
	SALISBURY POLICE DEPARTMENT
	Written Directive: Applicant Selection Process
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	 <hr style="width: 20%; margin: auto;"/> Approved: David Meienschein Chief of Police
Related CALEA Standards: 31.1.1, 31.1.2, 31.2.1, 31.2.2, 31.2.3, 31.3.1, 31.3.2, 31.3.3, 31.4.1, 31.4.2, 31.4.3, 31.4.4, 31.4.5, 31.4.6, 31.5.1, 31.5.2, 31.5.3, 31.5.4, 31.5.5, 31.5.6, 31.5.7	Applicant Selection Process Section #108

Applicant Selection Process

1. Policy:

The Salisbury Police Department believes that the true measurement and worth of a law enforcement agency are directly proportional to the aggregated abilities and talents of employees in the organization. Emphasis on selection of quality applicants, in full compliance with employment law, should yield benefits in terms of a lower rate of personnel turnover; fewer discipline problems, higher morale, better community relations and the delivery of more efficient and effective services. The department will employ selection methods and procedures that will produce the most highly qualified individuals, while at the same time remaining fair and non-discriminatory while reflecting the community we serve.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to guide management decisions relative to proper risk assessment throughout the hiring process, and to establish the various protocols, guidelines and standards used for selecting sworn and non-sworn employees for employment with the Salisbury Police Department.

3. Selection Process for Full Time and Part Time Positions (Sworn and Non-Sworn):

A. Applications:

- a) A pre-employment questionnaire will be completed by all applicants and all viable applicants will then complete a full employment application;
- b) Applications will be received by the department at any point during the year;
- c) Applications will be reviewed and all viable applicants will be contacted for testing;

- d) Active applications will remain on file for a period of one year. The retention period for these applications prior to disposal will be three years from the date received; and
- e) Applications will be reviewed for accuracy and completion. If applications are incomplete, they will be returned to the applicant for correction prior to processing.

B. Written Test:

- a) A written test will be administered to all applicants who have applied for sworn positions. A written test will also be administered to applicants who have applied for the positions of police communications officer and police cadet's;
- b) The written test will be scored and the results provided to the candidates upon completion;
- c) Written scores will carry over for one year; and
- d) Upon request of, reasonable accommodations will be made for applicants with identified disabilities.

C. Qualified applicants to serve as police officers will complete the National Police Officer Selection Test (POST). The National Police Officer Selection Test (POST) is an entry-level basic skills test that helps law enforcement agencies select the most qualified applicants by ensuring that candidates possess the basic cognitive skills necessary to successfully perform the job. The POST is a valid, job-related test designed specifically for law enforcement use, which measures these basic skills: Arithmetic, Reading Comprehension, Grammar and Incident Report Writing. Each section will evaluate a different critical job function which will be performed as a Salisbury Police Officer. An Applicant who fails to attain an average score of 70% or better is not eligible to move forward in the selection process and shall be eliminated from the candidate selection process. Applicants who fail the written test may retake the written test during the next scheduled cycle of testing.

D. Qualified applicants to serve as police communication officers (PCO) will complete the National Dispatcher Selection Test (NDST). The National Dispatcher Selection Test (NDST) is an entry-level basic skills test that helps law enforcement agencies select the most qualified applicants by ensuring that candidates possess the important skills required to perform effectively as a dispatcher. The NDST is a valid, job-related test designed specifically for law enforcement use, which objectively assess a candidate's skill level in five important areas: Reading Comprehension, Listening, Problem Solving, Prioritizing, and Multi-Tasking. Each section will evaluate a different critical job function which will be performed as a Salisbury

Police Communications Officer. An applicant who fails to attain an average score of 70% or better will be eliminated at this time.

E. Physical Fitness Test:

- a) Applicants who have applied for a sworn position and have successfully passed the written test will be required to successfully complete a physical fitness assessment. The physical fitness assessment will not be administered to applicants who have applied for a non-sworn position;
- b) Results of the physical fitness test will be provided to the applicants upon completion; and
- c) Applicants who pass the written test but who fail the physical fitness test will remain in the applicant pool for one year and may retake the physical fitness portion at the discretion and availability of the training officer.

F. Oral Boards:

- a) All applicants, regardless of position applied for, will be ranked by test score. The number of candidates to be interviewed may vary depending on the number of positions open and the number of eligible candidates; and
- b) Each applicant must appear before an oral board which will consist of at least three members of the police department. The board will restrict itself to the appraisal of such personal qualities as appearance, voice and ability to communicate. An applicant cannot be rejected solely on the board's evaluation.

