

<p>MESA POLICE</p> <p>Department Policy Manual</p>	<p align="center">Selection Process - Sworn Officer</p>	<p>DPM 1.3.15 Effective 01/10/2013 Revised 03/11/2024</p>
<p>Approved by: Chief of Police</p>	<p>Chapter: Hiring/Human Resources</p>	<p>Page: 1 of 11</p>

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides Mesa Police Department (MPD) members with guidelines regarding the selection process for sworn officer positions. [\[ALEAP 7.1B\]](#)

2. GENERAL

2.1 Responsibilities [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#)

- A. The City of Mesa (COM) Human Resources (HR) Department Personnel Unit and the MPD share the responsibility for the administration of the sworn officer selection process.
 - 1. The process evaluates applicants and ensures the selection of those applicants who meet entrance requirements.
 - 2. This policy lists the procedures for applicant selection and processing and identifies the responsibilities of those involved in the employment process.
- B. Portions of this process may be used to fill professional staff position vacancies within the Department.

2.2 City of Mesa Human Resources Department

- A. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit administers and coordinates the application process. They are responsible for: [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#)
 - 1. Announcing job vacancies.
 - 2. Coordinating the acceptance and review of all applications.
 - 3. Administering written examinations.
 - 4. Establishing eligibility lists for positions at the MPD.
- B. In addition to administering the selection process, the COM HR Department Personnel Unit ensures that the selection process complies with the COM Equal Employment Opportunity policies. [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#) [\[ALEAP 13.2\]](#)
 - 1. The validity of each step in the selection process is determined either by content validation, construct validation, or criterion related validation.
- C. To ensure the effectiveness of the process and to identify any adverse impact, the selection process is reviewed at each test session and revised as necessary.
 - 1. If adverse impact is identified, the selection process is analyzed, and a report made recommending revision of the process.
 - 2. Adverse impact is measured by comparing the selection rates for each age, sex, race, and ethnic background with the group having the highest selection rate.

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3. All portions of the selection process are administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner to prohibit discrimination based on age, sex, race, or ethnic background. [\[ALEAP 13.2\]](#)
4. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit and the Affirmative Action Coordinator maintain records and data used to monitor adverse impact.

2.3 MPD Responsibilities [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#)

- A. MPD conducts a screening process of the eligible police applicants to determine their suitability.

2.4 Hiring Unit Sergeant [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#)

- A. Coordinates all Police Officer Recruit testing.
- B. Coordinates recruit physical agility testing.
- C. Coordinates the out-of-state Police Officer Lateral Program.
- D. Coordinates the in-state Police Officer Lateral Program.
- E. Coordinates sworn/professional staff background interviews.
- F. Coordinates sworn/professional staff polygraph investigations.
- G. Serves as a member of the Hiring Review Board for sworn applicants.
- H. Acts as the Department's Affirmative Action Coordinator and has responsibility for maintaining the Affirmative Action Plan.
- I. Serves as the Department's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) liaison.

2.5 Background Investigator/Hiring Coordinator [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#)

- A. Coordinates the pre-employment psychological examination and medical examination.
- B. Maintains contact with the applicants throughout the selection process.
- C. Gives conditional offers of employment.
- D. Coordinates recruit orientation through the COM HR Department Personnel Unit.

2.6 Hiring Review Board [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#)

- A. Consists of the Hiring Unit Sergeant, Human Resources Lieutenant, and Human Resources Commander.
- B. The Hiring Review Board is responsible for determining eligibility of Department member applicants.
- C. The Hiring Review Board makes the final decision on who is eligible to be hired based on passing the background investigation.

2.7 Police Officer Recruit Announcement [\[ALEAP 13.1\]](#)

- A. The COM tests for the position of Police Officer Recruit as needed.
 1. Specific dates for testing are posted at the COM HR Department Personnel Unit and on the COM website.

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- B. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit screens the applications prior to the testing process.
 - 1. Applicants meeting the minimum requirements are allowed to participate in the testing process.

2.8 Written Examination [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit administers the written examination.
- B. In cooperation with the COM HR Department Personnel Unit, the Hiring Unit assists in administering the written examination.
- C. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit ensures that the written examination has documented proof that it is valid and non-discriminatory, as well as having validity and minimum adverse impact.
- D. The scoring process for the written examination is completed uniformly for all applicants.
- E. The Hiring Unit Sergeant will make every effort to ensure personnel representative of age, sex, race, and ethnic groups of the Department are among those assisting the COM HR Department Personnel Unit in administering the written examination.
- F. The MPD Recruitment Team may assist with the written examination.
- G. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit advises applicant of a non-passing score on their written examination.
- H. Applicants are also advised of the time limitations for re-application per COM Personnel Rules.
- I. Applicants who fail the written test are not allowed to continue in the selection process.

