



<b>Somerville Police Department</b> 	<b>TYPE:</b>		<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>		<b>VERSION:</b>	
	<b>GENERAL ORDER</b>		<b>416</b>		<b>2.00</b>	
	<b>Subject:</b> <b>Candidate Recruitment and Selection (Sworn)</b>					
<b>Issuing Authority:</b> <b>Charles Femino</b> <b>Chief of Police</b>		<b>Signature:</b> 		<b>Effective Date:</b> February 3, 2022		
		<b>Number of Pages:</b> Page 1 of 8				
<b>Accreditation Standards (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) 31.1.1, 31.3.1, 31.3.4, 32.1.1, 32.2.1, 32.1.4, 32.1.5, 32.1.6, 32.1.7, 32.2.1, 32.2.2, 32.2.3, 32.2.7, 32.2.8, 32.2.10, SEL-01</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised <input type="checkbox"/> Amended				
<b>Revision &amp; Reissued Dates:</b>	11/17/15					

## Purpose

The process of recruitment and selection of sworn personnel for the department is largely determined by Massachusetts Law as administered by the Massachusetts Human Resources Division (Civil Service).

The Somerville Police Department does accept the responsibility for assisting in the processing of applicants, participating in recruitment efforts, and managing other aspects of the personnel process in evaluating prospective candidates for employment as sworn police officers and candidates who will have access to the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS).

## Policy

It is the policy of the Somerville Police Department to:

- A.** Participate in the selection of officers, by performing background investigations, of the most qualified candidates for appointment as sworn police officers and for candidates who will have access to CJIS systems.
- B.** Strive to ensure that all background investigatory practices will be conducted in a manner which will ensure equal access for all people and prevent discrimination.
- C.** Ensure that the evaluation of prospective candidates is based solely on the candidate's eligibility and merit or fitness, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, sexual preferences, political or union affiliation. [31.2.3]

## Procedures

### A. Hiring Process [32.1.1]

1. It is imperative that the recruitment, screening and selection process attract desirable candidates and that the process be fundamentally fair and in compliance with federal, state and local law. In most instances, the sequence of the hiring process, and who is involved in that process, shall be:
  - a. Candidate Recruitment (HRD, SPD)
  - b. Civil Service Exam for Entry Level Sworn Positions (HRD)
  - c. Notification to prospective applicants of job vacancies based on certified civil service list (HRD, City of Somerville HR)
  - d. Application Process/Orientation (City of Somerville HR, SPD)
  - e. Candidate Orientation (City of Somerville HR, SPD)
  - f. Candidate Screening (City of Somerville HR, SPD)
  - g. Candidate Background Investigation (City of Somerville HR, SPD)
  - h. Interviews (City of Somerville HR, SPD)
  - i. Conditional Offer of Employment (City of Somerville HR)
  - j. Final Evaluations (City of Somerville HR, SPD)
  - k. Drug/Substance Testing (City of Somerville HR , City Vendor)
  - l. Medical Evaluation (City of Somerville HR , City Vendor)
  - m. Psychological Evaluation (City of Somerville HR , City Vendor)
  - n. Pre-Academy Screening (City of Somerville HR, SPD)
  - o. Training (SPD, MPTC)

### B. Recruitment [31.1.1]

1. The department shall actively participate in recruitment for qualified persons to fill sworn vacancies.
2. Official job announcements and recruitment notices shall include: [31.3.1(a)]
  - a. A description of the duties and responsibilities of the position
  - b. Requisite skills
  - c. Minimum educational requirements
  - d. Other minimum qualifications or requirements
  - e. Official application filing deadlines [31.3.1(d)]
  - f. Equal Opportunity Employer notice [31.3.1(c)]
3. Recruitment activities of this department may include advertising or posting notices of vacant positions or entrance examinations: [31.3.1(b)]
  - a. In local newspapers
  - b. On local radio stations
  - c. On local cable television venues

- d. At colleges
  - e. At criminal justice training academies
  - f. In the CJIS Jobs file
4. The process of recruitment and selection of sworn personnel for the department is largely determined by Massachusetts General Law as administered by the Massachusetts Division of Human Resources (HRD). Advertising, testing, and establishment of candidate lists are functions of Civil Service.
5. At a minimum, all Police Officer Candidates must: [32.2.1(a)]
- a. Have either a high school diploma or equivalency certificate approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education or [SEL-01]
  - b. Three years of experience in the armed forces of the United States with the last release or discharge under honorable conditions.
  - c. Attained the age of twenty one (21) at the time of the entrance exam. An exception to this requirement may apply to current military personnel serving on active duty on the date of the examination and requesting a military makeup. [SEL-01]
6. This department may hire sworn police officers, under M.G.L. Chapter 31 and the rules of the Massachusetts HRD, from a list of candidates provided by HRD upon the request of the appointing authority. The list may contain names established from:
- a. Open competitive entrance examinations
  - b. This department's list of reserve police officers
  - c. Reemployment list – Civil Service employees separated from positions in other departments due to lack of work, lack of funding, or abolition of position
7. If a request for a candidate list is made, names shall be certified from the reemployment list if Civil Service has established a list pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 31, Section 40, and then from the list established from the open competitive examination.

