demonstrate procedures for conducting conferences with juveniles and parents or guardians
- Analyze steps in handling family violence calls including Temporary Ex Parte Protective Orders, Protective Orders, and Magistrate's Orders for Emergency Protection

Strand 7: Crime Scene Investigation & Evidence

- Describe principles and procedures for protecting, documenting, and processing a crime scene
- Demonstrate how to photograph, sketch, search, collect, and document physical evidence
- Lift and preserve latent fingerprints from a simulated crime scene
- Explain chain of custody requirements and proper evidence handling procedures

Strand 8: Traffic Law Enforcement & Intoxicated Driver

Detection

- Produce a crash report involving two or more vehicles in a traffic accident
- Apply laws associated with accident investigation and scene management
- Research and explain procedures for responding to an accident scene and maintaining control
- Explain laws related to driving while intoxicated (DWI) and related offenses
- Discuss the development of "reasonable suspicion" for an intoxicated driver stop and temporary detention

Pacing Guide

The following pacing guide outlines instruction across approximately 38 weeks (one school year).

Timelines are flexible based on student needs and campus calendar.

Unit	Topics Covered	TEKS Strand(s)	Suggested Weeks
Unit 1: Career Development & Professional Standards	Course orientation; law enforcement career pathways; professional conduct and appearance; officer safety overview; CPR/AED/first aid; physical fitness standards	Strand 1	Weeks 1–4
Unit 2: Communication Skills in Law Enforcement	Technical law enforcement vocabulary; verbal and nonverbal communication; active listening; cultural diversity; report writing fundamentals	Strand 2	Weeks 5–8
Unit 3: Use of Force & Officer Safety	Legal framework for use of force; force options and alternatives; de-escalation; elements of officer encounter; use-of-force scenario analysis	Strand 3	Weeks 9–12
Unit 4: Criminal Law & Constitutional Rights	Texas Penal Code overview; Code of Criminal Procedure; constitutional protections (4th, 5th, 6th, 14th Amendments); search and seizure; arrest law; legal liability	Strand 4	Weeks 13–18
Unit 5: Patrol Procedures & Operations	Patrol duties and responsibilities; call response; report writing; approaching structures; building search and clearing techniques; tactical entry procedures	Strand 5	Weeks 19–24
Unit 6: Victims' Rights, Juvenile Law & Family Violence	Victims' rights statutes; written notification requirements; juvenile processing and conferences; family violence response; protective orders and emergency protection orders	Strand 6	Weeks 25–28
Unit 7: Crime Scene Investigation & Evidence	Crime scene protection and documentation; evidence photography and sketching; evidence collection and chain of custody; latent fingerprint recovery	Strand 7	Weeks 29–33
Unit 8: Traffic Law	Traffic crash investigation and reporting; accident scene management; DWI laws and detection; reasonable suspicion	Strand 8	Weeks 34–38

Grading Policy

Grading in this course follows the Lake Dallas ISD Secondary Grading Guidelines (2026–2027) for on-level courses. All grades are recorded and reported in alignment with LDISD policy as outlined below.

Grading Categories

Category	Weight	Description
Daily Grades (Classwork, Homework, Quizzes)	50%	Includes classwork, homework, notebooks, quizzes, and other daily assignments. A minimum of nine (9) daily grades shall be recorded each nine-week grading period.
Major Grades (Tests, Exams, Projects, Essays)	50%	Includes unit tests, examinations, projects, essays, and alternative assessments. A minimum of three (3) major grades shall be recorded each nine-week grading period.

Grade Scale

Numeric Average	Letter Grade
90–100	A
80–89	B
70–79	C
69 and below	F

Late Work Policy

- Work submitted beyond the due date will result in a deduction of points from the assignment grade per campus late work guidelines.

Classroom Expectations & Procedures

PRIDE Expectations

Principle	Expectation
P — Prepared	Bring all materials daily; arrive on time and ready to learn
R — Respectful	Treat classmates, teacher, and guests with dignity and courtesy
I — Involved	Actively participate in discussions, activities, and scenario-based exercises
D — Determined	Give your best effort on every assignment and assessment
E — Ethical	Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and accountability in all work

Required Materials

- 1-inch binder or folder with pockets
- 2 Composition notebooks
- Pencils and blue/black ink pens
- Yellow highlighter
- Access to district-provided media device

Technology Policy

Personal devices are permitted for educational purposes only. Unauthorized use of devices will result in disciplinary action per campus policy.

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Any student found in violation of the academic integrity policy will receive a zero on the assignment and may face additional

consequences per campus guidelines. Law enforcement careers demand the highest standards of honesty and integrity — this classroom is no exception.

Course Goals & Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the legal framework governing law enforcement in Texas, including constitutional rights and relevant statutes
- Demonstrate professional communication skills required for law enforcement including verbal, nonverbal, and written forms
- Apply use-of-force principles and explain the legal standards governing officer conduct
- Describe patrol procedures, tactical entry techniques, and officer safety protocols
- Process a simulated crime scene by collecting, documenting, and preserving physical evidence
- Explain victims' rights, juvenile law procedures, and family violence response requirements
- Produce a traffic crash report and apply DWI detection and reasonable suspicion standards
- Develop a personal career plan or portfolio aligned with a law enforcement career pathway