

CHAPTER 32 SELECTION

DISCUSSION: The Hattiesburg Police Department recognizes the need to have a personnel selection process that results in the appointment of those individuals who possess the skills, knowledge and abilities necessary to perform effectively. The selection process has been acutely affected by court decisions and regulatory requirements that mandate a useful job related non-discriminatory system. The department considers applicants in two categories as defined in this document. The elements and selection criteria are the same for both except where noted or specified.

Definitions

Entry Level- Persons who do not possess a current certification as a full-time law enforcement officer.

Lateral- Persons that possess a current full-time certification of law enforcement from the State of Mississippi. This includes persons that have a current certification from another state that is recognized, transferable to and acknowledged by the Mississippi Board on Law Enforcement Standards and Training.

32.1 SELECTION PROCESS

32.1.1 Elements and Activities of the Selection Process

Elements of the selection process used are listed as follows but are not limited to:

- A. Application for employment
- B. Civil service Test
- C. Physical fitness examinations
- D. Oral interview
- E. Polygraph test
- F. Psychological screening
- G. Medical examinations
- H. Fourteen (14) week academy program
- I. Three (3) month F.T.O. program
- J. One (1) year probation.

K. Background investigations

L. Written examinations

32.1.2 Criteria for Selection Process Elements

The elements of the selection process use only those rating criteria or minimum qualifications that are job-related.

32.1.3 Scoring, Evaluation and Interpretation

All elements of the selection process shall be administered, scored, evaluated and interpreted in a uniform fashion. Time limits, oral instructions, etc., must be clearly set forth and carried out identically for all candidates on all examinations. The test administrator SHALL read the appropriate test instructions to insure the uniformity of the testing process.

32.1.4 Selection process/Informed Candidates

- A. Applicants shall be informed in writing of all elements of the selection process.
- B. The selection/testing process is an ongoing process with entry level testing occurring as required.
- C. All candidates, at the time of application, shall be provided with a copy of information regarding application procedures.
- D. Entry level candidates shall remain on the departmental eligibility list for a period of one (1) year from the date of the civil service test. Those candidates who are not selected for further testing and probationary employment shall not be prohibited from entering the testing process again at a later time.
 - 1. Applicants who reapply shall be tested and evaluated as a NEW applicant.
 - 2. During the one (1) year period the candidates remain on the eligibility list, all applicants are encouraged to supply the department with information regarding any new knowledge, skills or abilities that they have acquired that would improve their chance of selection. Notification to the agency will be in writing and supplemented with any supporting documentation.

32.1.5 Ineligible Candidate Notification

Candidates who are not eligible for appointment to probationary status on the basis of a test, examination, interview or investigation shall be informed in writing, within ten (10) days of such decision.

32.1.6 Maintenance of Selection Records

All records and information regarding candidates who have not been selected for employment shall be maintained as follows:

- A. The individual records shall be maintained in a file at the Training Academy for a one (1) year period, consistent with the length of eligibility of the candidate.
- B. Records shall, after one (1) year, be transferred to the City of Hattiesburg Human Resources Department.

32.1.7 Security of Selection Material

All selection material (testing materials) shall be stored in a secure area, in locked files with controlled access. Access to these files shall be allowed only to representatives of the Training Division who are authorized to administer the examinations. All disposed selection materials shall be shredded by a representative of the Training Division.

32.2 ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

32.2.1 Background Investigation Required

- A. Prior to appointment to probationary status, a complete and thorough background investigation shall be conducted.
 - 1. Only sworn personnel, experienced in the collection of required information as a result of an investigative background or training, shall be allowed to conduct a background investigation.
 - 2. The background investigation shall be conducted according to the background investigator's checklist and shall include, at a minimum:
 - a. Verification of candidate's qualifying credentials, to include: educational achievements, military achievements, prior employment records, prior residence records, date of birth, citizenship, credit records, etc.
 - b. Criminal record checks in all cities of residence and employment.
 - c. Computer inquiries of motor vehicle records and licensing records in all states of residence.
 - d. Criminal history computer checks in all states of residence.
 - e. NCIC inquiries under all known identities.

- f. FBI fingerprint card check.
 - g. Triple I check through communications spots networks.
 - h. Verification of at least three personal references of the candidate and if possible two (2) developed reference checks.
- B. The background investigation shall become a permanent typewritten record and shall be maintained as a part of the candidate's file.

32.2.2 Person to conduct Background Investigations

Background investigations shall be assigned to investigators based on availability and case loads. Sworn personnel, experienced in the collection of required information as a result of an investigative background or training, will be assigned as needed to conduct background investigations.

32.2.3 Background Personal History Record Retention

The background investigation shall be maintained as a part of the candidate's file for at least three (3) years. (C120403)

32.2.4 Polygraph Questioning

At the time a person applies for a formal application the person will receive a list of areas from which polygraph questions will be drawn. These may include, but not limited to:

- A. Personal information obtained on application or background investigation
- B. Criminal history
- C. Drug and alcohol usage

32.2.5 Polygraph Examination

The administration of all polygraph examinations and the evaluation of the subsequent results shall be conducted only by an approved professionally trained polygraph examiner holding credentials from a recognized polygraph training program.

