

SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline

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Part Title: Personnel		Chapter Title: Recruitment and Selection	
Chief of Police:			

Selection Process for Police Recruits

I Policy

To establish procedures for the selection of qualified police recruits and the responsibilities of the department in the selection process. (CALEA 31.4.1)

II Definitions

Applicant – Someone who has submitted an application with the City of Springfield for the position of police officer.

Candidate – An applicant who has received and accepted a Conditional Offer of Employment for the position of police officer.

III Procedure

1 QUALIFICATIONS

1.1 In order to maintain a professional and qualified Department, certain minimum hiring standards must be maintained. The minimum qualifications for the position of Springfield police officer are:

1.1.1 21 years of age by the date of commission.

1.1.2 A United States citizen.

1.1.3 Be in excellent physical condition.

1.1.4 Meet the vision tests that demonstrate the candidate is able to perform the essential functions of the position. This includes having vision correctable to 20/40, along with satisfactory color vision and depth perception.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

- 1.1.5 Meet the hearing standards test that demonstrates the candidate is able to perform the essential functions of the position.
- 1.1.6 Be able to acquire a valid Missouri class "F" driver's license by the time of appointment.
- 1.1.7 No objectionable tattoos or brands, and no tattoos or brands visible while on duty or representing the SPD in an official capacity, unless approved by the Chief of Police.
- 1.1.8 Except for the ears, no portion of the body may be pierced. The ears may not have more than four pierced holes, each.
- 1.1.9 Pass all required post-offer exams including: polygraph examination, drug screen (urinalysis), psychological examination, medical examination, final review, and a follow-up investigation (if needed).
- 1.1.10 Regular Academy Program applicant education requirements:
 - 1.1.10(a) Have 60 credit hours from an accredited college or university; or
 - 1.1.10(b) Have two years of active military service with an honorable discharge; or
 - 1.1.10(c) Possess a Missouri Class A certification or currently enrolled in a Class A POST program with successful completion of the POST exam within six months of application deadline; or
 - 1.1.10(d) Possess a Missouri Class B certification as a peace officer, plus two years full-time law enforcement experience within the last five years; or
 - 1.1.10(e) Have 30 credit hours from an accredited college or university and three years of experience as a Springfield police cadet.
- 1.1.11 Lateral Hire Program applicant education requirements:
 - 1.1.11(a) In addition to the Regular Academy Program applicant education requirements, lateral applicants must possess a Missouri POST Class A license and have a minimum of two years full-time sworn civilian police experience in any state, within the last five years.
 - 1.1.11(a.1) If an applicant does not possess a Missouri POST Class A certification but possesses a law enforcement certification through another state, they may participate in the testing process while seeking reciprocity through Missouri POST.
 - 1.1.11(a.2) Primary duties must include responding to calls for service, conducting preliminary and/or follow-up investigation of crimes, responding to traffic crashes, and apprehending, detaining, and arresting suspects.
 - 1.1.11(b) Currently certified as a law enforcement officer in the state of Missouri with a Missouri POST Class A certification.
 - 1.1.11(b.1) If in possession of a Missouri Class B certification, it must be upgraded to a Missouri Class A certification by the application deadline.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

1.2 Automatic Disqualifiers

1.2.1 An applicant shall be automatically disqualified and ineligible for employment under any of the following conditions:

- 1.2.1(a) The applicant has pled guilty or nolo contendere to, or has been found guilty of, or has a pending indictment for any Missouri felony or their equivalents.
- 1.2.1(b) The applicant has been convicted of two moving violations from separate incidents within the past twelve months.
- 1.2.1(c) The applicant has been at fault in more than one traffic crash during the past twelve months.
- 1.2.1(d) The applicant has received a DWI, DUI, or BAC conviction within the past three years prior to the date of application or has more than one DWI, DUI, or BAC conviction.¹
- 1.2.1(e) The applicant has used controlled substances illegally within the last three years.
- 1.2.1(f) The applicant does not meet or has falsified any one of the requirements, has made a false statement of material fact established concerning the examination for the position of police officer, or has otherwise been intentionally untruthful at any time during the hiring process.
- 1.2.1(g) The applicant has used or attempted to use political pressure or bribery to secure an advantage in an examination or other determining factor in securing a position as a police officer.
- 1.2.1(h) The applicant intentionally omits relevant information or fails to submit a complete, accurate, and truthful application for employment or background information questionnaire.
- 1.2.1(i) The applicant has sold, transported, traded or dispensed drugs illegally, or has sold or traded in any contraband. If the candidate was a juvenile at the time of the offense, this will be considered as a discretionary disqualifier.²
- 1.2.1(j) The applicant has established an unsatisfactory employment or personnel record, evidenced by a reference check, of such a nature as to demonstrate unsuitability for employment.
- 1.2.1(k) The applicant has served in the Armed Forces and was released or discharged under less than honorable conditions.
- 1.2.1(l) The applicant violates or does not meet the requirements of the Merit Rules of the City of Springfield, Missouri, or the State of Missouri Public Safety Police Officers Standards and Training (POST) requirements. (Merit Rule 5.4; RSMo Chapter 590).
- 1.2.1(m) The applicant fails to return the Springfield Police Background Investigation Packet in a timely manner, it is returned intentionally

