



Clayton County Police Department

PROCEDURES

Subject APPLICANT SELECTION PROCESS			Procedure # C6
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures and guidelines that fairly and efficiently administer the applicant selection processes that are established in cooperation with the Clayton County Department of Human Resources (HR), the Clayton County Civil Service Board and the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD).

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) to select applicants in a manner that is consistent with federal, state and local laws, *Clayton County Civil Service Rules and Regulations*, and equal employment opportunity (EEO) guidelines. Clayton County, Georgia, is an equal opportunity employer.

III. DEFINITIONS

Non-Sworn Applicants: Applicants who are pursuing employment with the CCPD in positions that are not considered positions held by POST-certified peace officers, as defined by OCGA § 35-8-1 et al.

Sworn Applicants: Applicants who are pursuing employment with the CCPD in positions that are considered POST-certified peace officers, as defined by OCGA § 35-8-1 et al.

IV. REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATION

The Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) will reasonably accommodate applicants' covered disabilities and sincerely held religious practices with regard to dress and grooming in accordance with applicable law, unless such accommodation would cause the Department an undue hardship.

- A. The responsibility for seeking a reasonable accommodation begins with the applicant.
- B. Applicants desiring such an accommodation must submit a request in writing to the Chief of Police, or authorized designee (hereinafter referred to as the Chief of Police), for consideration.
- C. Requests for accommodations will be addressed through an interactive process with the requesting applicant, the Chief of Police, and the Director of the Clayton County Department of Human Resources (HR) or their designee (hereinafter referred to as HR Director).
- D. Appropriate documentation of the need and basis for an accommodation may be required in connection with such a request.

V. RECRUITMENT

For further information on the recruitment process, refer to CCPD SOP: *C5: Recruitment*.

VI. SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process shall be conducted in accordance with departmental procedures and *Clayton County Civil Service Rules and Regulations*. All parts of the process shall be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform, non-discriminatory manner, within the respective classification, job-related duties and requirements, and having minimum adverse impact.

A. Responsibility

1. The Commander of the Background and Recruitment Unit (hereinafter referred to as the B/R Unit) shall have the responsibility of administering the selection process and for performing as a liaison on selection matters with the HR Director.
2. The B/R Unit Commander may, as required, delegate special duties to:
 - a. Another officer assigned to the B/R Unit for sworn/non-sworn employment positions; or
 - b. To another commander (Captain or higher) for non-sworn employment positions sought to be filled within their command.
3. All elements of the selection process for all full-time employees use only those rating criteria or minimum qualifications that are job-related.
4. The final authority to appoint employees rest entirely with the Chief of Police, as provided by Section 7.203 of the *Clayton County Civil Service Rules and Regulations*.
5. All elements of the selection process for all personnel will be administered, scored, evaluated and interpreted in a uniform manner within their respective classification.
6. Personnel used to conduct background investigations are trained in collecting required information.

B. Job Application

1. The first step for an applicant is the completion of the on-line application through the Clayton County Department of Human Resources (HR) website which can be accessed by clicking on the following web link: <https://www.claytoncountyga.gov/government/human-resources>.
2. The County supports a policy of non-discrimination with employees and applicants for employment.
3. No part of employment within the County will be influenced in any manner by age, color, religion, sex, race, national origin, veteran status, mental or physical disability, or any other basis prohibited by statute.
4. Information regarding the Clayton County Police Department's (CCPD's) automatic employment disqualifiers for all applicants is posted on the HR website. To view a copy of the *CCPD Automatic Disqualifiers for All Applicants Form*, refer to *Appendix A* of this procedure.

C. Receipt of Applications

1. It is the responsibility of the B/R Unit Commander, or authorized designee (hereinafter referred to as the B/R Unit Commander), to view and obtain applications for employment positions sought to be filled within the Department. This is accomplished via the web application with the Clayton County Department of Human Resources (HR).
2. It is also the responsibility of the designated commander (Captain or higher) to obtain and view applications for non-sworn employment positions sought to be filled within their command. This process, along with the completion of *Background Packets* may be completed by the concerned commander, in coordination with the B/R Unit Commander.

