

## A breakdown: How the 50 states handle wandering officers

The following is a brief description of the reporting requirements in each state that includes either links to the forms themselves where available or the underlying regulation or statute governing the notice requirement. A state's "POST" refers to the "peace officer standards and training" body — the state-level agency responsible for overseeing law enforcement professionals in that state.

1. Alabama: Yes

- Alabama POST has a "[Termination Form](#)" with basic descriptions of separation and asks for explanations. If "resigned," it asks whether it was voluntary or involuntary. If involuntary, it asks for an explanation. "Fired" is another option, which, again, prompts an explanation.

2. Alaska: Yes

- The Alaska Police Standards Council "[Personnel Action Form](#)" or "F-4" includes various reasons for officer separation, requiring attached explanations if the officer was terminated, if there was sustained misconduct, if they were under investigation for wrongdoing or if de-certification is recommended.

3. Arizona: Yes

- Arizona's POST [regulations](#) require agencies to file a "report of the termination of a peace officer." This report includes the "nature of the termination," and a "detailed description of any terminations for cause[.]"

4. Arkansas: Yes

- Arkansas POST has the Personnel Change in Status Report, "[Form F-4](#)," which asks for reasons for resignation or dismissal, whether there is a recommendation for decertification, and then specific instructions to attach an explanation if separation was for a reason listed in [statute](#).

5. California: Yes

- California POST has the "[Notice of Appointment / Termination](#)" or "POST 2-114" with options including "resigned," "discharged" (or involuntarily terminated), "deceased" and other options if the separation was a result of criminal activity, or the resignation/retirement occurred during a "complaint, charge, or investigation."

6. Colorado: Yes

- Colorado POST has agencies file paperwork via an online portal. There is no printable form, but as the Texas Law Enforcement Landscape notes in [Appendix 3](#), Colorado captures a significant amount of information in an online portal regarding how an officer can resign under investigation or in lieu of termination.

7. Connecticut: Yes

- The Connecticut POST requires agencies to fill out an “[Officer Departure Form](#)” with the following options: terminated/dismissed, resigned, retired, lay-off, and deceased. The form includes check boxes and a summary text-box to include, if applicable, “A SUMMARY OF THE MALFEASANCE OR SERIOUS MISCONDUCT INVESTIGATED.”

8. Delaware: Yes

- No “form” identified, but the Delaware POST (“Council on Police Training”) [regulations](#) stipulate that the agency must document an officer’s separation in writing and “identify the circumstances of the separation” to the Council’s Administrator.

9. Florida: Yes

- For Florida POST, agencies have to file an Affidavit of Separation ([Form CJSTC 61](#)), which has 22 checkboxes to describe the reason for separation. The form is likely [available to the public](#) under statute.

10. Georgia: Yes

- Georgia POST promulgates a [Change of Status Form](#) with 10 options to select and space for a “reason for disciplinary action” if applicable.

11. Hawaii: Unknown

- No form, rule, or statute was identified.
- Hawaii only very recently established its own POST entity, making it one of the [last states](#) to do so.

12. Idaho: Yes

- Idaho’s POST [rules](#) describe a “Notice of Employment/Termination” form designated by the POST Council, but it is unclear if the form includes reasons for an officer’s separation.
- POST [guidance](#) to agencies note that a “Separation/Change in Status” form also has a requirement to report whether the agency is aware of certain kinds of violations.

- State [statute](#) requires agencies to report to POST when “a peace officer's employment is terminated as a result of any disciplinary action.”

13. Illinois: Yes

- Agencies are required to file a Form E “[Notice of Appointment/Separation](#)” with the Illinois POST, which captures the reasons for an officer’s separation “resigned, retired, terminated for cause, deceased, convicted of a criminal offense, or other” with a prompt to explain if “other” is selected.

14. Indiana: Unknown

- No form, rule, or statute was identified that would govern law enforcement agency reporting of officer separation.

15. Iowa: Yes

- The “[Law Enforcement Officer Change-In-Status Form](#)” for Iowa’s POST has 10 possible choices to describe a “leave” or separation, and requires a reason or rationale which, if the result of disciplinary action, is public record.

16. Kansas: Yes

- The “[Termination or Separation](#)” form from Kansas’s POST notes the date of separation, but it also includes a comment section citing state law which requires a description of the separation.

17. Kentucky: Yes

- The “[Form E](#)” reports to Kentucky POST the status updates for officers, including separations of different kinds. These include resignation, retirement, termination and death, with additional options to record whether the officer is under a criminal or administrative investigation.

18. Louisiana: Yes

- Louisiana’s POST has an “[Employment Status Change Report](#)” requiring indication as to the reason the form is being submitted, including “retired,” “deceased,” “voluntary resignation,” “terminated” and “involuntary resignation” in lieu of termination or an investigation. The agency is also required to document whether it has knowledge of certain kinds of misconduct.

