

FREDERICK POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

Section 18: Personnel Functions **Order Number:** 1805
Topic: SELECTION PROCESS FOR SWORN PERSONNEL **Issued by:** Chief of Police
Approved: 09/24/18
Review: Annually in March by Support Services Division Commander
Supersedes: G.O. 1805 dated 01/19/18

.01 PURPOSE:

To outline the hiring and selection process for sworn positions.

.02 CROSS-REF:

G.O. [1800](#) "Recruitment of Sworn Personnel"
SOP [PU-001](#), "Background Investigations"
SOP [PU-003](#), "Board Interview Process"
SOP [PU-005](#), "Written Entry-Level Test"
SOP [PU-006](#), "Psychological Testing"
SOP [PU-007](#), "Physical Examination"
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
City of Frederick Records Retention Policy
Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission (MPCTC) Rules and Regulations
CALEA Standards 32.1.1, 32.2.1, 32.2.7, 32.2.8, 32.2.10

.03 DISCUSSION:

It is essential that the Department identify and select those candidates most qualified and best suited to fill its sworn positions. The hiring and selection process is designed to meet this goal.

.04 POLICY:

The Department values diversity in its workforce and is committed to the goal of attracting, selecting and hiring the most qualified candidates. As an equal opportunity employer, no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or genetic information.

.05 DEFINITIONS:

Entry-Level Applicant – an applicant applying for a sworn position within the Department who is required to complete entry-level training as defined by MPCTC to acquire certification as a police officer.

Lateral Applicant – an applicant applying for a sworn position within the Department who currently holds MPCTC certification, or is eligible for re-certification, within three (3) years of separation from another Maryland police agency.

Out of State Lateral Applicant – an applicant applying for a sworn position with the Department who has already completed a certified entry-level police academy, outside of the State of Maryland, and has acquired certification through that State.

Re-hire Applicant – an applicant who has separated from service, in good standing, with the Frederick Police Department and is applying for re-hire to a sworn position and is eligible for re-certification within three (3) years of separation.

.10 AUTOMATION OF THE POLICE OFFICER SELECTION AND HIRING PROCESS:

1. The Department uses online software to automate portions of the police officer selection and hiring processes:

2. NEOGOV applicant tracking software will be used to automate the application and prescreening questionnaire. Additionally, NEOGOV allows the Department to maintain the applicant database; send notification to applicants at each step of the process; facilitates online test and interview scheduling and prepares Equal Employment Opportunity reports.
3. The Supervisor, Personnel Unit or designee, will be the administrator of these software programs.
4. Applicants who are unable to access these online software programs will be permitted to submit paper copies of the respective documents, however the information will then be transferred to the software programs by the Personnel Unit.

.15 HIRING SWORN EMPLOYEES

1. Entry-level applicants will follow the steps enumerated in Section .25 below.
2. Lateral applicants will follow the steps enumerated in Section .30 below. Lateral applicants, if hired, will enter the pay scale at Step 3 on the pay scale that is in effect at the time of their hiring.
3. Out of State Lateral Applicants will be required to attend and successfully complete the Frederick Police Department's entry-level academy. They will accrue benefits and enter the pay scale the same as an entry-level applicant.
4. Re-hire applicants that apply to the Department are subject to the same selection and scrutiny as any other applicant. Re-hire applicants that reached their normal retirement date and are re-hired will have to make their retirement plan selection as outlined in Sections 7 and 8 of the Retirement Plan. Re-hire applicants who reached their normal retirement date and are re-hired will accrue benefits the same as an entry-level applicant and will enter the pay scale at Step 1.
5. Applicants who separated from service prior to reaching their normal retirement date, and are re-hired, within 90 days of their separation, will enter the pay scale the same as an entry-level applicant but will accrue leave at the same rate as when they separated from service with the Department.

.20 OBJECTIVES:

The selection and hiring process, as outlined in this Order and adopted by the Frederick Police Department, has been designed to meet the following objectives:

1. To attract and hire the most qualified applicants available;
2. To provide a realistic, nondiscriminatory, comprehensive selection and hiring process in which all individuals desiring employment with the Department are able to participate;
3. The scoring methods and criteria for all elements of the process are administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner;
4. To ensure that applicants understand the qualifications required for employment with the Department;
5. To ensure that police personnel involved in the selection and hiring process understand their duties and responsibilities as members of the agency; and,
6. To provide a process which fulfills the mandates of the "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990" (ADA) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

.25 ENTRY-LEVEL SELECTION PROCESS:

The Frederick Police Department's Entry-Level Hiring and Selection Process is comprised of several steps and is divided into two Stages. The first stage is the Pre-Offer Stage and covers steps 1 thru 7. The Post-Offer Stage covers the remaining steps. Applicants must successfully complete each step in order to remain eligible to continue in the process.

