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July 31, 2024

Honorable Joseph Stanford
Chief of Police
City of Ashland
P.O. Box 849
Ashland, Alabama 36251

Dear Chief Stanford:

This Office is in receipt of your letter requesting an opinion on whether the Clay County Sheriff's Department and the Clay County Commission are entitled to reimbursement for the training expenses of a law enforcement officer initially employed by the City of Ashland.

This question was previously answered in the enclosed opinion to Honorable John H. Hood, Mayor, City of Valley, dated Jul. 30, 1981, A.G. No. 81-00475. This opinion specifically states that "[a]ny governmental unit which hires a law enforcement officer" within the time frame prescribed by section 36-21-7(a) of the Code of Alabama is "required to reimburse the governmental unit which paid for the training." *Id.* (emphasis added). The *Hood* opinion (applying the previous time frame of twelve months) then provides the following example:

[I]f a law enforcement officer is trained while employed by governmental unit A and within twelve months after completing the training is hired by governmental unit B, governmental unit B would be required to reimburse unit A for the training. If the law enforcement officer is subsequently hired by governmental unit C within twelve months after having completed the training, governmental unit C would be required to reimburse governmental unit B for the expenses of the training.

Honorable Joseph Stanford
July 31, 2024
Page 2

Id. at 3. Although your scenario arises from a law enforcement officer hired by governmental unit A, later hired by governmental unit B, and then returning back to governmental unit A, the analysis provided in *Hood* remains the same. That is, the obligation to provide reimbursement for training expenses travels with the law enforcement officer for the entire thirty-six months. Thus, the Clay County Sheriff's Department and the Clay County Commission are entitled to reimbursement for the training expenses of a law enforcement officer initially employed by the City of Ashland.

I trust the enclosed opinion will answer your question. If, however, you have any further questions, please feel free to let me know.

Sincerely,

STEVE MARSHALL
Attorney General
By:



Brenda F. Smith
Chief, Opinions Division

SM/BFS/RWS/rw
Enclosure: As stated
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