

# Contemporary Issues in Policing

with [Heather R. Cotter, PoliceOne Senior Editor](#)

## Why cops should join non-profit law enforcement associations

**As we continue to see a shift in the role of the American cop, it is important to take the steps necessary to meet the demands of the profession**

Dec 29, 2016

In today's environment, it's critical for police officers to stay informed on the latest training and to continually advance their education and professional network beyond their jurisdictional boundaries. There are several state, national and international professional law enforcement associations that welcome law enforcement officers to join as members and offer these opportunities to the law enforcement profession. Thousands of cops decide to become members of these associations because they believe in the mission, they want to expand their network, they seek new professional opportunities within and/or beyond their agencies and they are intrigued by the training and services offered. With so many associations out there, this article will help you navigate the professional law enforcement association landscape and help you decide which association or associations are the best fit for you. The following list of non-profit associations is in alphabetical order.

### **INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE**

The [IACP](#) was formed in 1893 and welcomes all sworn and civilian law enforcement officials to join. The mission of the IACP is to advance the law enforcement profession through advocacy, outreach, education and programs, and their vision is to serve the leaders of today and develop the leaders of tomorrow. The IACP is governed by a Board of Directors that includes senior law enforcement officials from agencies of all sizes. The cost of [membership](#) ranges from \$75 - \$150 per year depending on the type. The IACP offers its members several educational, training and professional development opportunities throughout the year. Members can join a committee, serve as a subject matter expert to a project or training and attend any of their conferences. The networking and professional development opportunities are continuous.

### **INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY ASSOCIATION**

The [IPSA](#) was founded in 2014 and allows membership to everyone who serves and supports public safety. The mission of the IPSA is to break down the cultural barriers and foster the relationships between EMS, fire, law enforcement, telecommunicators, allied emergency responders and the communities they serve, and their vision is for a stronger, more integrated public safety community

capable of an effective joint response to all public safety incidents. The IPSA is governed by its Board of Directors and includes representatives from law enforcement, fire service, EMS and the private sector. The cost of [membership](#) ranges from \$25 - \$125 per year based on type. The IPSA offers its members opportunities for professional development through publication, committee work, webinars and conferences. There are networking opportunities between law enforcement and with allied emergency first responders.

## **NATIONAL SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION**

The opportunities you will find from joining non-profit law enforcement associations for training and professional development are limitless.

### **Special Coverage: IACP 2016**

The P1 staff hits the showroom floor to bring you the latest in police products and innovations.

## **RELATED CONTENT SPONSORED BY**

The [NSA](#) was formally chartered in 1940. This association offers several training and educational opportunities throughout the year via in-person events, webinars and conferences. The NSA is governed by its Board of Directors which includes sheriffs from various sized agencies across the U.S. The [membership](#) fee varies from \$15 - \$562 per year based on type. There are ample opportunities for law enforcement networking and professional development.

## **NATIONAL TACTICAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**

The [NTOA](#) was founded in 1983. Their mission is to enhance the performance and professional status of law enforcement personnel by providing a credible and proven training resource as well as a forum for the development of tactics and information exchange with the ultimate goal of improving public safety and domestic security through training, education and tactical excellence. The association is governed by its Board of Directors which includes sworn law enforcement officers from various agencies across the U.S. There are three [membership](#) types and the pricing begins at \$40 for an individual membership. NTOA offers its members opportunities to publish, attend trainings throughout each year and receive discounts on conferences.

## **STATE AND SPECIALTY ASSOCIATIONS**

There are several state and specialty non-profit associations for officers to join from tactical to chiefs of police associations. The pricing and benefits widely vary, but the state-level legislative information and local networking opportunities are endless with state associations. Further, there are many specialty associations to consider joining from APCO International to the International Association of Crime Analysts.

As the law enforcement profession continues to evolve and the demands around the scope of duty shift, it's important to keep up with those changes through continual education, training and

networking beyond your hometown. The opportunities you will find from joining non-profit law enforcement associations for training and professional development are limitless. As we continue to see a shift in the role of the American cop, it is important to take the steps necessary to meet the demands of the profession by staying informed at the national, state and local level. Joining and getting actively involved with professional, non-profit law enforcement associations will help you adjust to the demands of the public and city management, keep you informed about policy and legislation and help you grow professionally – all while making a difference in the global law enforcement community.

## **About the author**

Heather is the Senior Editor of PoliceOne and CorrectionsOne. She has been working with law enforcement and public safety for over 15 years. She understands that although agencies have similar operations and missions, every agency is unique when it comes to their standard operating procedures, business requirements and communities they serve.

In her spare time, she volunteers as Executive Director at the International Public Safety Association. Prior to joining Praetorian Digital, Heather worked on projects supporting several state and federal agencies. She also spent a few years working at the IACP. Heather earned her Master's degree from Arizona State University and her Bachelor's at Indiana University, both in Criminology. Heather currently calls Arizona home.