

CCPD BOARD ACTION PROPOSAL

Funding Request: Fourth Amendment Training & Risk Reduction

Executive Summary

- **The Goal:** Authorize CCPD funding for practical, in-person advanced Fourth Amendment search-and-seizure training.
- **The Recommended Program:** Blue to Gold Law Enforcement Training - Advanced Search & Seizure. Final provider/course selection remains coordinated with the Police Chief.
- **The Purpose:** This proposal is not intended to duplicate required TCOLE instruction. It builds on that foundation with advanced, scenario-based Fourth Amendment training focused on difficult real-world field decisions.
- **The Immediate Priority:** Bring current Richwood officers to a common advanced training baseline, emphasizing residential entry, warrants, consent, exigent circumstances, curtilage, correct-location verification, and occupant detention.
- **The Long-Term Goal:** Establish an economical path so officers hired later receive comparable advanced instruction.
- **The Public Benefit:** Reduce preventable constitutional and safety risks while protecting officers, residents, community trust, and City resources.

Local Case Study: The 'One-in-a-Million' Operational Breakdown

THE INCIDENT (5 Years Ago in Richwood, TX): Patrol officers responded to an away-from-home burglar alarm dispatched for Street #100. Officers mistakenly approached Street #101 without first positively confirming the address. Richwood requires residential address identification near the front door, yet the street number was not located or verified before entry. Seeking to avoid alerting a potential burglar, officers opened a closed, unlocked exterior screen door, crossed an enclosed breezeway, then opened the closed but unlocked back door and entered the residence. An innocent resident was asleep. Officers woke him at gunpoint and repeatedly asked his address; he correctly answered #101. Once the error was recognized, officers left to respond to an unrelated domestic disturbance call. The resident later contacted the Police Chief, who promptly explained the concurrent emergency; the resident accepted that explanation. The responding officer later wanted to return and apologize, and the Chief, knowing the resident wanted rest, advised him to let the resident sleep. The incident ended without litigation, but it provides a powerful local example of why residential-entry decision making and address verification deserve focused training.

THE QUESTION THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED

What if the resident, awakened from a sound sleep and not yet fully conscious, had instinctively reached for a legally owned firearm – without realizing the people inside his house were police officers?

I will let you consider for yourself how differently that night could have ended.

AND THIS INCIDENT IS WHY I BELIEVE THIS CLASS IS NOT SIMPLY EXTRA TRAINING – IT IS NECESSARY TRAINING.

Fourth Amendment Training Issues Demonstrated by the Incident

- **Residential Entry / Curtilage:** Recognize when crossing protected residential areas requires a warrant, consent, or a legally recognized exception.
- **Correct-Address Verification:** Positively verify the intended residence before a highly intrusive entry and use available address identifiers.
- **Warrantless / Unannounced Entry:** Distinguish an alarm call from facts that actually establish a lawful basis for warrantless or unannounced residential entry.
- **Occupant Detention / Seizure:** Apply Fourth Amendment standards governing detention, force, and seizure of occupants encountered during residential entry.
- **Officer & Resident Safety:** A wrong-location, unannounced nighttime entry can create a deadly misidentification risk: an innocent resident and responding officers may simultaneously believe they are confronting an armed threat.



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Training Solution, Delivery Options & Board Action

Proposed Solution: Specialized Training Program

- **Why Advanced:** The recommended course builds on foundational TCOLE instruction by applying Fourth Amendment law through case studies and real-world scenarios – the type of decision-making illustrated by the Richwood incident.
- **Core Curriculum:** Residential entry, warrants, consent, exigent circumstances, curtilage, correct-location verification, occupant detention, and related officer/resident safety decisions.
- **Current-Officer Catch-Up:** Use the first effort to bring as many current Richwood officers as practicable to the same advanced legal-training baseline.
- **New-Hire Continuity:** Build an economical method for newly hired officers to receive comparable instruction without funding a large agency-wide event every year.
- **Local Integration:** For private agency training, request customization around Richwood policies, recurring scenarios, and local address-identification requirements.

Fourth Amendment Training - Delivery & Funding Options

Training Option	How It Works	Cost / Arrangement	Benefit
Individual Seats	Scheduled Advanced Search & Seizure class.	~\$225 / officer*	Immediate gaps/new hires.
Host Regional Class	Richwood supplies site; surrounding agencies register.	Free Richwood seats earned from paid registrations.*	Promotion/registration handled by Blue to Gold; can lower effective cost.
Private Department	Instructor comes to Richwood; content may be customized.	Custom quote required*	Broad catch-up + local issues.
Instructor / Sustainment	Chief evaluates qualified officer for instructor development.	Depends on path*	Possible long-term refresher/new-hire resource.

* = planning estimate/current public registration figure, not a Richwood quote. Private training requires a written custom quote.

* Current host terms state one free host-agency seat per 10 paid registrations. Hosting may reduce Richwood's effective cost; savings are not guaranteed.

Implementation Goal

- **Phase 1 - Catch Up:** Train the current department as broadly as approved funding and scheduling allow.
- **Phase 2 - Sustain:** Chief selects the economical recurring path for new hires: regional seats, online/on-demand, appropriate in-house instruction, or instructor development.
- **Optional Attendance:** Ask whether CCPD, Council, administrators, volunteers, or citizens may attend at their own expense; eligibility and TCOLE credit must be confirmed.

FORMAL RECOMMENDATION & ACTIONABLE MOTION

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

"I move that the CCPD Board authorize funding, in an amount not to exceed \$8,000, for specialized Fourth Amendment search-and-seizure training for the Richwood Police Department, with Blue to Gold Law Enforcement Training's Advanced Search & Seizure program identified as the recommended option; final course, delivery method, scheduling, and provider coordination to be made with the Police Chief, with preference for a plan that trains current officers and establishes an economical path for future new hires."

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