G. Conditional Job Offer:

- a) Upon successful completion of the initial testing phase, the applicant will be granted a conditional job offer (SPD-286). The applicant must successfully pass the remaining phases of the process in order to be hired.
- b) A conditional offer does not guarantee that an applicant will receive a final job offer since final job offers will be made only after the results of the medical and psychological examinations are evaluated and compared. A final offer of employment will be extended to the most qualified candidates who may then be formally appointed to the position by the Chief of Police.
- c) A conditional offer of employment is further expressly conditioned upon the City of Salisbury, Maryland's dedication of and ability to provide funding to hire the applicant for the position.

H. Polygraph/Voice Stress Examination:

- a) All applicants will be required to successfully complete a polygraph or voice stress examination administered by an approved operator.

- I. Background Investigations:
 - a) All applicants remaining in the applicant pool will be subject to take part in a thorough background investigation. All elements of the applicant investigation will be completed in accordance with Maryland state law and agency guidelines.

- J. Command Staff Interview:
 - a) All applicants will be required to complete an oral board type interview with the command staff.

- K. Medical Examination:
 - a) All applicants will be required to submit to a physical examination administered by the department physician.

- L. Psychological Examination
 - a) All applicants will be required to submit to complete a psychological examination administered by the department psychologist.

- M. A final report will be submitted to the chief of police via the chain-of command for review. The chief of police maintains the final authority for the hiring of sworn and non-sworn personnel for full time and part time positions.

4. Applicant Selection-Job Relatedness:

- A. The elements of the selection process measure skills, knowledge, abilities and traits needed to perform that particular job and the rating criteria or minimum qualifications are job specific.

5. Uniform Administration:

- A. All elements of the selection process will be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner. Testing procedures will be clearly set forth and carried out identically for all applicants.

6. Physical Fitness Test (Applicants for sworn positions only):

At this phase the applicant must participate and complete several different areas of fitness related exercise. Physical fitness is an applicant's body conditioning as measured by evaluation results according to the applicant's age, weight and height. Such an evaluation may help to identify qualified candidates and reduce the probability of work related disabilities.

The Cooper Standard is used to assess physical fitness. The requirements of this evaluation are included in the applicant's packet. The applicant may ask for reasonable accommodations if the applicant has a disability. Failure on the part of the applicant to complete any phase of the physical fitness evaluation may be cause for rejection of the applicant. If the applicant fails the physical fitness test, the applicant may retake the physical fitness test after 30 days of the failed test.

7. Background Investigations:

- A. All applicants must submit to a background investigation to verify his/her good character. The background investigation will be conducted by personnel who have been properly trained to conduct such background investigations.
- B. The name and fingerprint classification of all applicants must be searched through the criminal records of the Salisbury Police Department, the Maryland State Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and in other cities, including appropriate state agencies in jurisdictions which the candidate may have resided or worked.
- C. A thorough background investigation of all applicants will be conducted using the applicant's submitted police department application. The investigation will verify the candidate's qualifying credentials in such areas as:
 - a) Residential checks;
 - b) Neighborhood checks (past 5 years);
 - c) Examination of past employment (past 5 years) history and verification;
 - d) Education (within the past 5 years) history and verification;
 - e) Military experience and examination of military records (if applicable);
 - f) Fingerprinting: criminal history checks through a search of local, state and federal criminal records;
 - g) Civil actions or gross negligence claims;
 - h) Verification of personal and professional references;
 - i) Verification contact with Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission and the National Decertification Index (NDI);
 - j) Personal references check and interview; and
 - k) Social media (if applicable).
- D. Materials to be specifically excluded from the background investigation are:
 - a) Any general statements NOT supported by specific details, or documentation related to neighborhood checks, employment history, educational background and credit history. Medical examinations such as psychological and physical examinations will not be included in the background investigation.

- E. Personnel conducting background investigations will receive training to ensure a comprehensive and thorough investigation is completed. These personnel will be provided with the knowledge and skills to conduct a quality investigation.

8. Truth Verification (Polygraph Examination or Voice Stress Analysis):

- A. As a part of the testing process, applicants for all positions are advised at the time of their formal application that they will be subject to a polygraph or voice stress examination, which will cover areas listed in the application package which is furnished to the applicant.
- B. Just prior to and at the location of the test, applicants are provided the questions and given sufficient time to review and understand what is going to be asked of them; any questions concerning the process of the examination will be answered by the examiner prior to the test. If the applicant has an identified disability, reasonable accommodations will be made upon the applicant's request.
- C. The polygraph or voice stress examination will be administered by certified personnel. Polygraph and voice stress operators have been trained in all aspects of their specific truth verification procedures and examinations.
- D. The results of the polygraph or the voice stress examinations are not sufficient by themselves to disqualify an applicant. However, the results of both examinations can be used as an aid during the background investigation.