2.9 Physical Fitness Examination [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. Upon receiving a passing score on the written exam, the applicant will have nine months from the date of the written examination to pass the physical fitness examination prior to being eligible for selection.
- B. The physical fitness examination is administered by a trained physical fitness instructor(s).
- C. The physical fitness examination is scored in accordance with established criteria.
 - 1. The criteria for successfully completing the physical fitness examination is given with the application package.
 - 2. Applicants who pass the physical fitness examination are allowed to continue in the testing process.
 - 3. Applicants who fail any portion of the physical fitness examination are informed they failed and will have nine months from the date of the written examination to achieve a passing score. Failure to achieve a passing

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score within nine months will result in removal from the eligibility list and require the applicant to restart the hiring process.

- D. The Hiring Unit Sergeant will make every effort to ensure personnel representative of age, sex, race, and ethnic groups of the Department are among those assisting in administering the physical fitness examination.

2.10 Eligibility List [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. After completing the application screening, written examination, and a physical fitness examination, a list of eligible candidates is prepared by the COM HR Department Personnel Unit.
1. Establishment of the eligibility list is subject to change depending upon the number of candidates.

2.11 Background/Interview [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. The Hiring Unit Sergeant will coordinate the scheduling of the background interviews.
- B. The background interview is conducted by one Background Investigator or Hiring Coordinator assigned to the Hiring Unit or by a trained Department member.
- C. Prior to conducting background interviews, Background Investigators or Hiring Coordinators are trained by a member from the Human Resources Division on the proper methods of conducting the interview.

2.12 Polygraph [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. Upon completion of the background interview, the Hiring Unit Sergeant coordinates the scheduling of applicants for polygraph examinations.
- B. The polygraph is utilized to verify the information received in the application and information learned during the background investigation.
- C. Polygraph examiners are assigned and/or work for the MPD and report to the Hiring Unit Sergeant.
- D. A certified polygraph examiner conducts the polygraph examination.
- E. The areas to be addressed by the polygraph examiner are:
1. Driving history.
 2. Criminal conduct.
 3. Illegal drug/narcotic history.
 4. Gambling history.
 5. Military history.
 6. Employment history/honesty.
 7. Financial history.
 8. Unlawful sex acts.
 9. Previous law enforcement conduct, if applicable.
 10. Domestic violence.

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11. Character.

- F. The polygraph results alone are not the sole determination of employment. Although an admission during the pre-test or post-test interview, together with the information of deception, may be sufficient to support decisions relevant to employment status.
- G. After the polygraph examination, the polygraph examiner forwards a report to the assigned Background Investigator or Hiring Coordinator, and the applicant is scheduled for the written communication examination.

2.13 Written Communication Examination [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit administers the written communication examination.
 - 1. The written communication examination evaluates the applicant's writing skills.
 - 2. It is scored on grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.
- B. If an applicant does not do well on the test, the applicant is given suggestions on how to improve their writing skills.
 - 1. Applicants can take the written communication examination again while they are still on the eligibility list.
 - 2. If the applicant's second written communication examination is acceptable, the applicant may continue in the selection process.
 - 3. If the applicant's second written communication examination is not acceptable, the applicant is encouraged to continue working on their writing skills and can reapply at a later date.

2.14 Background Investigation [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. After the written communication examination, the assigned Background Investigator or Hiring Coordinator, in coordination with the Hiring Unit Sergeant, schedules the applicant for a background investigation.
 - 1. The background is intended to verify the candidate's qualifications, based on the information provided in the application and information disclosed during the background interview and polygraph examination.
 - 2. Persons conducting the background investigations are trained in the procedures for collecting information, conducting criminal history checks, and methods of verifying personal information.
- B. The assigned Background Investigator or Hiring Coordinator documents the results of the investigation and may include in the report of the investigation:
 - 1. Biographical data.
 - 2. Family data.
 - 3. Scholastic data.
 - 4. Employment background and history.
 - 5. Criminal history.

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6. Interviews with at least three of the applicant's personal references.
 7. Verification of a military service background.
 8. Credit history.
 9. A summary of the investigation's findings and conclusions.
- C. Applicants who fail the background investigation are notified in writing of the failure within 30 days after being found unacceptable by the Hiring Board.
1. The Hiring Unit Sergeant or designee coordinates this notification.