D. Screening Applications

1. Though the Clayton County Department of Human Resources (HR) attempts to screen incoming applications to determine whether the applicants meet the minimum criteria to apply, it does not alleviate the responsibility of the reviewing commander to determine the same. Applicants who do not meet the minimum criteria for the specified employment position will not continue in the process.
2. Officers assigned to the B/R Unit will prescreen applications received from HR for completeness and minimum qualifications of applicants. Applications will not be rejected because of minor omissions or deficiencies that can be corrected prior to the testing or interviewing process.

E. Coordinating, Scheduling and Interviewing Applicants

1. When applications are collected, the B/R Unit Commander will arrange, coordinate, and schedule the interviews of those applicants selected to move forward in the process.
2. Personnel assigned to the B/R Unit will maintain contact with applicants from initial application to final employment disposition and will advise them that their applications are still active or whenever there is a change in the status of their applications.
3. B/R Unit officers will document their written records of all contacts in the applicant's folder.
4. The B/R Unit Commander shall prepare and maintain a handout outlining the applicant selection process, and a copy of the handout shall be given to each applicant.
5. Upon the receipt of a completed application, applicants will be provided with the following:
 - a. A written list of all elements involved in the selection process.
 - b. A written notice of the expected duration of the selection process.
 - c. A copy of the relevant questions used in the polygraph examination.
 - d. A list of POST approved examinations and testing site information, for sworn positions.
 - e. A date and time for the physical agility examination, for sworn positions.
 - f. A written notice of the agency's conditions and procedures for re-application.
 - g. Departmental policies that may affect employment if applicable, e.g., tattoos, drug use, arrest, etc.
6. Applicants (Non-Sworn Positions)

The non-sworn application process is different in some ways than that of the applicants pursuing sworn positions.

- a. The B/R Unit Commander may forward applications to the designated commander for non-sworn employment positions sought to be filled within their command, to conduct interviews and/or to ensure applicants complete their *Background Packets*.
- b. When applications are collected, the concerned commander will arrange, coordinate and schedule the interviews of those applicants selected to move forward in the process.
- c. At a minimum, the interviewing of any applicant requires the presence of the concerned Division Commander and the commander who coordinated the interview. Additional participation of concerned supervisors from within the departmental component where the employment position is to be filled is recommended. Participation of the Assistant Chief or Deputy Chief is not required.
- d. Following the interview, any applicant continuing in the process, will immediately be provided with a *Background Packet* to complete by the commander who screened the application and arranged the interview. For further information on this process refer to *Section VI. F. Background Packet*, of this procedure.

- e. Once the *Background Packet* is completed, received, reviewed and approved by the concerned commander, they will escort the applicant to the B/R Unit, so that an officer assigned to the B/R Unit can begin conducting the applicant's background investigation. For further information on this process refer to *Section VI. G. Background Investigation*, of this procedure.

7. Applicants (Sworn Positions)

The following are elements and activities of the selection process for all full-time Georgia Peace Officer positions:

a. Written Examination

Applicants can take one (1) of the following written exams: Accuplacer, ASSET, COMPASS, or CPE at a technical college across the state. The following exams will be used by the Department for the written portion in applying for the position of Police Officer. Applicants must submit scores based on the requirements mentioned below in accordance with OCGA § 35-8-8. For additional information regarding examinations refer to Section 6.300 of the *Clayton County Civil Service Rules and Regulations*.

b. Accepted Written Examinations and Minimum Scores

This Department recognizes collegiate-level educational efforts as an acceptable threshold for basic reading and writing skills. Successful attempts of proctored collegiate-level entrance examinations (e.g., ACT, SAT) will be accepted in lieu of a pre-employment written examination.

Each applicant that has not taken a proctored collegiate-level entrance examination or met a minimum qualifying score on a proctored collegiate-level entrance examination (e.g., Accuplacer, ASSET, COMPASS, CPE) will be directed to complete any of the aforementioned examinations with a passing score in reading and a minimum passing score in writing.