9. Medical Examination For Both Sworn and Non-Sworn Applicants:

- A. All applicants offered conditional employment must be able to pass a job related medical examination as determined by the departmental physician to ensure that they can safely perform all of the essential functions of the job they are applying for. All applicants must be in sound physical condition and pass a physical fitness evaluation. The medical examination will include, but will not be limited to:
 - a) An eyesight examination as determined by the examining physician for the City of Salisbury. The results must be natural or correctable to 20/20;
 - b) The applicant's weight must be in proportion to applicant's height and build as determined by the examining physician for the City of Salisbury;
 - c) The applicant's hearing must be within acceptable levels as determined by the examining physician for the City of Salisbury;
 - d) The examination will identify any recurring and limiting physical injuries, conditions or illnesses which would prevent the applicant from performing the essential functions of the position for which the applicant applied;

- e) Applicants will further be required to submit to a urinalysis test for controlled dangerous substances during the application process. The time, location, and procedure will be designated by the department; and
- f) The applicant will be tested for communicable disease.

B. The examining physician is a licensed physician, contracted by the City of Salisbury.

10. Emotional Stability And Psychological Fitness Examination:

- A. The Salisbury Police Department utilizes a written psychological examination prior to appointment as an employee.
- B. The evaluations are analyzed by the Salisbury Police Department's psychologist, who is designated by the chief of police. The examinations are given to applicants for employment and employees of specialized units.

11. Candidate Information:

- A. The administrative division will ensure that, at that time of application, all candidates are informed, in writing of all elements of the selection process as well as the duration (dates) of the components of the selection process and the agency's policy on reapplication. This information is provided in the application package.

12. Contact With Applicant:

The administrative division commander will ensure that continuous contact is made with applicants for sworn and non-sworn positions from initial application to final employment disposition. Applicant contact will be documented, logged and stored within the application file.

13. Processing Applications:

The administrative commander or his/her designee is responsible to receive and review for accuracy, completeness, and eligibility of all sworn and civilian applications. Applications that are deficient will be processed routinely if the deficiencies can be rectified prior to the testing or interview process to ensure they are not rejected for minor omissions or deficiencies.

14. Notification of Ineligibility:

Applicants determined to be not eligible for appointment will be informed electronically or through writing within sixty (60) calendar days of such decision. Applicants will be

informed as to whether or not they can reapply, Applicants not successfully passing any phase of the process may reapply, if eligible, and will be required to repeat the process in its entirety. All applicants will be notified in writing of their application status. Those applicants, who are not eligible to reapply or are permanently rejected, will be notified in writing also. However, the specific reason as to why the applicant was not offered a position will not be provided in this letter. Applicants who believe the Salisbury Police Department violated any equal employment opportunity laws may contact the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Baltimore Field Office (www.eeoc.gov/field/baltimore/).

The Salisbury Police Department is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, creed, color, age, religion, national origin, or physical impairment.

15. Records of Applicants:

- A. The administrative division will ensure that records of applicants determined to be ineligible or not selected for appointment are filed, retained, and destroyed in accordance with federal, state and local requirements for privacy, security, and the Maryland Public Information Act. Background investigation records of those not selected but eligible for future consideration shall be maintained on file for at least three (3) years and then subject to disposal. Applicant specific records may not be viewed by the applicant once submitted.
- B. Salisbury Police Department maintains a report of each medical/psychological fitness examination and destruction of the records is in accordance with federal, state and local requirements for privacy, security and freedom of information. Background investigation records to include but not limited to; the results of the medical examination and emotional stability will be maintained for ten (10) years after the separation from employment for hired personnel. Background investigation records to include but not limited to: the results of the medical examination and emotional stability will be maintained for ten (10) years for applicants not selected for hire or rejected.