¹ Section 1.2.1(d) revised, multiple DWI/DUI/BAC convictions added as automatic disqualifier, per PCO 18-027.

² Section 1.2.1(i) revised, juvenile offender provision added, per Policy Change Order 18-027.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

incomplete, or verification of required information cannot be made with reasonable investigation.

1.2.1(n) The applicant fails to provide documents requested for the purpose of conducting a background investigation (e.g. school transcripts, Authorization for Release of Personal Information, etc.).

1.2.1(o) The applicant does not pass or complete the required post-offer examinations.

1.2.1(p) The applicant has received any conviction for domestic assault.

1.3. Discretionary Disqualifiers

1.3.1 An applicant may be disqualified and ineligible for employment based upon a review by the Springfield Police Department and/or Springfield Human Resources Department under any of the following conditions:

1.3.1(a) The applicant has pled guilty or nolo contendere to, or has been found guilty of, or has a pending indictment for any misdemeanor charge, ordinance violation or infraction (including all Missouri class A, B, and C misdemeanors, or their equivalents).

1.3.1(b) The applicant has abused/misused alcohol or a controlled substance without successfully completing an acceptable alcohol or substance abuse treatment program.

1.3.1(c) The applicant is in arrears on taxes or has demonstrated an unwillingness to honor fiscal contracts or just debts.

1.3.1(d) The applicant has been cited for an excessive number of traffic violations or one or more serious traffic violations.

1.3.1(e) The applicant has a history of disgraceful conduct, moral turpitude, or has otherwise established a pattern of conduct that would tend to disrupt, diminish, or otherwise jeopardize public trust in the law enforcement profession.

1.4 The disqualifiers listed in Sections 1.2 and 1.3 are given as basic guidelines and are not meant to be considered all-inclusive.

2 ADMINISTRATION

2.1 The Chief of Police, Director of Human Resources, Investigations and Support Services Bureau Commander, and Resource Manager, or their designees shall evaluate the selection process annually and make any necessary revisions or deletions.

2.2 Vacancies shall be filled at the discretion of the Chief of Police from the current eligibility list of police officer candidates provided by the Human Resources Department, based upon established periodic testing and other valid factors, such as background investigation information.

2.3 Testing for the position of police recruit will be conducted on a continual basis.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

- 2.4 The Resource Manager shall act as the Police Department's liaison to the Human Resources Department.
- 2.5 The Resource Manager and the Human Resources Department shall be responsible for the administration of the selection process.
- 2.6 Material generated and used during the selection process shall be stored in a secure area in the Resource Manager's Office or the Human Resources Department. All related material disposed of shall be shredded to prevent disclosure of information.
- 2.7 The Human Resources Department shall advise applicants of their success or failure in completing the physical agility and written tests within one week from the date the tests were administered.
- 2.8 After oral interviews are completed, the Human Resources Department will notify unsuccessful applicants/candidates, in writing and within 30 days, at any stage in the selection process in which they are no longer being considered for employment.
- 2.9 Applicants who fail any portion of the selection process are disqualified. If the applicant fails the written test or the physical agility/physical fitness test, they may retest during the next regularly scheduled selection process. If the applicant fails the oral interview, they must wait six months before reapplying for the position of police officer.
 - 2.9.1 If the applicant fails the written test or oral interview a second time, they must wait a period of one year before reapplying for the position of police officer.
 - 2.9.2 Any applicant who fails the written test or oral interview a third time is permanently disqualified.
- 2.10 The individual segments of the selection process shall be validated and have a practical value, using rating criteria or minimum qualifications that are job-related.
 - 2.10.1 The documentation for each segment shall be the responsibility of the Human Resources Department and, with the exception of background investigation paperwork, such documentation will be retained within that department.
- 2.11 All elements of the selection process will be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner.
 - 2.11.1 The physical agility/physical fitness test shall be scored on a pass/fail basis.
 - 2.11.2 The written exam shall be scored by percentile.
 - 2.11.3 Oral interviews shall be based on percentage scoring.
 - 2.11.4 Background investigations shall be scored on a pass/fail basis.
 - 2.11.5 Polygraph examinations shall be administered to all candidates who receive a conditional offer for employment as a police officer.
 - 2.11.5(a) The results of the polygraph examination shall be used in conjunction with all other available information to support hiring decisions.
 - 2.11.6 The drug screening shall be administered to all candidates who receive a conditional offer for employment as a police officer and will be considered on a pass/fail basis.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