Pre-Offer Stage:

Step 1 – Application submission- Either online or paper copy

Step 2 – Assessment Center- (One Day)

- Orientation- May be online for applicants over 200 miles away
- Complete Pre-Screen Questionnaire
- Written Testing

Step 3 – Personal History Questionnaire (PHQ)

Step 4 – Physical Fitness Testing

Step 5 – Background Investigation

Post-Offer Stage:

Step 6- Board Interview

Step 7 – Polygraph Examination

Step 8 – Psychological Testing

Step 9 – Selection Committee Review

Step 10 – Final Selection by the Chief of Police

Step 11 – Medical Examination and Drug Screening

.30 LATERAL SELECTION PROCESS:

The Frederick Police Department's In-State Lateral Hiring and Selection Process is comprised of several steps and is divided into two Stages. The first stage is the Pre-Offer Stage and covers steps 1 thru 5. The Post-Offer Stage covers the remaining steps.

Pre-Offer Stage

Step 1 – Application and pre-screening

Step 2- Physical Fitness Examination

Step 3 – Submit Personal History Questionnaire (PHQ)

Step 4 – Background Investigation

Step 5- Board Interview

Post Conditional Offer Stage:

Step 6 – Polygraph Examination

Step 7 – Psychological Testing

Step 8 – Selection Committee Review

Step 9 – One on One Interview and Final Selection by the Chief of Police (Discretionary)

Step 10 – Medical Examination and Drug Screening

.35 APPLICATION AND PRE-SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Anyone seeking employment with the Department as a police officer must complete and submit an application for employment and the Pre-Screening Questionnaire, via the website www.frederickpolice.org.
2. The Pre-Screening Questionnaire contains several job related questions and provides the Department with necessary information to determine an applicant's eligibility for obtaining police officer certification in the State of Maryland.
3. A list of automatic disqualifiers for police officer certification may be found in Section .40 below.
4. All Pre-Screening Questionnaires will be reviewed by assigned background investigators, as well as the Supervisor, Personnel Unit.
5. Applicants who provide no automatic disqualifying information on the Pre-Screening Questionnaire will be eligible to continue in the process.
6. The Supervisor, Personnel Unit will forward all Pre-Screening Questionnaires that contain disqualifying information to the Commander, Support Service Division for review.
7. The Commander, Support Services division will make a determination regarding whether the applicant will be eliminated from the process based on the disqualifying information, or whether the Pre-Screening questionnaire should be forwarded to the Chief of Police for further review.
8. MPCTC Regulations do permit waiver requests for certain disqualifiers. In the unique event the Chief of Police chooses to request a waiver, the Supervisor, Personnel Unit will prepare the necessary request and send it to MPTC in accordance with MPCTC regulations.
9. The Commander, Support Services Division will notify applicants who are eliminated from the process based on disqualifying information in writing of their elimination.
10. During the application process, applicants who show documented incidents of untruthfulness in their backgrounds may be permanently disqualified and will not be allowed to apply for a position of police officer with the Frederick Police Department. The final decision of a permanent ban from the hiring process will be made by the Commander of the Support Services Division.

11. During the application process, applicants who have an automatic disqualifier, as defined in section .40 and .45 may be permanently disqualified from applying for a position of police officer with the Frederick Police Department. The final decision will be made by the Commander of the Support Services Division.