### **C. Application Process**

1. The Professional Standards Lieutenant works in conjunction with the City's Personnel Department HR Coordinator/Civil Service Manager in screening prospective applicants. Once all applicants have been given the opportunity to sign a Civil Service List at City Hall, the applicants will be scheduled to attend an orientation in the police department's academy room.

2. All candidates for employment must complete and submit an employment application package provided by the Personnel Department. The application shall include a letter identifying:
  - a. An explanation of all elements of the selection process [32.1.4(a)]
  - b. The expected duration of the process [32.1.4(b)]
  - c. The policy on reapplication in the event that the candidate is not selected [32.1.4(c)]
  - d. The applicant will also be required to produce the following documents:
    - (1).A release form completed and signed by the applicant in order to conduct a background investigation.
    - (2).A credit report.
    - (3).College transcripts.
    - (4).A copy of the applicant's Massachusetts Driver's License.
    - (5).Police Basic Recruit Training Certificate, if applicable.
    - (6).DD 214 if a veteran.
    - (7).Proof of Citizenship.
    - (8).Fingerprints (taken at police station).
  - e. The applicant will also be required to produce a full employment history including an explanation of any gaps in employment. [SEL-01]
3. The application often provides the first impression of the candidate to members of the selection committee. It also serves as a foundation for background investigations and interviews. The application shall be screened by the selection committee. At a minimum, committee members should consider:
  - a. Whether the application was submitted in a timely fashion.
  - b. Whether the applicant meets minimum standards for training, education, age, etc.
  - c. Spelling, grammar, writing skills, and proficiency in the use of the English language.
  - d. Whether the application is complete, with all required documents submitted or accounted for.

4. The content of the application should be reviewed in detail. Areas which are reasons for concern or which make the candidate more desirable should be noted.
5. Intentional false, misleading, or exaggerated information will be grounds for rejection.
6. Minor omissions or deficiencies that can be corrected prior to testing or the interview process shall not be grounds for rejection. [31.3.4]

#### **D. Applicant Screening**

1. Applicants accepted for further consideration may be notified in writing, verbally, or both.
2. Criminal records & background checks include: [32.2.1(b)]
  - a. Local records check.
  - b. Driver history.
  - c. Board of Probation criminal history record (BOP).
  - d. Q5: Massachusetts suicide check.
  - e. QWA: CJIS/NCIC Wanted / Missing Person / Vehicle check.
  - f. WMS: Massachusetts Warrant Management System.
  - g. Massachusetts Sex offender registry.
  - h. DQ: Out-of-State Driver's License check.
  - i. BOPFI: Massachusetts License to Carry (LTC)/ Firearms Identification Card (FID) check.
  - j. FSI: Massachusetts Firearms Ownership Index check.
  - k. QH/QR: Criminal History NCIC/Interstate Identification Index (III) (AFIS-R)
  - l. Coplink
  - m. R3: Massachusetts Driver's License check.
  - n. KQ: Massachusetts Drivers History check
  - o. Fingerprint check. [SEL-01]

**Note:** No person convicted of a felony may be appointed as a police officer, nor shall anyone convicted of a domestic violence misdemeanor, as they are permanently disqualified from possessing a firearm or ammunition.

- p.** National Decertification Index. [SEL-01]
  - q.** Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or other social media or personal web sites.
  - r.** Search of the candidate's name on an Internet search engine.
- 3.** Applicants who are not selected for further consideration shall be informed in writing within thirty (30) days of that determination. [32.1.5]
- 4.** All documents provided to the committee and those produced during the application and selection process shall be considered confidential and not circulated outside of the committee or administration. Records shall be stored in a secure area when not being used. All copies of documents used to assess a candidate shall be turned in to the City's Personnel HR Coordinator/Civil Service Manager who in turn shall store or dispose of these documents in a manner that prevents disclosure of the information and is in accordance with the Massachusetts Municipal Records Retention Manual. [32.1.7]
- 5. Selection Material:**
  - a.** All records of the selection process for candidates selected to be hired shall be stored and retained by the Personnel Department's HR Coordinator/Civil Service Manager at City Hall. All candidate selection material, to include a candidate's background investigation, shall be retained by the Personnel Department in accordance with the Massachusetts Municipal Records Retention Manual. [32.2.3]
  - b.** All records of the selection process for candidates not selected to be hired and all candidate selection material, to include a candidate's background investigation shall be stored and retained by the Personnel Department's HR Coordinator/Civil Service Manager at City Hall for two years after the vacancy is filled or the position cancelled and, thereafter, may be destroyed in a manner which prevents disclosure of the information within, in accordance with department policy and the Massachusetts Municipal Records Retention Manual. [32.1.6]