16. Rejection Criteria:

- A. Applicants are required to meet minimum qualifications for the position of police officer as established by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC). The minimum qualifications are as follows:
 - a) Applicants must be at least 21 years of age at time of certification;
 - b) Applicants must be a U.S. citizen at time of appointment;

- c) Applicants must possess a high school diploma or a GED certificate recognized by the Maryland State Board of Education;
 - d) Applicants must hold a valid driver's license in the state they reside prior to appointment and have three years driving experience; and
 - e) Applicants for non-sworn positions shall hold a valid driver's license in the state in which they reside.
- B. If the background investigation reveals or substantiates one or more of the rejection criteria listed, the chief of police or his designee will review the entire package and forward it to the administrative commander for further investigation or rejection.
- C. If six (6) months or more have expired since the background investigation was completed prior to hiring, an updated background investigation must be conducted and the applicant must successfully pass it.
- D. The applicant must be of good moral character and reputation, as determined by a comprehensive background investigation.
- E. The following information formulated during a background investigation may be cause for automatic rejection of applicant:
- a) Military bad conduct or dishonorable discharge from any branch of the U.S. Military Service;
 - b) Documented evidence of three (3) or more instances of misconduct or disciplinary action in the military service (regardless of the type of charges);
 - c) Discharge from employment on two (2) or more occasions within the past five (5) years, or documented evidence of disciplinary action or discharge on three (3) or more occasions;
 - d) Conviction of any felony; and
 - e) Conviction of a misdemeanor may be cause for rejection.
- F. Further Elements of Potential Disqualification
- a) Six (6) or more current points against the applicant's operator's license prior to appointment;
 - b) Participation as a plaintiff or defendant in three (3) or more civil court actions reflecting litigiousness and an inability to interact reasonably with other persons;
 - c) Patterns of violence towards other persons as evidenced in two (2) or more areas of the background investigation (e.g. military check, arrest for crimes of violence, neighborhood checks, etc.);
 - d) A high incidence of accidents due to negligence (as evidenced by two (2) or more vehicular accidents in which the applicant admitted to his negligence or negligence established in a court of law, civil or criminal) or a similar history of

accidents involving other equipment as determine in the background investigation;

- e) Evidence of alcoholism or serious drinking including, but not limited to:
 - i. Conviction for an offense involving intoxication;
 - ii. Poor work history related to abuse of alcohol;
 - iii. Repeated intoxication or disorderly conduct revealed through checks of neighborhood.
- f) Any juvenile felony committed at fourteen (14) years of age or older, involving violence against other persons;
- g) Personal history form not completely or accurately filled out; and
- h) Untruthfulness.

G. Salisbury Police Department Drug Use Policy:

- a) Identification of present use and/or addiction to any illicit drug (cocaine, PCP, marijuana, LSD, etc.) by an applicant will be grounds for permanent rejection. Should the use of a substance identified be supported by the proper medical documentation, the completed investigation will be forwarded to the city physician for evaluation and recommendation. The purpose of this evaluation shall be to ensure the substance, although properly obtained, is not subject to abuse and/or the individual is medically fit to fill the assigned position.
- b) Evidence demonstrating repeated use of any drug or chemical substance, e.g., marijuana, alcohol, etc., with such frequency that it appears the individual has or had accepted the use and/or reliance upon the substance as a part of a pattern of behavior, shall be reason for permanent rejection.
- c) Opiates: There will be no exceptions for any use of heroin or opium. Opiates in this form have no medicinal use, are typically related to a criminal atmosphere and are not usually a drug of first use. Other opiates, e.g., morphine, codeine, etc., having medicinal value, may be considered in the context of their application. Where these drugs are abused, e.g., in experimentation situations, taken without proper authorization, illegally obtained, etc., the limits for experimentation are:
 - i. One time ingestion (lifetime) (no intravenous applications);
 - ii. Three-year period of abstinence prior to application; and
 - iii. Must submit to additional psychiatric/psychological evaluation
- d) Depressants: (barbiturates, benzodiazepines, methaqualone, etc.) Drugs of this class have a medical use and are readily available, legally and illegally. Where these drugs are abused, the limits for experimentation are:
 - i. Two ingestions (lifetime) – (No exceptions will be made for any intravenous applications);