2.15 Hiring Board Evaluation [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. Upon completion of the polygraph examination and background investigation, all relevant information is forwarded to the Hiring Board for review.
- B. The Hiring Unit Sergeant reviews the applicant's qualifications and investigates findings of the background investigation and makes a recommendation as to the applicant's status on the eligibility list.
- C. The Human Resources Lieutenant reviews the applicant's qualifications and findings of the background investigation and makes a recommendation as to the applicant's status on the eligibility list.
- D. The Human Resources Commander reviews the applicant's qualifications and findings of the background investigation and makes a recommendation as to the applicant's status on the eligibility list.
- E. Any Hiring Board member can request further investigation be done on any applicant file.
 1. Results of that investigation can be submitted to the Hiring Board for re-evaluation of the file.
- F. A member from the Human Resources Division notifies applicants who are found acceptable by the Hiring Review Board in writing within 30 days.
- G. All applicants found to be acceptable by the Hiring Review Board are considered for employment.
 1. Those applicants recommended by the Hiring Review Board may be reviewed by the Chief's Office for concurrence.
 2. A conditional offer of employment may be given to the applicant by the Mesa Police Department.
 - a. The Human Resources Commander or designee will make the conditional offer of employment to the applicant.
- H. After selection for hire, the Background Investigator or Hiring Coordinator coordinates the following examinations. Both examinations must be passed before the applicant is scheduled for an Academy class.
 1. Psychological examination.
 2. A pre-employment medical examination.
- I. Note: An additional successful physical fitness examination may also be required if several months have elapsed from the first test.

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2.16 Psychological Examination [ALEAP 10.6] [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. An emotional stability and psychological fitness examination of each applicant is conducted by a qualified psychologist in accordance with an established contract at no cost to the applicant.
 - 1. The examination is based upon valid and useful methods and employs non-discriminatory procedures.
 - 2. A record of the results of the exam is kept in a separate file from the Hiring file and the Personnel file to maintain privacy and comply with ADA and MPD policies.
- B. The applicant who fails the emotional stability and psychological fitness exam is notified in writing by a member from the Human Resources Division that the applicant will not continue in the selection process.
- C. An unsuccessful applicant's record of results is maintained for a period of at least three years in accordance with Arizona State Library Human Resources Schedule 20721.

2.17 Pre-Employment Medical Examination [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. The Hiring Coordinator schedules a pre-employment medical examination.
 - 1. An authorized physician, per contractual agreement, conducts the medical examination at no cost to the applicant. [ALEAP 10.6]
- B. All applicants who successfully pass the medical examination and the psychological examination need to be approved by the Arizona Public Safety Retirement Board.
- C. A record of the results of the examination is kept in a separate file from the Human Resources file and the Personnel file to maintain privacy and comply with ADA and MPD policies.
- D. The applicant who fails the medical examination is notified in writing by a member from the Human Resources Division that the applicant will not continue in the selection process.
- E. An unsuccessful applicant's record of results is maintained for a period of at least three years in accordance with Arizona State Library Human Resources Schedule 20721.

2.18 Onboarding Process [ALEAP 13.1]

- A. Once the candidate successfully passes both the medical evaluation and psychological evaluation, the Background Investigator will send an e-mail to City HR confirming the candidate has passed all preemployment requirements. The e-mail shall include the candidate's Academy start date and a copy of the candidate's fingerprint card.
 - 1. The Background Investigator will request a requisition number and position number from PD Employment Services.

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2. The request will be reviewed, and approved or denied, by Mesa Police Department Fiscal and the COM Management designee.
3. Once the requisition is approved, the Background Investigator will complete the New Hire Form in NeoGov and submit it for approval by the Hiring Sergeant, Timekeeping, and the Human Resources Division Commander.

3. LATERAL ENTRY [ALEAP 13.1]

3.1 In-State Lateral Entry as Police Officer

- A. MPD may allow in-state lateral entry into the classification of sworn police officer position under the following conditions:
 1. The applicant must currently be, or has been, an AZPOST certified sworn peace officer in good standing.
- B. Applicant will be hired at a tiered-level based on years of experience as a sworn peace officer.
- C. Officers who desire to enter this Department laterally must follow a testing process established by the Human Resources Division.
- D. The lateral applicant submits an application to the COM HR Department Personnel Unit.
- E. The application includes a resume or completed questionnaire that includes training, all assignments, and supervisors' names from their current or previous employment as an Arizona peace officer.
- F. The applicant is required to provide copies of their last two performance appraisals.
- G. An applicant's probationary status and standing within their department will be taken into consideration during the hiring decision process.
- H. Applications for the position of in-state Police Officer Lateral are initially screened by the COM HR Department Personnel Unit to ensure compliance with existing Department standards such as minimum age, minimum qualifications for the position, and drug use standard.
- I. The applicant must pass a physical fitness examination and firearms qualification prior to moving on in the process.
- J. All applicants who successfully pass the physical fitness examination and firearms qualification will be scheduled for a background interview with a member of the Hiring Unit.
- K. A polygraph examination is done on applicants who are found to have an acceptable background.
- L. After the polygraph examination, an extensive background investigation is completed.

