

BLET's Frequently Asked Questions

QUESTION How can I become a law enforcement officer in NC?

ANSWER There are several ways to become a law enforcement officer in NC.

1. Apply with a few law enforcement agencies and have the agency send you to BLET.
2. Attend BLET on your own.
3. Find an agency to sponsor you for a BLET course

The first option would take the longest as most agencies take between 2-4 months to hire someone. Only larger agencies will send someone to BLET. You may find that most agencies prefer that you have already graduated from BLET.

The second option is the fastest way to complete BLET. If you are moving to specific location within NC you should contact the local community college for the county in which you are living or one within driving distance and contact the BLET school director.

There is an admissions process for BLET. You must provide a certified criminal history check from all the counties and states in which you have lived since becoming an adult. If you don't already have copies of these I recommend visiting the county courthouse where you are living now as it is often easier to get these documents in person versus mail. They will charge you a small fee to provide you with a certified copy of the record. You must also have a physical and there are two forms to complete for that.

The third option is to find an agency to sponsor you into a BLET course. This will save you the cost of tuition although you will still have to purchase the books. The way this works is you go to an agency and tell them you are interested in becoming a police officer and ask if they sponsor people in BLET courses. If the chief or sheriff is willing to sponsor you they will run a background check on you to look at your criminal and driving history. If there are no issues there they will send a letter to the local BLET school director or provide you with such a letter that states they are sponsoring you in BLET. The prospective student is still responsible for obtaining certified local and state criminal records checks for each place he or she has resided since becoming an adult. Please note that sponsorship is NOT the same thing as a promise to hire you after you complete the course. Some agencies routinely sponsor people with no intention of hiring them. They just sponsor as a favor to the student.

Graduation from BLET does not equal certification as a police officer. It makes you eligible for certification. This eligibility is good for one year from the date of graduation from BLET. If you are not hired by an agency within that one year period you have to take BLET over again.

QUESTION Will my law enforcement certification from another state transfer to NC or will I have to attend BLET in its entirety?

ANSWER It depends on the certification type, your overall experience and quality of training received. The N.C. Training & Standards Division in Raleigh is the authorizing agency on this issue. Questions should be directed to 919.716.6470.

QUESTION Is there a "condensed" version of BLET available for law enforcement officers from other states wanting to re-locate to N.C.?

ANSWER Yes. However, the N.C. Training & Standards Division is the authorizing agency on this issue. Questions should be directed to 919-716-6470.

QUESTION How often do agencies and/or community colleges deliver BLET and where do I enroll?

ANSWER Most Community Colleges begin BLET courses twice per year, usually with each semester (January & August). A few colleges offer "night" BLET classes, but they take longer to deliver. Contact your local community college for further information.

NOTE: Persons who enroll on their own accord and graduate from a Community College BLET program ARE NOT guaranteed future employment. The certification may make persons more "attractive" as a prospective applicant.

Individual law enforcement agencies with their own BLET academy typically hire persons as full time employees at the start of or prior to course delivery. BLET deliveries are scheduled by agency need.

QUESTION After graduating from BLET, does the certification last indefinitely?

ANSWER No. Graduates must be hired or "sworn-in" by a law enforcement agency within 12 months from their graduation date or the certification will expire. In summary, ANYONE who does not maintain a "sworn" status with an agency for a period of 12 months will see their BLET certification expire. BLET must be taken again in its entirety for re-certification.

QUESTION How long does it take to deliver BLET?

ANSWER Approximately 16 weeks - attending full time or 40 hours per week - to deliver the entire course. BLET "night" courses usually last 6-7 months. "Night" courses typically take place Monday - Friday (6-10pm) and on Saturdays, but are mainly taken by persons working other full time jobs.

QUESTION Do community colleges charge tuition for BLET? If so, how much does it cost?

ANSWER Most Community Colleges charge tuition for individuals enrolling on their own accord. Tuition fees vary. Contact your local community college for more information. Furthermore, students may need to purchase books, supplies and other required equipment (ammunition, weapons, clothing, etc.), in addition to tuition fees.

QUESTION Do I need a NC law enforcement agency "sponsorship" before I can enroll in a community college BLET course? And what does "sponsorship" mean?

ANSWER It depends. Many community colleges require applicants to obtain "sponsorship" from law enforcement agencies before being allowed to enroll in their BLET program. In summary, the sponsoring law enforcement agency must attest, usually in writing, to the applicant's moral character, integrity and

honesty. Some agencies actually conduct background investigations on applicants prior to granting sponsorship.

←—————→
QUESTION Is there a "study guide" for the BLET curriculum?

ANSWER No. However, students may find it useful to study ALL lesson plan training objectives when preparing for the state comprehensive exam.

←—————→
QUESTION Is the NC Justice Academy responsible for the BLET state exam?

ANSWER No. The Justice Academy is only responsible for the BLET curriculum itself. The N.C. Criminal Justice Training and Standards Division has sole purview over the state exam. The Standards Division also enforces all BLET testing, policy, accreditation and instructor certification issues.

←—————→
QUESTION How often are BLET lessons revised?

ANSWER The entire curriculum is actually in a constant state of revision, but lesson revisions occur bi-annually (January and July). Changes in the law, procedures and training methods are primary reasons for revisions.

←—————→
QUESTION Can anyone teach a BLET topic?

ANSWER No. Only persons that hold a "General Instructor Certification" from the NC Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Commission may teach in BLET. Instructors who teach "Subject Control/Arrest Techniques," "Physical Fitness Training," "Firearms," and "Law Enforcement Driver Training" must possess, in addition to the "General Instructor Certification" a "Specialized" certification for EACH area.

The General Instructor Certification course is 2 weeks long. It includes a variety of practical tests and a comprehensive written exam. Specific academic and/or experience criteria must be met before one can enroll in such a course.

Every "specialized" certification course is 2 weeks long, with the exception of "Law Enforcement Driver Training." Each specialized course has rigid pass/fail skills testing criteria. Persons must also pass comprehensive written exams for each specialized course. All BLET instructors are required to teach a specific number of hours each year to maintain their certification(s).

←—————→
QUESTION Do I need to purchase Microsoft PowerPoint software to view "Hypermedia" slide presentations? How much does PowerPoint software cost?

ANSWER No. Each CD includes software to "read" and display the files. However, if you want to modify slides or add animation effects, you must purchase the software. PowerPoint software sells for around \$100.00, but is typically found within the Microsoft Office package installed on most computers.

←—————→

QUESTION How old do you have to be before enrolling in BLET?

ANSWER Schools may not admit any students younger than 20 years of age unless there is prior written authorization from the Director of the Criminal Justice Standards Division. All students must be at least 20 years of age upon completion of BLET.

Persons must be at least 20 years of age to be certified as a law enforcement officer by the Criminal Justice Standards Division and at least 21 years of age to be certified by the Sheriffs' Standard Division.