- 1) Applicants that pass the entrance examination will be invited to participate in the next phase of the selection process.
- 2) Applicants that fail the entrance examination will need to retake the test thirty (30) days from the initial testing date.

c. Physical Agility Test (PAT)

- 1) Each entry-level applicant for sworn positions shall have unlimited attempts to successfully complete the State's Physical Agility Test (PAT) to proceed forward in the selection process. Applicants are allowed a maximum of two (2) attempts on a date scheduled by the Department. The various obstacles are representative of the degree of physical agility that sworn personnel are expected to maintain and they help determine an applicant's strength, endurance, coordination, and flexibility.
- 2) Each entry-level applicant for sworn positions shall be allowed only one (1) attempt to successfully complete the State's Physical Agility Test (PAT) within thirty (30) days prior to the start of the Academy. Any failure will be appropriately addressed through the chain of command, up to the Chief of Police.

F. Background Packet

The following steps shall be performed by officers assigned to the B/R Unit for sworn positions and/or non-sworn positions, or the concerned commander for non-sworn positions sought to be filled within their command.

1. Following the successful completion of the Department's physical agility assessment and review of the pre-screening questionnaire, or interview, a *Background Packet* will be given to each applicant to complete.
2. Each applicant will be instructed on completing the *Background Packet* in its entirety, providing thorough answers to all questions. The automatic disqualifiers, to include untruthfulness and withholding information, will be clearly explained to each applicant.
3. Applicants will be given a deadline to have their *Background Packet* and all required documentation completed and returned to the B/R Unit. For non-sworn positions the date may be arranged and scheduled by the concerned commander, who will coordinate the involvement of the B/R Unit on a designated date/time.
4. Required Information & Documentation with *Background Packets*
 - a. All notarized forms must be submitted with the *Background Packet*. These notarized forms are required before an applicant's background investigation can be initiated. Without these notarized forms, the B/R Unit cannot take certain investigative actions.
Notarized forms consist of the following:
 - 1) *Preliminary Interview Affidavit*;
 - 2) *Release & Hold Harmless Agreement*;
 - 3) *Authorization for the Release of Personal Information*;
 - 4) *Consent Form*;
 - 5) *Application Employment Verification*;
 - 6) *Authorization for Release of Personal Information (Military)*;
 - 7) *Social Media Usage Affidavit*, and
 - 8) Any other form required for an applicant's background investigation.
 - b. Color copies of the following documents/items are also required:
 - 1) Driver's license;
 - 2) Birth certificate;
 - 3) Social security card;
 - 4) Diploma/GED; and
 - 5) Any other document/item required for an applicant's background investigation.
5. Upon receipt of the *Background Packet*, including signed and notarized consent forms, the B/R Unit officer or concerned commander, will immediately review it in the presence of the applicant to address any discrepancies, clarifications and unanswered questions. Should the applicant need to provide further information or explanation about any topic within the packet, the applicant will provide that information or explanation in writing at that moment and before they will continue in the application process.
6. Once the *Background Packet* review is completed and approved the B/R Unit will conduct the background investigation.

G. Background Investigation

1. A B/R Unit officer will then be assigned by the B/R Unit Commander to begin conducting the applicant's background investigation.
2. Only trained officers assigned to the B/R Unit shall normally conduct applicant background investigations. If additional officers are required, only trained detectives/officers will be used.
3. The investigating B/R Unit officer shall be furnished with the applicant's *Background Packet* and any other relevant information pertaining to the applicant.

4. Upon receipt of the completed *Background Packet*, including signed and notarized consent forms. The applicant will review and sign the *Non-criminal Justice Applicant's Privacy Rights Form* (refer to Appendix E of this procedure) prior to fingerprints being taken.
5. The assigned B/R Unit officer, or designee, will immediately complete the following tasks:
 - a. Finger printing the applicant;
 - b. A "criminal history check" of the applicant; and
 - c. Other required documentation, such as *Motor Vehicle Report (MVR)*, etc.

Once taken, the applicant's fingerprints will be submitted for state and federal screening.