19. Maine: Yes

- Maine agencies are required to file a “[Notice of Employment / Termination](#)” with the ME POST which asks whether the officer had “Resigned Discharged Retired Deceased [or] Other” with a comments section beneath.

20. Maryland: Yes

- Agencies fill out a “[Notice of Personnel Action Form](#)” for the Maryland POST with four kinds of separation: resignation, retirement, termination and deceased. The form also has eight additional check boxes to describe the “condition of separation.”

21. Massachusetts: Yes

- One state [statute](#) requires a division of the Massachusetts POST to keep a database that records any officer’s separation, including “the nature of the separation” and the “reason for any separation from employment.”
- Another state [statute](#) requires reporting to Massachusetts POST if an officer resigns during an investigation, including “a description of the events or complaints surrounding the resignation[.]”

22. Michigan: Yes

- State [regulations](#) require that agencies submit a report to Michigan’s POST of separation that “shall include... [t]he reason for the separation.”
- A detailed record of separation is required in a statutory [process](#). [Statute](#) also outlines a process to document disagreements between agencies and officers over the reasons for separation. A [waiver](#) allowing new agencies to contact old agencies is required under law.

23. Minnesota: No

- The “[Employment Termination](#)” form for Minnesota’s POST only requires notice of termination (voluntary or involuntary) and has a box to indicate whether or not the terminated officer is deceased. This follows from [administrative rules](#) on the same subject.

24. Mississippi: Yes

- The Mississippi POST requires a “[Law Enforcement Termination/Reassignment Report](#)”, which offers nine possible reasons for “termination.” It can include retirement, resignation and a “discharge” (an involuntary separation). Some reasons prompt additional explanation as to the specific circumstances leading to termination.

25. Missouri: Yes

- The separation process for Missouri's POST is done through an [online form](#) for all employment-related actions. When "not employed" is marked, the user is prompted with a comment box and reminded of statute under which the "chief executive officer of a law enforcement agency shall state the circumstances surrounding why the officer is no longer commissioned by the law enforcement agency[.]"

26. Montana: Yes

- Agencies fill out a "[Notice of Termination](#)" for Montana's POST with selections for the type of termination: resigned, retired, involuntary, resigned under investigation, medically disabled or deceased. The "involuntary" and "resigned under investigation" selections require a written explanation from the agency allowing attachments if necessary.

27. Nebraska: Yes

- The "[Personal Change in Status](#)" form reported to Nebraska's POST includes 17 checkboxes to describe various ways an officer separates from an agency.

28. Nevada: Yes

- Nevada's [POST Administration Manual](#) offers instructions on completing an "Update – Personnel Action Report (PAR)" detailing status changes that include "Deceased," "Retired," and "Separated" with an additional indication as to whether the officer has been charged with a crime that could lead to additional POST action.

29. New Hampshire: Yes

- State [statute](#) requires agencies to fill out "employee status notification form 'B'" to the New Hampshire POST when certain changes in an officer's status occur. Among them are 10 that involve leaving the agency, including "retirement," "discharge," "resignation in lieu of discharge" and "resigned during internal investigation." The POST requires officers and agencies to file necessary forms via an online portal.

30. New Jersey: Partial

- An "employment separation form" was not identified.
- All agencies operate under heavily regulated [internal affairs rules](#) under the jurisdiction of the state's Attorney General. While the reasons for an officer's termination are to be recorded (Sec. 9.9.2), it is unclear whether these are reported to the "Police Training Commission" or the state's Attorney General.

31. New Mexico: Partial

- An “employment separation form” was not identified.
- If an officer commits certain kinds of misconduct, the agency is required to submit a “[DPS Misconduct Report](#)” to the [New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy Board](#) to determine whether there are grounds for denial, revocation, or suspension of a police officer’s certification.

32. New York: Yes

- Under recently enacted [regulations](#), peace officer employers are required to report to the New York POST the effective date when such officer ceases to serve and the reason for such” including “resignation, removal, removal for cause..., and removal during a probationary period.”

33. North Carolina: Yes

- For North Carolina’s POST, an “Affidavit of Separation” or [the Form F-5B\(LE\)](#) ([alternative link](#)) asks for “resignation” “dismissal” “other” and “retirement” with additional boxes checking for whether the agency is aware of any recent potential criminal action or officer misconduct. If there was an investigation into wrongdoing, the form requires a written description.

34. North Dakota: Yes

- The “[Employment Termination](#)” form requires agencies to report separation to the North Dakota POST and indicate one of the following: voluntary resignation; involuntary resignation;retired; deceased; and other. Agencies can check a separate box recommending the POST to review the case, and a separate box prompts description of the cause of the termination.

