

Guidebook

2024 State Conference

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TPSA Members and Guests ,

As we press forward through regional competitions, the time has come for some of us to begin shifting our focus towards the TPSA 2024 state conference. This annual gathering unites dedicated professionals, passionate students, and esteemed leaders in the public service sector from across the state.

As we embark on this conference, please keep in mind our 2024 theme, "Your Future Is Here." This theme encapsulates the essence of what TPSA represents for our students—a gateway to their aspirations in the realm of public safety. "Your Future is Here" serves as a rallying call, reminding us all that TPSA is not just a stepping stone but the very foundation upon which our students build their careers. It underscores the importance of seizing the opportunities we offer and making the most of them right now.

To all attendees, whether you are a seasoned professional, a dedicated student, or a first-time participant, we encourage you to actively engage, exchange ideas, and forge connections that will not only enhance your professional journey but also contribute to the collective advancement of public service students in Texas. Our theme isn't just a slogan; it's a promise. It's a commitment from us to provide our students with the resources, support, and experiences they need to succeed in their chosen fields. It's about creating an environment where they can thrive, grow, and ultimately make their mark in the world of public safety.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our speakers, sponsors, and volunteers whose unwavering support will make this event possible. Your commitment to the ideals of our organization is truly commendable, and we are honored to have you as part of our community.

Thank you for being a vital part of the 2024 TPSA State Conference. Together, let us embrace the theme, "Your Future Is Here," and pave the way for a future that holds limitless possibilities.

Here's to an extraordinary State Conference, where together, we'll shape the future of public safety.

Sincerely,



Kira Hassler Newsom
Executive Director



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2.0 Conference Overview

2.1 Dates and Location

The conference will be held from March 25th- March 28th, 2024 at the Marriott Dallas Allen Hotel & Convention Center.

*777 Watters Creek Blvd,
Allen, Texas 75013*

2.2 Theme and Objectives

This year's conference theme, "**Your Future is Here**", directly affirms that TPSA is a vital part of students' paths toward their career goals. TPSA is the ideal environment where students can acquire essential knowledge, develop practical skills, and experience real-world scenarios they might encounter in their chosen public safety field. The theme stresses that there's no need to wait for some distant future to prepare - the time is now, and the place is here, at TPSA. The designs effectively capture this sense of immediacy, place, and the vital role of TPSA in shaping students' futures. We hope this theme will inspire insightful discussions, incite innovation, and encourage collaboration among participants.

2.3 Organizing Committee

This year's event planning is being led by the Board of Directors, but it's essential to acknowledge that the success of this endeavor would not be possible without the invaluable contributions of the Executive Council, Regional Representatives, dedicated Staff, and committed volunteers.

Board of Directors

Kira Hassler Newsom (Executive Director)
Thomas Helgoth (Director of Finance)
Connor Winston (Director of IT)



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3.0 Schedule

3.1 Monday - March 25th

08:30 AM - 12:30 PM Meeting & Event Set-Up (all TPSA staff)

03:00 PM Hotel Check-in

03:00 PM - 04:15 PM Conference Check-in

04:30 PM - 05:00 PM Mandatory Advisor Meeting

05:30 PM - 06:30 PM Opening Ceremonies

07:00 PM - 08:00 PM Dinner* (Optional \$20.00/person)

08:00 PM - 09:30 PM Student Social* (Optional \$5.00/person)

** Meal options must be selected in the conference registration system and paid for with your conference registration.*

3.1 Tuesday - March 26th

07:30 AM - 08:30 PM Breakfast* (Optional \$10.00/person)

08:20 AM - 08:50 PM Volunteer Check-in**

08:55 AM - 09:15 AM Volunteer Orientation

10:00 AM Competitive Events Start***

12:00 PM - 01:30 PM Lunch* (Optional \$15.00/ person)

*** All event volunteers will check-in and attend orientation on the same day.*

**** Competitive Events End Time dependant upon event entry*

3.1 Wednesday - March 27th

07:30 AM - 08:30 PM Breakfast* (Optional \$10.00/person)