6. The background investigation shall include the following:
 - a. Verification of the applicant's qualifying credentials, educational achievements, current and past employment, age, residence, citizenship and driver's license;
 - b. Review of the applicant's criminal and traffic records, if any;
 - c. Interviews with prior employers and at least three (3) personal references for the applicant;
 - d. Any other information that may be required by Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST), for a sworn position; and
 - e. Any other information required for an applicant's background investigation.
7. Applicant Body Art Review
 - a. Specific inquiries by B/R Unit officers to applicants regarding body art which potentially signifies affiliation with a criminal enterprise or group shall be done in person.
 - b. If photographs are necessary for further investigation, supervisor authorization is required and will be taken by a supervisor of the same sex.
 - c. The photographs will be forwarded to the Department's Gang Unit or other law enforcement entity for further investigation.
 - d. Any photographs that were determined not to have any affiliation to a criminal enterprise or group will be deleted and/or destroyed.
 - e. Any photographs that were determined to have an affiliation with a criminal enterprise or group, will be printed and placed in the applicant's file to support the decision to disqualify the applicant.
 - f. No digital copies will be saved.
8. A *Background Investigation Report* will be submitted to the B/R Unit Commander when the investigation has been completed for recommendation or approval to be forwarded to the Chief of Police. In some cases, information and/or documents (e.g., employment information, personal references, military records, social media research, etc.) required for a full background investigation may take longer to obtain and/or verify than others. Hence, applicants who have successfully completed the necessary requirements up to this point, may continue in the application process, based on their responses and answers in the application for employment and their responses to questions in the *Background Packet*. In such cases, the *Background Investigation Report* detailing the screening process and steps taken thus far, will be submitted to the B/R Unit Commander for recommendation or approval to be forwarded to the Chief of Police.

H. Application Review

1. Each application will be reviewed. Applicants who display the best skills and have the most acceptable aptitude for the job description being filled may then be considered for a conditional offer of employment (COE) interview.

2. Applicants not approved for further consideration will be sent letters of ineligibility within thirty (30) days of disqualification stating the reason(s) for disqualification.

I. Conditional Offer of Employment (COE)

Only the Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, or the Chief of Police, may issue a conditional offer of employment (COE) to an applicant. No other employee is authorized to issue a COE to any applicant without written authorization from the Chief of Police.

J. Conditional Offer of Employment Interview

1. The B/R Unit officer shall schedule a conditional offer of employment (COE) interview with each applicant selected for a conditional offer of employment by the Chief of Police.
2. Applicants will have the opportunity to ask final questions prior to the COE interview.
3. Upon completion of an interview, the interviewing panel will make recommendations to the Chief of Police, on whether or not an applicant should be given a COE. Recommendations must include the screening process and steps taken for the applicants prior to the COE. A COE must be issued in order for the applicant to continue in the process.
4. Upon successful completion of the COE interview, the applicant will be scheduled for their polygraph, medical, and psychological examinations.
5. Applicants selected for a COE will be given the individualized starting salary based on the applicant's experience and education for review and approval as authorized by the Chief of Police, as well as a probationary contract form to sign.

Applicants acknowledge that their employment and its continuance with the Department is contingent upon their agreement to sign and adhere to the provisions (e.g., passing the background investigation, to include, medical, drug, psychological and polygraph examinations, etc.) listed in the appropriate COE waiver hire form (shown below) for the agreed upon position.

- a. *CCPD COE as a Police Recruit Pending Successful Completion of Background Process Agreement Form*, refer to Appendix B of this procedure.
- b. *CCPD COE as a Police Officer Pending Successful Completion of Background Process Agreement Form*, refer to Appendix C of this procedure.
- c. *CCPD COE as a Civilian Employee Pending Successful Completion of Background Process Agreement Form*, refer to Appendix D of this procedure.
- d. *CCPD COE as a E911 Communications Dispatcher 1 Pending Successful Completion of Background Process Agreement Form*, refer to Appendix F of this procedure.

6. The applicant will be directed to the Administrative Office of the Logistics & Operations Unit for completion of administrative forms and issued a hire date. This will occur, regardless of the status of the full background investigation. Due to the potential length of a background investigation, applicants who have been given a date of employment will report to work and begin their probationary period of employment.

