
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



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2021 Wisconsin Act 49 [2021 Senate Bill 122]

Public Access to Law Enforcement Use-of-Force Policies

BACKGROUND

Wisconsin law requires each person in charge of a state or local law enforcement agency to prepare, in writing, a policy or standard regulating the use of force by law enforcement officers in the performance of their duties. Prior law required each agency to make its use-of-force policy or standard available for public scrutiny, but did not prescribe a specific mechanism by which the policy or standard must be publicly available.

2021 WISCONSIN ACT 49

2021 Wisconsin Act 49 requires that each law enforcement agency make its use-of-force policy or standard publicly available on a website maintained by the law enforcement agency. If an agency does not maintain its own website, the policy or standard must be made available on the website of the municipality over which the agency has jurisdiction. When a use-of-force policy or standard is changed, the act requires the agency to ensure the website displays the updated policy or standard as soon as practically possible, but no longer than one year after the change is made. The act further requires that each agency prominently display a means of requesting a copy of the policy or standard and, if a copy is requested, provide a copy of the current policy or standard free of charge as soon as practically possible but no later than three days after a request is made.

Effective date: This act took effect on June 24, 2021.

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