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August 28, 2015

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OHIO COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY-POLICE ADVISORY BOARD FINALIZES FIRST OF ITS KIND STANDARDS FOR OHIO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

COLUMBUS— An advisory board established by Ohio Governor John R. Kasich to implement ways to improve community and police relations today established new state standards – for the first time in Ohio history – on proper use of force, including deadly force, and the recruiting, hiring and screening of potential law enforcement officer candidates. The new standards will now be distributed to law enforcement agencies across the state by the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS).

“These new standards will not only give law enforcement agencies a clear guide to follow, but will hold everyone accountable and instill better confidence with the public,” said John Born, Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, who co-chairs the Board with former state Senator Nina Turner. “There is no doubt that Ohio will be an even stronger state because of these efforts.”

The new standards issued today include the following policy statements:

- **Use of Force:** Employees may only use the force which is reasonably necessary to effect lawful objectives including: effecting a lawful arrest or overcoming resistance to a lawful arrest, preventing the escape of an offender, or protecting or defending others or themselves from physical harm.
- **Use of Deadly Force:** The preservation of human life is of the highest value in the State of Ohio. Therefore, employees must have an objectively reasonable belief deadly force is necessary to protect life before the use of deadly force. Deadly force may be used only under the following circumstances: To defend themselves from serious physical injury or death; or to defend another person from serious physical injury or death; or in accordance with U.S. and Ohio Supreme Court decisions, specifically, *Tennessee v. Garner* and *Graham v. Connor*.
- **Agency Employee Recruitment and Hiring:** The goal of every Ohio law enforcement agency is to recruit and hire qualified individuals while providing equal employment opportunity. Ohio law enforcement agencies should consist of a diverse workforce. Communities with diverse populations should strive to have a diverse work force that reflects the citizens served. Non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity is the policy. Law enforcement agencies shall provide equal terms and conditions of employment regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, veteran status, military status, or disability. This applies to all terms or conditions associated with the employment process, including hiring,

Ohio Collaborative Finalizes Standards
Page 2

promotions, terminations, discipline, performance evaluations, and interviews. Agencies should utilize due diligence in ensuring that their prospective employees have the proper temperament, knowledge and attitude to handle this very difficult job. Agencies should have appropriate mechanisms in place in order to achieve this mission. Further, agencies should ensure their employment requirements are related to the skills that are necessary to be a successful employee.

To begin communicating these new standards to Ohio's nearly 1,000 law enforcement agencies, the Ohio Collaborative will be sending a letter to police departments and sheriffs' offices, conducting regional meetings and teleconferences, disseminating information via the *Criminal Justice Bulletin*, and other criminal justice communication methods.

The Ohio Collaborative has charged OCJS to publish a report by March 31, 2017, listing which state and local law enforcement departments have adopted and fully implemented the new minimum standards.

The 12-member Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board was created by Gov. Kasich in April to implement recommendations from his Task Force on Community-Police Relations and continue to work on strengthening the bond between police and the communities they serve.

For more information on the Ohio Collaborative, including its members, visit:
<http://ocjs.ohio.gov/otfcpr/occpab/index.html>

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