K. Full Background Investigation

1. The full background investigation continues after the applicant's *Background Packet* is received by the B/R Unit, and while they are under a COE.
2. Any discrepancies discovered by a B/R Unit officer will be immediately brought to the attention of the B/R Unit Commander and/or the concerned commander, for consideration, and documented in the *Background Investigation Report*.
3. A *Background Investigation Report* will be submitted to the B/R Unit Commander when the full background investigation has been completed.

L. Polygraph

Before a polygraph examination can be administered to an applicant, a COE must have been issued to and signed by the applicant. There are no exceptions.

1. The applicant will be given a polygraph examination by an officer assigned to the Department's Polygraph Unit. If a polygraph examiner for this Department is unavailable, a private or public polygraph examiner, approved by the Department, shall be used.
2. All completed *Background Packets*, fast tracking documentation and any other related documents will be delivered by the B/R Unit to the Polygraph Unit. Incomplete *Background Packets* will not be accepted by a polygraph examiner.
3. Polygraph examiners will provide a schedule of their polygraph examinations to the B/R Unit Commander, prior to conducting any polygraph examination. The Polygraph Unit will schedule the polygraph examination at the first available date and time.
4. Admissions concerning illegal activities made during polygraph testing will be reviewed as to their employment acceptability factor.
5. Applicants for employment will be provided with questions relevant to the polygraph examination and prior to their scheduled polygraph appointment examination time.
6. The applicant shall be advised of the results of the polygraph examination by the polygraph examiner, upon completion of the examination.
7. Although the results of the polygraph examination shall not be used as the single determinant of employment status, a significant response to any relevant questions during any part of the polygraph examination that is corroborated by other investigative means may eliminate the applicant from further consideration.
8. Once a polygraph examination is completed, the related *Background Packet* will be returned to the assigned B/R Unit officer, or designee.
9. Upon successful completion of a polygraph examination, the polygraph examiner will immediately escort the applicant to the Administrative Office of the Logistics & Operations Unit, or authorized designee, to schedule the required medical examination. The medical examination will be scheduled for the earliest date and time available.

M. Medical and Drug Examinations

1. Physical and drug screening examinations shall be required of any persons under consideration for sworn and non-sworn positions to reveal any medical problems which might inhibit work performance, or contribute to work related disabilities.
2. Physical and drug screen examinations shall be conducted at the County's expense and the results thereof shall be submitted to the Chief of Police.
3. Physical and drug screen examinations shall be conducted by a medical doctor licensed by the State of Georgia and selected by the County.
4. Applicants for employment are required by law to meet certain physical standards prior to appointment to probationary status, in order to certify the general health of each applicant for a sworn position as a Georgia Peace Officer.

N. Psychological Examination

1. An emotional stability and psychological examination shall be required of any person under consideration for a sworn position and may be required for a non-sworn position.
2. Emotional stability and psychological examinations shall be conducted by a psychologist or psychiatrist licensed by the State of Georgia and selected by the Department. The psychologist shall maintain the examinations on file for purposes of review and security and shall notify the Chief of Police of their findings.

O. Notification of Ineligibility

Whenever an applicant is determined ineligible for appointment to probationary status, the applicant shall be notified in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of such decision. A copy of the letter will be placed into the applicant's file.

P. Re-Application

Applicants not appointed to probationary status may reapply if a vacancy exists after a minimum period of six (6) months from the date of last application, unless a permanent disqualification has been issued to the applicant. No portion of the selection process shall be waived because of reapplication.

Q. Lateral Entry

Whenever it is determined that a position, either sworn or unsworn, may be filled by lateral entry, selection criteria shall be established and posted to include both eligibility qualifications and formal procedures for carrying out the process. In the event that qualified personnel are available from both within and outside of this Department it is the policy of this Department to promote in favor of those currently employed by the Department.