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- M. The same review board process used for police recruit applicants is utilized for lateral officer applicants.
- N. In-State Lateral applicants require notification to the Chief of Police.
 - 1. Those that would meet criteria for [ARS 41-1828.02](#) (Hiring Reimbursement) require approval of the Chief of Police or designee prior to a conditional offer.
- O. If given a conditional offer of employment, the applicant must also pass the following examinations prior to being hired:
 - 1. A psychological examination.
 - 2. A medical examination.
 - 3. A physical fitness examination if several months have elapsed since their first physical fitness examination.
- P. Applicants who are not successful in the testing process are notified in writing within 30 days.

3.2 Out-of-State Lateral Entry as Police Officer

- A. The MPD may allow out-of-state lateral entry into the classification of sworn police officer. To be eligible, a person must:
 - 1. Have previously served as a certified peace officer in Arizona, another state, or federal agency.
 - 2. Have completed basic and advanced training that demonstrates substantial comparability to the Arizona basic course.
 - a. At a minimum, a person meets the substantial comparability standard if they have graduated from a state approved POST basic training academy and have at least one year of experience as a POST academy certified peace officer.
 - 3. Obtain an appointment from an Arizona Law Enforcement Agency.
 - 4. Meet all of the minimum qualifications for certification as an Arizona peace officer as outlined in Arizona Administrative Code Rule [R13-4-105](#) [Minimum Qualifications](#).
- B. Applicant will be hired at a tiered level based on years of experience as a sworn peace officer.
- C. Out-of-state officers who desire to enter this Department laterally must follow a testing process established by the Human Resources Division.
 - 1. The lateral applicant submits a completed application, background questionnaire, and AZPOST FORM WB (training verification) to the COM HR Department Personnel Unit. The materials will be screened for minimum qualifications.
 - 2. The application includes a resume or completed questionnaire which includes training, all assignments, and supervisors' names from their current employment as a peace officer.

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3. The applicant is required to provide copies of their last two performance appraisals.
 4. An applicant's probationary status and standing within their department will be taken into consideration during the hiring decision process.
 5. Applications for the position of out-of-state Police Officer Lateral are initially screened by the COM HR Department Personnel Unit to ensure compliance with existing Department standards such as minimum age, minimum qualifications for the position, and drug use standard.
 6. The applicant must pass a physical fitness examination and firearms qualification prior to moving on in the hiring process.
 7. All applicants who successfully pass the physical fitness examination and firearms qualification will be scheduled for a background interview with a member from the Hiring Unit.
 8. A polygraph examination is conducted on applicants who are found to have an acceptable background.
 9. After the polygraph examination, an extensive background investigation is completed.
 10. The same review board process used for police recruit applicants is utilized for lateral officer applicants.
- D. If given a conditional offer of employment, the applicant must also pass the following examinations prior to being hired:
1. A psychological examination.
 2. A medical examination.
 3. A physical fitness examination if several months have elapsed since their first physical fitness examination.
- E. Applicants who are not successful in the testing process are notified in writing within 30 days.

4. RECORDS RETENTION

- A. The COM HR Department Personnel Unit maintains official applications and testing materials used in the selection process.
 1. The materials are secured to prevent their unauthorized disclosure.
- B. The applicant questionnaires and background investigation materials are secured to prevent unauthorized disclosure.
 1. The Chief of Police keeps the records throughout employment with the COM.
 2. The Human Resources Division maintains these records.
- C. A record of each applicant's background investigation is retained according to the following guidelines:

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1. Information contained in the applicant's file is confidential and is only discussed with that applicant.
2. Non-hired applicant records are destroyed after a period of 3 years in accordance with Arizona State Library Human Resources Schedule 20721.

5. PROBATION

- A. Police Officer Recruits successfully complete an 18-month probationary period before they are granted permanent status.
- B. This probationary period is inclusive of the time spent in the basic Police Training Academy and in the Field Training Program.
- C. The appointment rate of Police Officer Recruits from probationary to permanent status meets the requirements of minimum adverse impact.
- D. Lateral entry officers have a 15-month probationary period if they are not required to attend a basic Police Training Academy.
- E. The work performance of each probationary employee is evaluated using valid, useful and nondiscriminatory procedures.
- F. [COM Management Policy 300 - Performance Appraisal Program](#) requires a supervisor conduct an interview with a member when giving a member a performance evaluation.
 1. The performance evaluation allows the member to make written comments.
 2. This applies to probationary members as well as non-probationary members.

REFERENCES

- [ARS 41-1828.02](#)
- [COM Management Policy 300 - Performance Appraisal Program](#)
- [COM Personnel Rules](#)
- [R13-4-105 Minimum Qualifications](#)