.40 AUTOMATIC DIQUALIFIERS FOR POLICE OFFICER POSITIONS:

1. Failure to provide requested information on any document or at any point in the hiring process;
2. Providing false information on any document or at any point in the hiring and selection process;
3. Any Criminal involvement within 3 years of application;
4. Any Illegal drug use within 3 years of application;
5. Ineligibility under Federal or Maryland State law to possess or carry a firearm;
6. Conviction for any felony or for any domestic violence offense (including, but not limited to, Assault, Battery, Telephone Misuse, False Imprisonment, Stalking, etc.);
7. Illegal drug use which fails to meet the standards of the MPTC Rules and Regulations, Section .16, "Prior Substance Abuse by Applicants for Certification;"
8. Any uses of heroin, LSD, PCP, or hallucinogen including psilocybin, methamphetamine, ecstasy, cocaine; including Synthetic Cannabinoids.
9. Been convicted or otherwise found guilty of selling, manufacturing, or distributing a controlled dangerous substance, narcotic drug or marijuana
10. Ever illegally sold, produced, cultivated, distributed, or transported a controlled dangerous substance, narcotic drug, or marijuana
11. Ever illegally used a controlled dangerous substance, narcotic drug, or marijuana, while employed to enforce federal, state, or local law by any government entity.
12. Candidates cannot have used marijuana within the three (3) years preceding the date of their application for employment, regardless of the location of use (even if marijuana usage is legal in the candidate's home state). The various forms of marijuana include cannabis, hashish, hash oil, and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), in both synthetic and natural forms. A candidate's use of marijuana in its various forms for medical reasons, regardless of whether or not it was prescribed by a licensed practicing physician, cannot be used as a mitigating factor.
13. More than 5 lifetime uses of any other controlled dangerous substance;
14. More than 1 use of any other controlled dangerous substance after age 21;
15. Being involuntarily terminated from a previous law enforcement position whether sworn or civilian
16. For any conviction equivalent to Maryland Motor Vehicle Law, Section 21-902 (Impaired Driving) within 5 years of application;

17. Discharge from military service with less than "General Under Honorable Conditions."

.45 PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY BANS FROM APPLYING FOR POLICE OFFICER WITH THE FREDERICK POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Individuals discovered, during background investigations, to be involved in the following activities may be permanently eliminated from re-applying as a police officer with the Frederick Police Department. The final decision of a permanent elimination/ban from applying with the Frederick Police Department will be made by the Chief of Police.

1. Permanent Elimination:
 - A. Member of criminal gang or a security threat group;
 - B. Significant reactions during polygraph examination or truth device as determined by the polygraph examiner;
 - C. Three or more license suspensions;
 - D. One conviction, guilty plea, or probation before judgement (PBJ) for any felony;
 - E. Two or more convictions, guilty pleas, or PBJ for any misdemeanor;
 - F. Patterns or history of racial, religious or gender bias by an applicant discovered during any phase of the background process;
 - G. Patterns of violence or harassment towards another person is evidenced and discovered during any phase of the background process;
 - H. Two or more convictions, guilty pleas, or PBJ for driving while intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any combination thereof regardless of the timeframe;
 - I. Convictions of a crime involving a sexual act where the federal, state, or local laws require the applicant to be placed on the sexual offender Registry after they have served their criminal sentences or when they have been released on a parole or probation; and/ or
 - J. Selling, producing, distributing, cultivating or transporting of a controlled dangerous substance by the applicant, even if not criminally charged.
2. **May Eliminate:** In lieu of a permanent ban a one year ban form the start date of the academy may be imposed for the following:
 - A. Untruthfulness- cannot re-apply for one year from the start of the academy. A permanent ban will be determined by the Commander of the Support Services Division;
 - B. Established propensity for the abuse of any prescribed drug, narcotic, medication or alcohol may be cause for permanent elimination;
 - C. Applicants driving record indicates a continual or serious driving history (i.e. insurance violations, 10-50 P/I's, fleeing and eluding);
 - D. Documented credit history of garnishments, bankruptcy, chronic late payments, defaulted loans and debts;

- E. Documented history of failure to honor and satisfy judgments, alimony, child support, fines, etc.;
- F. Two or more license suspensions in five years from the start date of the academy;
- G. Significant reaction during polygraph examination or truth device as determined by the polygraph examiner;
- H. Five or more traffic violations within three years from the start of the academy;
- I. Failing the psychological exam will result in a two year ban from the start date of the academy process applied for; and/or

Failing the medical exam will result in a two year ban from the start date of the academy process applied for.

.50 WRITTEN TESTING:

1. For entry-level written testing, the Department uses the Police Officer Selection Test (POST) developed by Standard & Associates of Chicago, Illinois.
2. The test is administered and scored in accordance with the procedures set forth by Standard & Associates.
3. The written test is made up of four separate timed sections.
4. All questions are multiple choice.
5. To obtain a passing score on the written test, the applicant must attain an overall average score of 70% with no individual section score below 65%. Applicants who attain a passing test score are eligible to continue in the selection process.
6. Applicants who do not obtain a passing score will be eligible to retest so long as there are written test dates available in the current process.
7. If no additional test dates are available in the current process, the applicant may re-apply for the next process.