2.11.7 The written psychological test and psychological evaluation shall be administered to all candidates who receive a conditional offer for employment as a police officer and will be scored on a pass/fail basis. (CALEA 31.5.7)

2.11.7(a) All psychological reports are confidential. They will be maintained and stored in a locked file cabinet in the Human Resources Department separate from the candidate's other personnel records.

2.11.8 Medical tests shall be administered to all candidates who receive a conditional offer for employment as a police officer and will be considered on a pass/fail basis.

2.11.8(a) All medical reports are confidential. They will be maintained and stored in a locked file cabinet in the Human Resources Department separate from the candidate's other personnel records.

3 APPLICATION PROCESS

3.1 A written application containing complete and accurate information will be filed with the City of Springfield Human Resources Department. All applications shall be screened and maintained by the Human Resources Department to ensure the applicant meets the minimum requirements for the position.

3.2 At the time formal application is made, the Human Resources Department shall inform the applicant of the following information in writing:

3.2.1 All elements of the selection process.

3.2.2 The expected duration of the selection process.

3.2.3 A list of areas from which polygraph questions will be drawn.

3.2.4 The City of Springfield's policy on reapplication, retesting, and reevaluation of applicants who are not appointed.

3.3 The City of Springfield Human Resources Department shall be responsible for all applications and records used in or pertaining to the hiring and selection process, with the lone exception being background investigation paperwork. All related materials shall be stored in locked files.

4 SELECTION PROCESS

4.1 Testing Process

4.1.1 Applicants will be notified by the Human Resources Department of the expected duration of the selection process. The Human Resources Department will notify qualifying applicants of test dates at least one week prior to the test being given. Applicants must pass each testing phase before proceeding to the next phase.

4.1.2 Applicants will be required to take entrance level examinations and must pass with a score equal to or greater than the minimum acceptable score established for that examination.

4.1.3 Written exams:

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

- 4.1.3(a) Multiple choice reading comprehension/writing skills test (scored by percentile).
- 4.1.3(b) General police officer aptitude test (scored by percentage).
- 4.1.3(c) Failure to pass the written exam will eliminate the applicant from continuing the selection process.
- 4.1.4 Agility/physical fitness test (CALEA 22.2.2)
 - 4.1.4(a) The physical agility/physical fitness test is a timed 1/2 mile long obstacle course and will be graded on a pass/fail basis.
 - 4.1.4(a.1) The maximum allowable time for the Regular Academy Program applicants to complete the course shall be 7 minutes and 5 seconds.
 - 4.1.4(a.2) The maximum allowable time for the Lateral Hire Program applicants to complete the course shall be 5 minutes and 54 seconds.
 - 4.1.4(a.2.1) If an applicant does not meet the required time for the lateral hire program, but meets the required time for the regular academy program, they may choose to continue the hiring process as a regular academy program applicant.
 - 4.1.4(b) The obstacle course consists of the following 10 stations/tasks:
 - 4.1.4(b.1) 100 meter sprint;
 - 4.1.4(b.2) Vehicle push;
 - 4.1.4(b.3) Jump box;
 - 4.1.4(b.4) 6 foot wall climb;
 - 4.1.4(b.5) 3 foot wall climb;
 - 4.1.4(b.6) Window climb;
 - 4.1.4(b.7) Dummy drag;
 - 4.1.4(b.8) Subject resistance station;
 - 4.1.4(b.9) Stair climb;
 - 4.1.4(b.10) Trigger pull.
 - 4.1.4(c) This test may change as necessary to reflect current standards.
 - 4.1.4(d) Failure to pass the physical agility/physical fitness test will eliminate the applicant from continuing the selection process.
- 4.1.5 Oral Interview
 - 4.1.5(a) Advancement to this phase of the testing process is based upon satisfactory completion of the physical agility/physical fitness, multiple choice reading comprehension/writing skills, and general police officer aptitude tests.
 - 4.1.5(b) The oral interview shall be conducted using valid, nondiscriminatory procedures.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