08:20 AM - 08:50 PM Volunteer Check-in**

08:55 AM - 09:15 AM Volunteer Orientation

10:00 AM Competitive Events Start***

12:00 PM - 01:30 PM Lunch* (Optional \$15.00/ person)

3.1 Thursday - March 28th

07:30 AM - 08:30 PM Breakfast* (Optional \$10.00/person)

09:00 AM - 10:30 PM Closing Ceremonies & Awards^

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM Closing Ceremonies Clean Up (all TPSA staff)

^ Chapters are financially responsible for the shipment of any awards earned and not received at closing ceremonies.



3.2 Competitive Event Schedule

Due to the fluid nature of event management individualized student competitive event schedules will be provided to advisors at check in. Advisors should plan for students to be in attendance for the duration of the conference.

3.3 Keynote Speaker

Opening Ceremonies will feature a Keynote Speaker, stay tuned for the announcement!

3.4 Workshops and Trainings

Advisor workshops are currently being developed. Please check back in the coming weeks for updated information.

3.5 Exhibitor Booths

Exhibitor booths representing various public service agencies and product representatives will be set up throughout the venue, offering attendees valuable insights and opportunities for engagement. If you or someone you know are interested in hosting an exhibitor booth please reach out to Connor Winston ConnorWinston@tpsa.info.

3.6 Networking Opportunities

Advisors and students alike will have ample networking opportunities throughout the conference. They can engage with exhibitor booths, connect with peers during the Monday night dinner and student social, and participate in advisor workshops, fostering valuable connections and insights for their professional and educational journeys.

3.7 Student Board Elections

Student board elections will take place during the state conference. Additional information will be added to this section in the coming weeks.



4.0 Competitions and Rules

4.1 Competition Categories

The Texas Public Safety Association offers a diverse range of competitive events designed to assess and enhance your readiness for careers in public safety. These events fall into three main categories Roleplay, Skills Assessment, and Prepared Events.

4.2 Rules and Guidelines

All state competitive events will adhere strictly to TPSA policies outlined in the bylaws, code of conduct, competition rulebook, and individual event guidelines, ensuring fairness and integrity throughout the competition process.

4.3 Event Entry and Eligibility

High School Public Service students who have competed at a 2024 Regional Competition, placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in the respective events, and scored at least 60 points are eligible to participate in state level competitive events. Students are limited to participation in two competitive events.

4.4 Attendance, Substitutions, Drops

Checking in to Your Event

Competitors must check in to their event at their designated check-in time. Competitors that arrive ten (10) minutes after their designated check-in time will be marked as no-shows and not be allowed to compete out of respect for the time commitment made by our judges and volunteers.

Substitution Policy

TPSA has enacted an emergency substitution policy to accommodate emergency situations for students on team events needing to be swapped out before the competition.

- Substitutions may only occur for emergencies up to five days before the competition. After the 5-day deadline has passed, substitutions can not be made, and the competitor must forfeit the event (teams may still be able to compete, see the Drop Policy). Grades are not a valid emergency.
- Substitutes must be active paid members of TPSA.
- Substitutions must be approved by the Executive Council
- Substitutions can not be made for individual events.



Drop Policy

- Any team of 3 or more students may compete with one less than the required number of team members; however, no more than a one-member deficit is allowed.
- Teams composed of 2 or fewer members will forfeit the opportunity to compete in a particular event if a member is removed for any reason other than an emergency substitution.
- No team can compete with a deficit greater than 1 regardless of the reason.

State Conference

- No more than 50% of any team may be substituted for a State Competition.
- The substitutes must have attended and have competed at a regional competition, not in the same event.
- Only emergency substitution requests will be considered after the close of registration.

4.5 Scoring

The Texas Public Safety Association (TPSA) aims to provide a fair and transparent scoring system to ensure the integrity and credibility of our competitions.

(a) All scores from individual judges will be averaged to determine a competitor or team's final score for each event. This process ensures fairness and objectivity in scoring.