35. Ohio: Yes

- Ohio POST has agencies fill out “[Notice of Peace Officer Separation](#)” with 12 checkboxes to describe the nature of the separation like “resignation under investigation.” In some cases, further explanation and written comments are required.

36. Oklahoma: Yes

- The “[Notice of Separation](#)” form for Oklahoma POST includes categories such as “resigned,” “discharged,” “retired” and “deceased” with additional options to designate whether the separation happened while the officer was under investigation and to describe the nature of the separation.

37. Oregon: Yes

- Oregon's POST "F4s form," or "[Personnel Action-Separation](#)," requires a narrative description and asks whether separation was the result of a settlement or investigation, and whether there were uninvestigated misconduct allegations.

38. Pennsylvania: Yes

- Pennsylvania's POST will receive reports on municipal police officers. Agencies will file a "[Separation Record Form](#)" which checks "termination," "resignation," "retirement" and "deceased" as options. It also includes other issues about the nature of separation and whether other conditions have been met. It appears that information can only be offered to hiring agencies upon a signed [release](#).

39. Rhode Island: Unknown

- No form, rule, or statute was identified that would govern law enforcement agency reporting of officer separation.

40. South Carolina: Yes

- The South Carolina POST requires [different forms](#) depending on the type of separation. The "[Routine Separation](#)" form includes 12 possible reasons for separating from an agency, and boxes for whether there are pending criminal charges or investigations on the officer. The "[Separation Due to Misconduct](#)" form has 15 different kinds of misconduct that can be reported.

41. South Dakota: Partial

- State [regulation](#) requires agencies to file a "law enforcement resignation or termination form" with South Dakota POST any time an officer leaves employment "for any reason[.]" Separate [regulation](#) describes officer certification revocation or suspension if the officer "has been discharged for cause from employment as a law enforcement officer[.]"
- Statute does not clarify whether the reasons are included on the form, and the form itself has not yet been identified.

42. Tennessee: Yes

- State [regulation](#) requires agencies to file a "Change of Status" form with Tennessee's POST indicating the kinds of changes that would give rise to filing the form. Regulations also require [notification](#) when "discharging certified law enforcement officers for disciplinary reasons or accepting the resignation in lieu of termination of certified law enforcement officers[.]"

43. Texas: Yes

- The [F-5 form](#) requires agencies to report to the state's POST (a.k.a. The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement or "TCOLE") and designate whether the officer's separation was an "honorable," "general" or "dishonorable" discharge.
- Senate Bill 1445 and House Bill 1530 as they were first filed in the Texas Legislature would repeal the required discharge categories without replacing them with any other requirement to record or report how an officer separated from an agency.

44. Utah: Yes

- Under [state statute](#) agencies are required to file a "Change of Status" form with Utah's POST to "identify the circumstances of the peace officer's status change by indicating that the peace officer has resigned, retired, terminated, transferred, deceased, or that the peace officer's name has changed;" and whether the termination happened during an internal investigation.

45. Vermont: Yes

- For the Vermont POST, the "[Employment Change Notification Form](#)" filed by agencies lists a few options to record separation of duty: resigned, retired, discharged, deceased or "other."

46. Virginia: Yes

- Virginia's POST requires filing an "[Employment Update \(Form 31\)](#)," which captures "resigned," "retired," "deceased," "terminated for cause" and "other (specify)" as options.

47. Washington: Yes

- The [Notice of Officer Separation](#) form filed by agencies with the Washington POST lists "resignation," "termination," "retirement," "medical" and "deceased" as options. It asks whether the officer was "under investigation" at the time of separation among other things. Interestingly, [statute](#) prohibits contracts that preclude disclosure or promises to check different boxes.

48. West Virginia: Yes

- Agencies fill out a "[Personnel Change-In-Status Report](#)" ([alternative link](#)) for the West Virginia POST with options to describe and comment on the conditions of retirement, resignation, termination, deceased or criminal charges.

49. Wisconsin: Yes

- Wisconsin Administrative Code [requires](#) agencies to notify its POST “regardless of the reason for the termination.” This is done via a restricted portal available to law enforcement agencies and officers, and the Law Enforcement Standards Board manual ([available here](#)) describes “Notification of Officer Status Changes” in that system. The separation options available are “deceased,” “resigned in good standing,” “resigned in lieu of termination,” “resigned prior to completion of internal investigation,” “retired,” “separated,” “separated due to budget cuts or disbandment,” and “terminated for cause.”

50. Wyoming: Yes

- No specific form identified for Wyoming’s POST. [State statute](#) requires notice to be given to the state when an officer leaves an agency. If it is a “termination,” the agency must “in writing, of the termination, setting forth in detail the facts and reasons for the termination.” Any officer who has been terminated may present a written statement to the commission responding to the claims made against him or setting forth the facts and reasons for the termination as he believes them to be, and that statement shall become a permanent part of the file.”