- 4.1.5(c) Oral interview board members will be coordinated by the Resource Manager with the approval of the Director of Human Resources. Whenever possible, board members who are representative of race, sex, and ethnic groups within the community should be included in this process.
 - 4.1.5(d) Failure to pass the oral interview will eliminate the applicant from continuing the selection process.
- 4.2 Background Investigation (CALEA 31.5.1)
- 4.2.1 A complete, thorough, and confidential background investigation will be conducted on applicants who have passed the testing process.
 - 4.2.1(a) The investigation will verify qualification credentials including the applicant's education, character, reputation, financial arrearage, driving record, criminal record, fingerprint record, military record, employment record, residency, and personal references.
 - 4.2.1(a.1) Background investigations shall be conducted only by background investigators who have been specially trained to conduct such investigations.
 - 4.2.1(a.2) When conducting background investigations, investigators should refer to their experience and training, as well as, "The Sourcebook to Public Record Information" and "National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators", which are available through the Resource Manager. Whenever possible, background investigators will conduct neighborhood checks, employment checks, applicant interviews, etc., in person.
 - 4.2.1(a.3) Background investigators shall report to the Resource Manager.
 - 4.2.2 Prior to the commencement of the background investigation, each applicant will be required to complete and sign the following documents:
 - 4.2.2(a) Background Investigation Questionnaire ([SPD Form # 07-SP-0550](#)).
 - 4.2.2(b) Background Investigation Waiver and Release of Personal Information Authorization ([SPD Form # 12-SP-0619](#)).
 - 4.2.2(c) Applicant Authorization for Procurement of Consumer Report (City of Springfield Human Resources Department form).
 - 4.2.2(d) U.S. Military Standard Form 180 (SF-180), if the applicant currently serves or has served in the military.
 - 4.2.2(e) Fingerprints are taken electronically and submitted to the MSHP and FBI for the purpose of verifying the applicant's identity and to check for a criminal history.
 - 4.2.2(e.1) Two hard copies of the electronic fingerprints are printed. One copy is placed in the applicant's file. The other copy is sent to Missouri POST if the applicant is accepted into the academy.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

- 4.2.3 Failure to complete and sign all required documents listed in 4.2.2 may eliminate the applicant from further consideration of employment.
- 4.2.4 If the questionnaire packet is returned incomplete or verification of required information cannot be made, or if it is not returned to the Resource Manager in a timely manner, the applicant may be disqualified.
- 4.2.5 The applicant is required to provide the following:
 - 4.2.5(a) Birth certificate with a raised state seal.
 - 4.2.5(b) Sealed high school and/or college transcripts sent directly to the Springfield Police Department from the school, college, or university.
 - 4.2.5(c) A photocopy of a valid driver's license or other state-issued form of photo identification.
 - 4.2.5(d) A photocopy of a marriage certificate, if applicable.
 - 4.2.5(e) A photocopy of a dissolution of marriage certificate, if applicable.
 - 4.2.5(f) A photocopy of the U.S. Military DD-214, long form, if applicable.
 - 4.2.5(g) A photocopy of a high school diploma or G.E.D.
 - 4.2.5(h) The Springfield Police Background Information Questionnaire form completed accurately and in its entirety.
 - 4.2.5(i) Other information that may be needed to verify claims of skills, training, or eligibility for employment with the City of Springfield.
- 4.2.6 All information or material received or developed as a part of the background investigation shall be treated as confidential and shall be referred to as the Springfield Police Background Investigation Packet.
 - 4.2.6(a) After the hiring process is complete, the Resource Manager shall turn over all Background Investigation Packets to the Investigations and Support Services Bureau Commander.
 - 4.2.6(b) Except as specifically noted in this section, no person shall have access to the information contained in this packet at any time without written permission from the Chief of Police.
 - 4.2.6(c) If a release of information is authorized, the release shall be made in the form of a photocopy of the desired information.
 - 4.2.6(d) The original Springfield Police Background Investigation Packet shall remain in the custody of the Investigations and Support Services Bureau Commander at all times, except in rare circumstances (e.g., subpoenaed for court).
 - 4.2.6(e) All information or material received shall be kept secure, during and after the investigation.
 - 4.2.6(f) If the candidate is hired by the City of Springfield, their Background Investigation Packet shall be stored in a locked cabinet in a location designated by the Investigations and Support Services Bureau Commander,

