



# NOTICE TO SPECIAL CONSERVATORS OF THE PEACE

**TO:** SCOP Industry

**CC:** Private Security Services Training Schools  
General Assembly Members  
Office of the Executive Secretary, Supreme Court of Virginia  
Police Departments  
Sheriffs' Offices  
Virginia State Police  
Regional Criminal Justice Training Academies  
Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council  
Virginia State Crime Commission  
Office of the Attorney General

**DATE:** June 22, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Legislative Changes to the Special Conservator of the Peace Program

This year the General Assembly amended several components of the Special Conservator of the Peace (SCOP) Program which requires DCJS to make changes to the registration process and other regulatory aspects of the program. Some changes go into effect immediately and others, such as the training requirements, will go into effect later. We understand these changes are important to you, your existing DCJS registrations and court appointments, and therefore DCJS has been working with the Office of the Attorney General to ensure compliance with the new laws is seamless and accurate.

To better understand all the changes to the program, we encourage you to read the new legislation contained in [Senate Bill 1195](#), [House Bill 2206](#), and [House Bill 2369](#). This notice is the first of many as we anticipate more questions and changes arising from the legislation. We will also update our FAQ sheet to help you understand the new changes to the program.

## APPLICATIONS TO COURTS

- **Mandatory Forms** – As of July 1, 2015, if you are seeking a new appointment with a circuit court or re-appointment with a circuit court, the law requires you to submit **two** separate standardized forms, created by the Office of the Executive Secretary, to the circuit court. One form is the Application to the circuit court and the other is the Appointment Order signed by the judge.
  - On July 1, 2015, the new forms can be accessed at the Supreme Court of Virginia website: [www.courts.state.va.us/forms/circuit/civil.html](http://www.courts.state.va.us/forms/circuit/civil.html)
  - Once the circuit court signs the order, you must return copies of **both** the Application and Appointment Order to DCJS in order to receive your registration documents.
- **Background Investigations** – As of July 1, 2015, if you are seeking a new appointment with a circuit court or re-appointment with a circuit court, you must submit a completed background investigation.
  - The background investigation must be done by a state or local law enforcement agency within the Commonwealth, such as your local police department, sheriffs' office or the Virginia State Police. DCJS

has notified all police departments, sheriffs' offices and the Virginia State Police about this requirement.

- The background investigation is separate and distinct from the criminal history check, which only shows your arrest and conviction history, if any.

## REGISTRATION WITH DCJS

- **New Appointments** – As of July 1, 2015, if you are seeking a new appointment with a circuit court or re-appointment with a circuit court, you must submit copies of both the Application and Appointment Order to DCJS. There are no exemptions from registration with DCJS (see below).
- **Proof of Bond** – As of July 1, 2015, individuals seeking SCOP appointments with circuit courts or renewal registrations with DCJS must show proof of general liability insurance in the amount of \$10,000. Cash and surety bonds are no longer acceptable to courts or DCJS.
- **Final DCJS Registration Documents** – As of July 1, 2015, DCJS may only issue registration documentation for SCOP registrants. The issuance of registration cards containing photographs will gradually be phased out.
- **DCJS Registration Application** – DCJS will update the registration application based on new requirements for the SCOP program. We will inform the industry once the new forms are finalized.

## NO EXEMPTIONS FROM REGISTRATION

- **No Exemptions** – As of July 1, 2015, all SCOPS must be registered with DCJS. No exemptions from registration exist under Virginia law.
- Current SCOPS who have not registered with DCJS must register with DCJS. As part of the registration process, individuals must submit the following pursuant to the *Code of Virginia* and Administrative Code:
  - [DCJS Registration Application](#)
  - Proof of minimum training standards
  - Fingerprint card
  - Proof of drug/alcohol test
  - Background investigation completed by a police department, sheriff's office or the Virginia State Police
  - Appropriate Fees

## TRAINING

- **Training Waiver** – As of July 1, 2015, any individual who has been decertified as a law-enforcement officer is not eligible for exemption from SCOP training requirements.
- **Training Location** – As of July 1, 2015, individuals seeking SCOP training may now obtain training at regional criminal justice training academies. DCJS has notified all regional criminal justice training academies about this authorization. Any SCOP receiving training at a regional criminal justice training

academy does not need to submit a training waiver request to DCJS. A list of academies can be found at: [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/directories/criminalJustice](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/directories/criminalJustice)

- **Unarmed Minimum Training** – The minimum training hours for unarmed SCOPS has changed from 24 hours to 98 hours. This standard ***will not go into effect*** until new regulations are promulgated, and SCOPS have 36 months following the regulatory promulgation to comply with the new training standards. **The training requirements of 24 hours for unarmed SCOPS currently remains the same.**
- **Armed Minimum Training** — The minimum training hours for armed SCOPS has changed from 40 hours to 130 hours. This standard ***will not go into effect*** until regulations are promulgated, and SCOPS have 36 months following the regulatory promulgation to comply with the new training standards. **The training requirements of 40 hours for armed SCOPS currently remains the same.**

## SCOPE OF AUTHORITY

- As of July 1, 2015, all SCOP orders entered by circuit courts will describe the property where SCOPs are authorized to perform.

## ELIGIBILITY

- In addition to existing barrier crimes, anyone who is required to register with the Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry is not eligible for registration with DCJS as a SCOP or appointment by circuit courts as a SCOP.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- SCOPS must report any misdemeanor or felony arrests, charges and convictions to DCJS and the chief law-enforcement officers of any locality in which they authorized to serve within THREE (3) days of such arrest.

Please let us know if you have any questions and continue checking the DCJS website for updates to the SCOP program. DCJS will provide additional notification to the industry as we begin implementing legislative changes to the SCOP program.