.55 PERSONAL HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE (PHQ)

1. PHQs can be completed online, or printed from the website www.frederickpolice.org
2. Applicants will be provided instructions on properly completing the PHQ. The form is to be downloaded from the website and saved, to ensure the document is accessible.
3. Applicants will be given sufficient time (two weeks minimum), to complete the PHQ prior to arriving for their scheduled Physical testing.
4. Applicants who fail to complete the PHQ within the allotted time will be eliminated from the selection process.
5. Applicants will bring their completed PHQ to Physical testing, or ensure it is mailed prior to their Physical testing date.

.60 BOARD INTERVIEW:

Once written and physical testing is completed, eligible candidates will be invited to continue

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competing for the position. The Department's goal is to interview all eligible candidates; however, this is not always possible. In the event it is not possible to interview all eligible candidates, a cutoff score will be selected based on the results of the written test. Candidates who scored above the cutoff score will be invited to interview. Candidates who scored below the cutoff score will not be invited to interview.

1. Each Departmental Interview Board will be comprised of a diverse group of a total of three sworn employees, at least one of whom will hold the rank of corporal or above, approved by the Chief of Police.
2. Candidates will be asked a series of questions during the interview that are designed to illicit responses that will help us determine the candidate's suitability for a position with the Department.
3. The panel will score each interview independently, arrive at a consensus score, and will make a recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should advance to the background investigation stage of the selection process.
4. At the conclusion of Board Interview, the Commander, Support Services Division and Supervisor, Personnel Unit will determine which applicants will advance to the background stage of the process. This determination will be made by reviewing each applicant's file to determine which applicants appear best suited for a position with the Department.
5. The Supervisor, Personnel Unit will notify each applicant that interviewed of their interview score and whether or not they were selected to advance to background.
6. Applicants who are not selected to advance to background will be eliminated from the process and may re-apply.

.60 PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST:

Pre-employment Physical Fitness testing for police officer candidates will be conducted in accordance with [SOP PU-004 Physical Agility Testing](#).

.65 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION AND POLYGRAPH:

Pre-employment background investigations and polygraph examinations for police officer candidates will be conducted in accordance with [SOP PU-001 Sworn Background Investigations](#).

.70 CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT:

The candidate will receive a "Conditional Offer of Employment" prior to the polygraph examination. This offer will stress that the candidate must successfully complete all remaining components of the selection process and that a "Final Offer of Employment" will be made to those candidates believed to be best suited for a Police Officer position with the Department.

.75 MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND URINALYSIS:

Pre-employment medical examinations for police officer candidates will be conducted in accordance with [SOP PU-007 Physical Examination](#).

.80 PSYCHOLOGICAL SCREENING:

Pre-Employment Psychological Screening for police officer candidates will be conducted in accordance with [SOP PU-006 Pre-Employment Psychological Screening](#).

.85 FINAL REVIEW AND SELECTION:

1. The Police Officer Selection Committee will be comprised of the following personnel:
 - A. Supervisor, Personnel Unit;

- B. Commander, Support Services Division;
 - C. Deputy Chiefs of Police
 - D. Chief of Police; and
 - E. If necessary, the Department Psychologist
2. The Supervisor, Personnel Unit will assemble the background investigation files of those candidates who have completed all previous steps of the selection process for the Selection Committee's review and recommendation.
 3. Each member of the Selection Committee will conduct a thorough review of each candidate's file and will either recommend the candidate for a position or not recommend the candidate for a position.
 4. The Chief of Police will review the recommendations and will either approve or not approve the candidate for the position.
 5. In the event more candidates are approved for positions than there are vacant positions, the Selection Committee will rank the candidates in numerical order. In the event a higher ranked candidate declines a final offer of employment, the next candidate on the approved list will be offered the position.
 6. The Chief of Police will have the final decision in selecting which candidates are to be hired.

.100 RECORD KEEPING:

1. All selection process material is confidential and will be treated accordingly.
2. Applicants will be notified of their status upon their completion of each step in the selection process.
3. Copies of correspondence sent to an applicant will become a part of the applicant's file.
4. The Supervisor, Personnel Unit will handle all selection process material in accordance with Department Policy and the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.