(b) Ties are not allowed for a numerically scored event. In the event of a tie, judges are required to review and adjust their scorecards to break the tie. The revision should be based on the team or individual's overall performance, paying close attention to aspects like adherence to safety protocols, accuracy in executing tasks, professionalism, teamwork, and communication. Under no circumstances should ties be broken based on time. All options must be exhausted to break a tie, in the event that a tie is still unable to be broken the Competition Governance Team for that conference must approve a tied placement.



4.6 Awards

Medals are awarded to 1st place, 2nd place, and 3rd place competitors for each competitive event. Each winning entry or team will receive a trophy to be displayed at their school, symbolizing their collective excellence and teamwork.

The presentation of awards is an integral part of closing ceremonies at the State Conference. It is highly recommended that all participants and advisors attend the ceremony to celebrate the achievements of all involved. If you choose to leave the conference prior to the award ceremony, you will be responsible for any shipping charges incurred to receive your medals or trophies. Please notify the event organizers in advance if you will be unable to attend the ceremony.

4.7 Grievances

A grievance is a formal complaint or allegation regarding a decision, action, or condition that a competitor, advisor, or team believes to be unfair, unjust, or in violation of TPSA rules and guidelines.

Reporting Process

1. **Submission:** All grievances must be submitted through the myTPSA portal. No grievances will be accepted through any other means.
2. **Initial Review:** Upon receipt of a grievance, the Competition Governance Team will initiate a preliminary review to determine the validity of the complaint.

Hearing and Investigation

1. **Notification:** The Competition Governance Team will notify the party against whom the grievance has been filed, outlining the nature of the complaint and requesting a written response by a specified deadline.
2. **Hearing:** A formal hearing will be conducted where the Competition Governance Team will review all submitted materials and any additional evidence.
3. **Decision:** After thorough review, the Competition Governance Team will make a final decision and notify all parties involved.



Time-Sensitive Nature

Due to the time-sensitive nature of grievances, especially during regional and state competitions, specific deadlines for filing and resolving grievances will be posted at each event.

Non-Compliance

Grievances that do not follow this prescribed process and any posted time limits will not be considered.

Additional Resources

For step-by-step guidance on how to submit a grievance, please visit [TPSA Grievance Guide](#).

4.8 Competition Governance Team

The Competition Governance Team is a specialized body within the Texas Public Safety Association at each conference designed to ensure the integrity and fairness of all TPSA competitions. This team comprises one Board of Directors member, one Executive Council member, and a Regional Representative for regional competitions. For state-level competitions, the team expands to include two Board of Directors members and three Executive Council members. Their key responsibilities include reviewing grievances, overseeing the scoring process, and disqualifying participants when necessary. If any team member feels strongly about an issue that needs broader deliberation, they can move the matter to be escalated to the full Board of Directors and Executive Council for a comprehensive vote. This structure ensures a balanced and equitable resolution of any challenges or conflicts during competitions.



5.0 Accommodations and Venue Information

5.1 Required Accommodations

TPSA has partnered with the Marriot to offer accommodations at a reduced cost. All schools located outside a 75 mile radius of the event venue are required to book accommodations at the Marriott Dallas Allen Hotel & Convention Center for the duration of the event. Schools who choose to book alternate accommodations without prior approval from the TPSA Executive Director shall not be permitted to compete.

Marriott Dallas Allen Hotel & Convention Center

777 Watters Creek Blvd,

Allen, Texas 75013

469.675.0848

MarriottAllen.com

5.2 Financial Information

Rates

- Double Queen, Max Occupancy of 4 - \$150.00 per room, per night
- Single King, Max Occupancy of 2 - \$150.00 per room, per night

Meals

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner are NOT included in the room rate. To order meals through TPSA please select the desired meal option in the TPSA Conference Registration System.

Parking

Parking in the attached parking garage is offered at no cost to attendees. Overflow parking will be available offsite for all oversized vehicles. Bus drivers should prepare to park offsite. Schools should get in contact with the Marriott to arrange bus parking.



