



# 272 Critical Words

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Recruits arriving at the Department of Criminal Justice Training to begin their basic training will receive something new along with their navy uniform, equipment and Kentucky criminal law manual.

A pocket-sized booklet will be given to each officer containing information that will become the foundation of their experience at DOCJT and carry them into their careers as peace officers, said DOCJT Commissioner John Bizzack. The booklet identifies pertinent details about the style and range of training recruits will receive, as well as the caliber and distinction of the nationally-accredited program.

"This is your opportunity to join that elite force," the booklet states.

The purpose of the training also is clearly identified for those new to Kentucky's ranks: The purpose of my training as a Kentucky peace officer is to learn how to constructively interact with the public for the good of the civil peace.

"This one sentence embeds the concept that they are peace officers, not warriors," Bizzack said, "encompassing everything they are supposed to be. They are to learn, while they're here, how to constructively interact with the public. That is key and covers all the bases. We don't expect them to read 12 paragraphs of what the mission is at DOCJT. The important thing is *their* mission. We will provide what is needed, but they need to understand their purpose in being here."

The section of the booklet recruits should, perhaps, focus on most is the full content of Kentucky Revised Statute 503.090, which details how and when peace officers in the commonwealth may exercise use of force. Beginning with Basic Training

Class No. 470, whose 23 weeks of training began on Aug. 24, each recruit will be required to memorize all 272 words and recite them verbatim to their class coordinator when required.

"It's nothing that a recruit can't learn over a 23-week period, especially when this is the core of the discretion they have such wide authority to use," Bizzack said. "[Recruits] must learn this verbatim, be able to recite it and, most importantly, understand it."

It would be easy to select a half-dozen statutes that are important for new peace officers to remember, but Bizzack said that the Use of Force statute is one that, throughout their careers, officers always will need to recall.

"This isn't something you can easily go back and refer to the manual, to state law or to departmental policy when

a situation arises," Bizzack said. "You need to carry it with you in your mind all the time. That's the emphasis that's going to be placed on it."

While the booklets will be available to all Kentucky peace officers, the concept is to introduce the information in basic training to plant the seeds for the interaction, behavior and attitudes an officer will need for the next 20 years of his or her career, Bizzack said. 