## **E. Background Investigation**

- 1.** A background investigation shall be conducted for each applicant approved for further consideration by the selection committee.
  - a.** The investigation shall be conducted by an employee designated by the Chief.
  - b.** All background investigators shall be properly trained in background investigation techniques prior to conducting such investigations. [32.2.2]

2. The investigators shall prepare a report for the selection committee, to include:
  - a. Verification of the candidate's qualifying credentials. [32.2.1(a)]
  - b. Review of any criminal record or negative contacts with police: [32.2.1(b)]
    - (1).Candidates with a history of perpetrating violence (including elder abuse, child abuse, sexual assault, stalking, or domestic violence) should be screened out at this point in the hiring process
    - (2).For further information, see the department policy [116 - Domestic Violence by Police Employees](#).
  - c. Verification of at least three personal references [32.2.1(c)]
  - d. Investigation of any areas of concern raised by the selection committee.
  - e. Appearance of excessive use of sick time or patterns of sick time taken in conjunction with days off, or on weekends.
  - f. Appearance of or evidence of excessive tardiness.
  - g. Appearance of excessive workman's compensation or injured on duty claims.
  - h. Any previous employment in law enforcement in any state, or United States territory or by the federal government. This will include but not limited to the applicant's full employment record, complaints, discipline. [SEL-01]
  - i. Excessive use of force complaints.
  - j. Character or integrity issues.
  - k. Difficulty in getting along with other employees.
  - l. Sexual/harassment complaints.
3. Candidates who will have access to CJIS systems must be fingerprinted and conduct a national fingerprint based records check.
4. Persons convicted of a felony cannot be police officers or access the CJIS system. The appointing authority may petition CJIS for a review of the felony record for authorization for access.
5. Candidates who are found to have intentionally submitted false information in the application package will not be considered further.

6. The selection committee will review the report and determine which candidates should be considered further.
  - a. Those who are still under consideration will be invited to interview with the selection committee.
  - b. Candidates who are screened out shall be notified in writing. [32.1.5]

## **F. Interviews**

1. The selection committee shall conduct interviews of candidates. A standardized list of questions for all candidates will provide the format for the interview. Follow-up questions and inquiries into issues raised during the background investigation should also be asked as appropriate. The process should include:
  - a. A general question about the candidate's background to put the candidate at ease and provide him/her with an opportunity to tell the committee about him/herself.
  - b. A question or scenario to test the candidate's integrity.
  - c. An opportunity to provide the committee with any information that was not asked, but which the candidate deems important.
  - d. An opportunity to ask questions of the committee.
  - e. Questions about a candidates political views or political interpretation of current events shall be avoided.
2. Candidates shall be clearly informed of the department's position of zero tolerance concerning domestic violence by police department employees. For further information, see department [116 - Domestic Violence by Police Employees](#).

## **G. Final Evaluations**

1. The committee will evaluate the candidates and prepare a report for further consideration. Candidates will be made a conditional offer of employment, in writing, before further evaluation is conducted.
2. All remaining candidates shall undergo a medical evaluation (physical) conducted by a physician selected by the department to certify the general health of the candidate. The physician may have specialization in industrial medicine. The evaluation should include screening for controlled substances and the ability to physically perform tasks which have been determined to be critical job functions. [32.2.7] [SEL-01]



3. All candidates shall undergo an emotional stability and psychological fitness examination by a qualified psychologist or psychiatrist who specializes in criminal justice pre-employment psychological evaluation. [32.2.8] [SEL-01]
  - a. The psychological screening of all viable candidates will include indicators of abusive tendencies.
  - b. This department will strongly consider a no-hire decision in the case of a candidate with tendencies indicative of abusive behavior.
4. Reports of physical and psychological testing shall be considered confidential medical records. For candidates hired by the department, these records shall become part of the employee's medical personnel records. For candidates not selected, the records will be retained with the candidates' other selection process records at the Personnel Department at City Hall. [32.2.9]

## **H. Sworn - Pre-Academy Screening**

1. All candidates selected for employment as sworn-officers who have not completed a basic recruit municipal police training academy must complete the HRD physical agility test (PAT) prior to enrollment. A "waiver" may be obtained from the MPTC for those that have completed equivalent academies in other states.
2. Trained candidates who were not previously civil service police officers must also pass the HRD physical agility test.
3. All candidates selected for employment as sworn-officers must pass an examination approved by the Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission. [SEL-01]
4. All candidates selected for employment as sworn-officers must successfully complete an oral interview administered by the POST Commission. [SEL-01]
5. All candidates selected for employment as sworn-officers must be of good moral character and fit for employment in law enforcement, as determined by the POST Commission. [SEL-01]

## **I. Training**

1. Sworn Officer Candidates
  - a. Police Academy Training: Candidates selected for employment must meet training requirements as specified in M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 96B, and the department policy on Training and Career Development. [SEL-01]

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- b.** CPR & First Aid: Candidates selected for employment must possess or obtain during a recruit academy, a First Aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certificate or equivalent. [SEL-01]
- c.** Upon successful completion of basic recruit training, new officers must complete at least a six-month (6-month) probationary period. [32.2.10]