5.3 Reservation Process

All reservations must be made by Friday March 1st, 2024. Schools who do not compete until March are encouraged to complete room reservations in advance to ensure availability. Cancellations can be made up until 48 hours prior to check-in date. In the event that the Marriott is unable to accommodate your reservation due to availability please contact KiraHasslerNewsom@TPSA.info.

Option 1 - Online When using the provided link, you will only be permitted to reserve (3) three rooms at a time. Booking Link: [Marriott Booking Link](#)

Option 2 - Email To reserve 4 or more rooms, complete the [rooming list](#) and email it to Tina.odonkor@marriottallen.com

Option 3 - Phone For Marriott Hotel Reservation phone assistance: +1 (888) 236-2427

6. Conference Registration

6.1 Fee Schedule

Rate Type	Amount	Opens	Closes
Volunteer	Free	02/12/2024	03/15/2024
Volunteer Penalty^	\$250.00	03/16/2024 (applied)	
Attendee	\$60.00	02/12/2024	03/01/2024
Late Attendee*	\$100.00	03/02/2024	03/15/2024

^ Chapters who fail to register the required two (2) volunteers will have the volunteer penalty applied to their account.

* Regions who compete after the close of regular attendee registration will not incur the late attendee fee. These regions must register by 03/15/2024 to be eligible to compete.

Attendees and volunteers will receive a state conference t-shirt, patch, and additional swag provided by vendors. No meals are included in the conference registration fee. Meals must be purchased through the conference registration system and be selected at the time of registration. Only registered attendees and volunteers are guaranteed a seat at opening and closing ceremonies.



6.2 Volunteer Requirement

The TPSA State Conference is a large undertaking that requires hundreds of volunteers to ensure that all activities run smoothly and efficiently and keep costs minimized for participants. To fill this volunteer need, each chapter attending state conference is required to register two (2) volunteers. The volunteer requirements are as follows:

- One adult (18+) volunteer that is not a student competitor. Advisors may serve as a registered volunteer but must fulfill all volunteer requirements as outlined in this policy.
- One adult (18+) or youth (14+) that is not a student competitor.
- Volunteers must be available to work both Tuesday 03/26/24 and Wednesday 03/27/24 for a combined minimum number of eight (8) hours. Total number of hours is dependent on job assignment. Meals will be provided for those volunteering during lunch.
- Volunteer jobs will be assigned on an as needed basis at volunteer check in. No requests will be honored prior to check in.
- Volunteers must be entered into the conference registration system before it closes 03/15/24.
- Volunteers must check in on Tuesday 03/26/24 between 8:20 and 8:50 am.
- Volunteers must attend the volunteer orientation at 8:55 am on Tuesday 03/26.

Failure to register the required number of volunteers will result in the \$250 penalty being applied to your chapters account. This penalty must be paid prior to your arrival at the state conference. Chapters who do not pay the penalty will not be permitted to participate in competitive events. No refunds will be given.

In the event your chapter registers the two (2) required volunteers and one or both volunteers fails to fulfill the requirements of their assignment a \$250 penalty will be applied to your account. This penalty must be paid prior to membership registration for the 24-25 school year.



6.3 Registration Process

To register attendees and volunteers for the 2024 state conference, visit the TPSA State Conference website at <https://texaspublicsafetyassociation.org/conferences/state> . Click the registration link and follow system instructions. For registration questions and issues visit <https://texaspublicsafetyassociation.org/help/registration> .

6.4 Meal options

TPSA will not be providing meals as part of your state conference registration fees. This decision was made after reviewing state conference survey data and conducting an in depth cost analysis. TPSA staff have researched alternatives to previous offerings and have come up with a plan to offer meals delivered from outside vendors. At this time vendor specifics are not available as we are still working out details. The meal fee schedule and some potential options are below.