1. Applicants seeking lateral entry into a sworn position must be certified as a Peace Officer by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (POST). POST certified officers who have less than twenty-four (24) months of active law enforcement experience as a uniform patrol officer responding to citizen calls for service and providing law enforcement services to the public, may be required to complete the full POST Mandate Academy and Field Training program before the end of their probationary period, if recommended by the Chief of Police.
2. POST certified officers who have at least twenty-four (24) months of active law enforcement experience as a uniform patrol officer responding to citizen calls for service and providing law enforcement services to the public, will be required to complete classroom and Field Training as directed by the Chief of Police, before the end of their probationary period.
3. POST certified officers who have three (3) years of law enforcement experience may be hired as a Police Officer with a starting salary up to Step 5 at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
4. POST certified officers who have six (6) years of law enforcement experience may be hired as a Police Officer with a starting salary up to Step 9 at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
5. Applicants who also meet the requirements for educational incentive pay for sworn officers may be awarded this additional incentive at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
6. Out of state applicants who are sworn peace officers that have three (3) or more years of law enforcement experience and are in good standing with their agency/POST will be eligible for consideration for any open positions as a Police Officer. At the discretion of the Chief of Police, out of state applicants may be required to complete the full term of the Police Academy. Prior to the conclusion of the probationary period, the employee will complete the Field Training program.

VII. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- A. Per Section 7.301 of the *Clayton County Civil Service Rules and Regulations*, employees will be placed on a probationary status. All new employees will be on a probationary status for the first twelve (12) months of service in a classified position to which an employee has been appointed, under the provisions of these Rules, shall constitute a working test or probationary period (hereinafter referred to as the probationary period); except that the probationary period shall be eighteen (18) months for the position of Police Recruit and E911 Communications Dispatcher 1.
- B. Prior to the conclusion of the probationary period, the Chief of Police will provide the Personnel Director with a written statement to the effect that the services of each employee appointed for a

probationary period have or have not been satisfactory and that the employee is or is not recommended to be retained in the service. An unsatisfactory rating will constitute grounds for dismissal from the Department as dictated by the Clayton County Civil Service Board. Unsatisfactory evaluation may be contested only during an interview between the Chief of Police and the employee. No further grievance procedures shall be available.

- C. The work performance of each probationary employee will be evaluated using valid, useful and non-discriminatory procedures.
- D. Performance reports under contest by a probationary employee shall be subject to a review process, which shall be less than the full grievance procedures available to permanent employees. This review process will include an interview between the employee and the rater's supervisor. The report may be appealed up the chain of command.
- E. Any extensions of the employee's probationary status can be extended under the guidelines under Section 7.301 of the *Clayton County Civil Service Rules and Regulations*.

VIII. APPLICANT RECORDS

- A. The originals of all rejected applications, excluding polygraph and background reports, will be returned to the Clayton County Department of Human Resources (HR).
- B. Application material and records of applicants appointed to probationary status shall become a permanent record of the Department's personnel files.
- C. All applications, polygraph examinations, background reports, medical and psychological reports shall be maintained on file by HR in a confidential status.

IX. SELECTION MATERIALS & RECORDS

Selection materials and records shall be stored in a secure area within the B/R Unit, when not being used. Whenever selection material is to be disposed of, the material will be incinerated or shredded. The B/R Unit Commander shall personally monitor such disposal.

X. EVALUATION OF SELECTION PROCESS

The entire selection process shall be evaluated at least annually in terms of its effectiveness relevant to selecting the best-qualified applicant in a fair and equitable manner. All circumstances concerning the evaluation of validity, utility and adverse impact shall be considered in determining when one (1) or more components of the selection process may become outdated. The report will also evaluate the probationary process to ensure that it suggests no adverse impact. The annual review shall be submitted to the Chief of Police by the 15th of January each year.

XI. ADVERSE IMPACT

- A. Adverse impact, if any, in the selection process shall be measured by comparing the selection rates for each race, sex, and ethnic group with the group having the highest selection rate.
- B. Records and dates used to monitor adverse impact, if any, will be maintained on file by the Administrative Secretary for the B/R Unit.
- C. Every effort shall be undertaken to ensure that all aspects of the selection process are fair and non-discriminatory in nature and that there is minimal adverse impact on any race, sex, or ethnic group.
- D. Every effort shall be undertaken to ensure that the appointment rate of employees from probationary status to permanent status meets the requirements of minimum adverse impact.

XII. CANCELLATION

This procedure amends and supersedes the following standard operating procedure: C6: *Applicant Selection*, dated February 12, 2024.