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

separate from all other files. This file must be retained for five years after the employee has separated from the City.

4.2.6(g) If the candidate is not hired, the Background Investigation Packet shall be stored in the same manner as above but shall be destroyed five years from the date the investigation commenced.

4.2.6(g.1) This allows for future reference concerning unsuccessful applicants who apply again at a later date.

4.2.6(g.2) In case of litigation, Background Investigation Packets shall be retained for at least three years after adjudication. (References: Missouri Secretary of State General Records Retention Guidelines, GS 062 Employment Recruitment and Selection Records).

4.2.7 Persons who may possess or access a Background Investigation Packet:

4.2.7(a) Background investigator (but only files pertaining directly to the applicant they are investigating, and then only while the investigation is active)

4.2.7(b) Resource Manager

4.2.7(c) SPD Polygraph Technician (but only for the purpose of preparing questions for the respective candidate's polygraph examination)

4.2.7(d) Training Section Commander (or designee)

4.2.7(e) Support Services Division Commander (or designee)

4.2.7(f) Investigations and Support Services Bureau Commander (or designee)

4.2.7(g) Chief of Police (or designee)

4.2.7(h) City of Springfield Director of Human Resources (or designee)

4.3 Review and Selection

4.3.1 All individual Background Investigation Packets and test results shall be reviewed by, at minimum, the Resource Manager, Investigations and Support Services Bureau Commander, Chief of Police, and Director of the Human Resources Department (or their designees) for the purpose of selecting the most qualified candidates.

4.3.2 If an applicant is judged to be qualified to hold the position of police officer and an open position exists, a "Conditional Offer of Employment" will be made. Such an offer will be made in writing and signed by the Chief of Police, Director of Human Resources, and the prospective candidate. If the applicant fails to sign the Conditional Offer of Employment, they shall no longer be eligible for employment.

4.3.3 An applicant who has received and accepted a Conditional Offer of Employment will then be considered a "candidate" for the position of police officer.

4.4 Post Job Offer

4.4.1 A candidate must satisfactorily complete all the following steps of the hiring process to gain employment as a police officer with the City of Springfield.

SOG 201.2

Selection Process for Police Recruits

Effective Date: 01/08/2019

- 4.4.1(a) A polygraph examination shall be conducted by a certified polygraph technician trained to conduct such examinations and approved by the City of Springfield to administer the examination.
 - 4.4.1(b) Drug screening (urinalysis) shall be conducted at a medical facility approved by the City of Springfield to conduct such tests.
 - 4.4.1(c) Written psychological exams based upon accepted professional standards. (CALEA 31.5.7)
 - 4.4.1(d) A psychological evaluation conducted by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist, based on procedures established for law enforcement officers. (CALEA 31.5.7)
 - 4.4.1(e) A medical examination shall be conducted by a licensed physician approved by the City of Springfield to perform such examinations. The examinations shall use valid, nondiscriminatory procedures to determine physical and medical fitness of the candidate for the position of police officer. This testing shall include hearing and vision tests. All medical, hearing, and vision testing pursuant to the police officer selection process conducted by the City of Springfield shall be at no cost to the candidate. Subsequent medical testing will be at the candidate's expense.
 - 4.4.1(f) A final review and follow-up investigation. A final review may be conducted of each candidate concerning any new information received during the hiring process. Additional information or investigation may be requested. This review shall be made by, at minimum, the Resource Manager, Investigations and Support Services Bureau Commander, Chief of Police, and Director of the Human Resources Department (or their designees).
- 4.5 Candidates who successfully complete all phases of the hiring process and are selected for the position of police officer shall serve a period of probationary status for a minimum of one year from the date of the beginning of the academy.

IV Attachments