Meal	Cost/person	Possible Options (not confirmed)
Breakfast	\$10.00	Chick Fil A Breakfast, Rosa's Breakfast Tacos, grab and go muffins, fruit, yogurt.
Student Social	\$5.00	Ice Cream Sundae Bar
Lunch	\$15.00	Chick Fil A, Olive Garden, In and Out Burger, Raising Cains
Dinner	\$20.00	Lupe Tortilla Fajita Bar

7.0 Conference Policies and Code of Conduct

7.1 Code of Conduct

This event will strictly adhere to the [TPSA Code of Conduct](#).

7.2 Media and Photography Policy

All media and Photography requests shall be directed to kirahasslernewsom@tpsa.info. TPSA does not permit spectators inside the competition area for any competitive event. This means that no unauthorized viewers are permitted to enter the contest event areas to view, photograph, or video a competitive event.



7.3 Safety and Emergency Procedures

The safety and well-being of all conference participants are our utmost priority.

- Emergency exits and evacuation routes will be clearly marked and accessible throughout the conference venue.
- Attendees are expected to adhere to all safety protocols and guidelines provided by conference staff and venue personnel.
- In the event of an emergency, attendees must follow instructions from conference organizers and emergency personnel.

First Aid Assistance

- A designated first aid station will be set up at the conference venue, equipped with necessary medical supplies and equipment.
- Incident reporting forms will be available at the first aid station and shall be completed for incidents impacting conference attendees.
- Attendees requiring medical attention should notify conference staff immediately.
- Any medical conditions or allergies should be communicated to conference organizers in advance for appropriate accommodations.

Reporting Safety Concerns

- Attendees are encouraged to report any safety concerns or incidents to conference staff promptly.
- Conference organizers will address reported safety concerns promptly and take necessary actions to ensure the safety of all participants.

Compliance with Health Guidelines

- All attendees must comply with any health guidelines and regulations issued by relevant authorities.



Cooperation and Responsibility

- All attendees are responsible for their own safety and the safety of others.
- Cooperation with conference staff, security personnel, and emergency responders is essential to maintaining a safe conference environment.
- Any reckless or unsafe behavior that jeopardizes the safety of others will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the conference premises.

By attending the state conference, all participants agree to abide by this Safety and First Aid Policy. Your cooperation ensures a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

8.0 Scholarships

TPSA scholarships help make college or trade school more affordable for students who demonstrate exceptional leadership qualities and are committed to a future career in the public safety industry. TPSA is pleased to offer three scholarship awards at our State Conference. Our scholarships provide financial assistance to active TPSA members currently enrolled as seniors in a high school public safety CTSO.

8.1 Award Amounts

Three scholarships will be awarded at the State Conference. When you apply, you are applying for the opportunity to receive one of the three awards listed below. Only one award will be given to an applicant.

- \$2,000
- \$1,500
- \$1,000

8.2 Eligibility

- Graduating Senior in the current academic school year
- Active (paid) Member of TPSA
- Must be in good standing with TPSA as defined in the TPSA bylaws and never be placed on probation or suspension.
- Must currently have a minimum 3.0 GPA (4.0 scale)
- Must be active in your school's Public Safety Career Tech Student Organization and TPSA Chapter.



8.3 Timeline

- 01/01/2024 Scholarship application opens online
- 03/01/2024 Application closes at 11:59 pm
- 03/02/2023-03/23/2023 Applications reviewed by TPSA Scholarship Review Committee.
- 03/27/2023 Recipients notified of their award at State Conference closing ceremonies.
(Students do not need to be present at State Conference to receive scholarship awards)

8.4 Application

- Obtain a Digital copy of two letters of recommendation with the recommender's contact information (one from a current TPSA Advisor).
- Obtain a Digital Copy of Unofficial High School Transcript
- Complete the [Online Application](#)

9.0 Conference Communication

Check your email the week before the state conference for details about on site communication. Information will also be posted around the conference.

We hope this State Conference Guidebook will be an invaluable resource throughout the event, helping you navigate, engage, and make the most of your conference experience.

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