



HRCJTA TB 2025-1

DATE: August 1, 2025

TO: Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy Member Agencies

FROM: Scott Barlow, Executive Director

SUBJECT: HRCJTA Training Bulletin 2025-1 (Testing Basic Classes)

The HRCJTA has seen a serious decline in the academic abilities of our basic recruits. It appears that their ability to comprehend material, and apply learned material to successfully pass tests is steadily declining.

As you are aware, to graduate from any academy across the commonwealth, students must pass every DCJS objective with either a test question, or a practical exercise. The HRCJTA allows each student three opportunities to pass each mandated objective.

The HRCJTA has taken many steps to assist with the new type of recruits we are training:

- ✓ We no longer give three different tests questions to recruits that fail a specific objective (Test Question). We give students the same test question three times.
- ✓ HRCJTA staff provides remedial training (Test Review) after every test. Staff will also do one on one remediation as needed or requested.
- ✓ Training topics have been lengthened in order to allow students more time to absorb material, and to ensure tests do not back up due to retests.
- ✓ We have added a remediation (Full Day) after all complex legal classes to allow academy staff to ensure all material was covered prior to testing. Yes, this means we review before test one, and review after each test is taken.

- ✓ We allow for one fourth test on written tests for students whom were not successful in passing a DCJS objective.
- ✓ We allow for a fourth test on all practical exercises such as Firearms, Defensive Tactics, Driving, and other practical tests at the agencies request.
- ✓ All basic class students are provided with, and are encouraged to utilize code books during testing. Students receive a class on use of the code books prior to any testing.
- ✓ On the third and final test we allow an open book test (The student's manual and any notes taken) in the Jailors class only.
- ✓ We carefully vet our adjunct instructors to ensure a quality instructor teaches each topic, especially legal topics.
- ✓ The HRCJTA staff has diligently worked with lesson plans and test questions to ensure accuracy and fairness.
- ✓ Prior to any student being released from the HRCJTA as an academic failure, we convene a review panel to ensure; the student received the needed information, the material in their manuals is correct, the test question is fair, and HRCJTA did a proper review. If at any time we find HRCJTA staff or materials is at fault the failure is overturned.

We at the HRCJTA understand that our recruits are different now, and we strive to address any weaknesses in our processes, especially our testing processes. The HRCJTA will continue to address training issues to ensure that we maintain our rigor (academic standards), but also provide each student with the ability to be successful if they are willing to put in the effort required.

We are not "Dumbing Down" the curriculum, but we are being as creative as possible to address the educational shortcomings we are faced with. We do not believe that recruits are unable to be successful in the L.E. profession, just that learning needs to be slowed down with more reviews of material.