- ii. Three-year period of abstinence prior to application; and
 - iii. May be required to submit to additional psychiatric/psychological evaluation
- e) **Stimulants:** (amphetamines, methamphetamines, etc.) Drugs of this class have a medical use and are readily available – legally and illegally. Where these drugs are abused, the limits for experimentation are:
- i. Two ingestions (lifetime) – (No exceptions will be made for any intravenous applications);
 - ii. Three-year period of abstinence prior to application; and
 - iii. May be required to submit to additional psychiatric/psychological evaluation
- f) **Cocaine:** Cocaine may be used medically as a local, topical anesthetic; however, the predominate use of cocaine is in abuse situations. No exemptions for experimentation are to be made. Permanent rejection.
- g) **Hallucinogenic:** (LSD, PCP, Mescaline, Metabolites) these drugs have no medicinal value. Because of the research concerning the residual side effects from even small quantities of these drugs, no exemptions for experimentation are to be made for any use – permanent rejection.
- h) **Inhalants** – (solvents, glue, paint, aerosols, and amyl nitrates) inhalants have no medicinal value. Documented medical information identifies significant medical complications associated with the use of small quantities of inhalants.
- i. Two ingestions (lifetime);
 - ii. Three-year period of abstinence prior to application; and
 - iii. May be required to submit to additional psychiatric/psychological evaluation
- i) **Cannabis:** (Marijuana, Hashish, any substance containing THC) Prevailing attitudes, availability, and the lack of significant conclusive evidence supporting health or psychological hazards contributes to the widespread use of this substance.
- i. The Commission may certify an applicant if the applicant’s last use of marijuana preceded the applicant’s date of application for certification by:
 - a. Three or more years; or
 - b. Less than three years, but not less than 12 months, on the condition that the applicant agrees to complete an annual substance abuse test during the two years following the applicant’s date of initial certification.
 - ii. May be required to submit to psychiatric/psychological evaluation

- j) **NOTE:** Ingestion is a single application, e.g., one marijuana cigarette, one dosage of pills, liquid, etc. Indications of cross experimentation, while meeting individual drug exemption criteria, will require, in all cases, participation in psychological evaluation. All periods of abstinence must be positively verified by polygraph examination or a Computer Voice Stress Analyzer (CVSA). Results of psychiatric/psychological evaluation must support a negative propensity toward drug abuse and a lack of residual side effects associated with drug use. Cross experimentation indicating experimentation with more than two controlled dangerous substances will result in permanent rejection.
 - k) An applicant having been permanently rejected has no reapplication right. An application will not be accepted from any individual who has been previously rejected on two occasions for substance abuse. Reapplication will be accepted if:
 - i. If any individual has abstained from usage for the period specified; and
 - ii. The indicated frequency requirements are met.
 - l) Information demonstrating a history of narcotic/drug use shall be evaluated by the City physician. At the discretion of the physician and the chief of police, the applicant may be given the opportunity to authorize release of any medical documentation pertinent to the investigation and agree to psychological and/or psychiatric evaluations selected by the physician and chief of police, the expense of which will be borne by the individual. All documentation will become part of the individual's pre-employment investigative file. At the conclusion of the investigation, the physician will make a recommendation as to the employability of the individual. Psychiatric/psychological evaluations required under this section are in addition to normal applicant psychological testing.
- H. A final decision will be based on the above information in addition to that developed through any counseling, testing, investigation, etc. The chief of police shall have the latitude to impose additional requirements based on a demonstrated need. The indicated guidelines may be sufficient; however, the method of ingestion, circumstances of use, attitude toward substance abuse, etc., may pose additional considerations and warrant more investigation prior to a final decision.
- I. Further Grounds for Rejection:
- a) In addition to the aforementioned grounds for rejection, the following additional grounds for rejection are established if the information upon which the rejection is based has been independently corroborated by BOTH background investigation and/or the polygraph examination or Computer Voice Stress Analyzer (CVSA).
 - i. Evidence of repeated violent behavior;

Related CALEA Standards: 31.1.1, 31.1.2, 31.2.1, 31.2.2, 31.2.3, 31.3.1, 31.3.2, 31.3.3, 31.4.1, 31.4.2, 31.4.3, 31.4.4, 31.4.5, 31.4.6, 31.5.1, 31.5.2, 31.5.3, 31.5.4, 31.5.5, 31.5.6, 31.5.7

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- ii. Evidence of repeated use of drugs (as indicated by one or more instances reported in background investigation and evidence related to the use of drugs, obtained during the polygraph examination);
 - iii. Continued commission of misdemeanors;
 - iv. A composite of unsuitable characteristics. (occasionally a candidate exhibits a number of characteristics which, when reliably documented and taken in combination, produce a pattern judges clearly inappropriate for law enforcement duties); and
 - v. Evidence of the use of drugs (any CDS) within one year of application date, obtained during the polygraph examination or background investigation.
- J. Failure to satisfactorily complete ANY phase of the testing procedure, including failure to bring completed forms to the written examination may result in disqualification.
- K. Failure to disclose or an omission of information in the application may be grounds for rejection.

17. Contractual Agreement:

After appointment and prior to beginning entrance level training, the probationary officer must review and sign a contract for reimbursement of hiring and training expenses. Should an officer resign within five (5) years after successfully completing entrance level training, he/she will be required to reimburse the department for the sum of all amounts expended by the department in accordance with the contract.