32.2.6 Polygraph Results

The entry level polygraph examination shall be used as an investigative aid only. The results of the polygraph shall not be used as the single determinant of employment status, but may be used together with other information to support decisions relevant to employment.

32.2.7 Medical Examination Requirements

- A. Prior to the first day of employment, after being offered a position as a probationary officer, candidates shall be scheduled for a comprehensive medical examination. The job offer is conditional upon successful completion of this medical examination.
 - 1. The examination is designed to reveal any medical problems that might inhibit work performance shorten a career or contribute to work-related disabilities.
 - 2. The examining physician shall be provided with a packet containing a medical evaluation form.
 - 3. Candidates shall be provided with the proper medical examination form by the Training Division to be brought with them at the time of their scheduled appointment.
- B. In addition to a medical examination, a drug screening test shall be performed on the candidates to determine recent usage.

32.2.8 Psychological Evaluation

- A. Prior to appointment as a probationary officer, those candidates being considered for employment shall have their psychological and emotional fitness evaluated by professionals.
- B. The Minnesota Multi-Phasic Personality Inventory, RSCI Personality Inventory, and the Shipley Institute of Living Scale shall be the examinations used for psychological evaluation.
- C. Only qualified professionals (psychologists or psychiatrists) shall be used to evaluate the screening devices and make judgments regarding the emotional stability and psychological fitness of candidates.
- D. A record of the results of all emotional stability and psychological fitness examinations shall be maintained as a part of the candidate's/employees permanent file.
- E. The candidate's psychological examination test results, as well as any other required information, shall be provided to the examining physician.

32.2.9 Medical and Psychological Evaluation Results

A record of the results of all medical examinations, emotional stability and psychological fitness examinations shall be maintained as a part of the candidate's/employee's permanent file.

32.2.10 probation as a Part of the Selection Process

- A. All hiring decisions shall be made by the Office of the Chief of Police based upon the results of the selection process.
- B. One of the most important components of the selection process is the probationary period of employment during which the candidate's training and work performance may be evaluated and a decision regarding permanent status reached. The entry level probationary period for the position of police officer shall be twelve months. There are no exceptions to this requirement.
 - 1. Candidates must satisfactorily complete all entry level training prior to being granted permanent status.
 - 2. If determined by the Chief of Police to be necessary, the probationary period may be extended an additional six (6) months.
- C. Probationary employees SHALL be evaluated as outlined in the Hattiesburg Police Department Field Training Officer program.

32.2.11 Application for Employment

- A. Individuals seeking employment as a Police Officer will, during open recruitments, submit experience and education information on standard application forms developed and provided by the City of Hattiesburg Human Resources Division before the recruitment deadline.
- B. Applications will normally be completed at City Hall in the Human Resources Division. (Applications may be mailed, with the approval of the Human Resources Manager or his/her designee). Applications shall be completed in black ink and printed clearly to assure ease in reproducing.
- C. Applications for initial appointment shall, when completed, provide the following information about the individual:
 - 1. Position(s) applied for;
 - 2. Full name and current address (Including Telephone Number);
 - 3. Military service record, if any;
 - 4. Previous work history, including;

- a. Name/location of employers
 - b. Position Title
 - c. Nature of duties
 - d. Dates employed
 - e. Beginning/ending salary
 - f. Reason for separation
5. Citizenship;
 6. Date and place of birth;
 7. Voter registration; and
 8. Residence for the five (5) years prior to the application.

32.2.12 Physical fitness Examination

- A. The Hattiesburg police Department and the Mississippi Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training recognize that each law enforcement Officer be able to demonstrate an acceptable level of fitness. Upper body strength, agility, cardio-respiratory endurance, and flexibility are measurable characteristics of fitness. The duties of a Police Officer often include physical activities involving these characteristics in the police Officer's daily activities (running, pulling, pushing, subduing, prisoners, Climbing stairs, etc.).
- B. The Hattiesburg Police Department utilizes a fitness test adopted by the Board on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Training. It is a fitness test that measures each of the following areas;
 1. Upper body strength - through Pushups
 2. Agility - through a timed agility run
 3. Flexibility measurement
 4. Cardiovascular endurance - through a 1.5 mile run
- C. The minimum acceptable score for this test is 60% for each event. The test has been age and gender adjusted to ensure that the scoring reflects the average for the general population of each group.

- D. Lateral applicants will be tested using the same criteria and test that is used biannually and outlined for Full-time certified officers currently employed by the department

32.2.13 Oral Interview

- A. The purpose of the oral interview process is to assess a candidate's ability to demonstrate proper communication skills necessary to be a Police Officer. Candidates are evaluated on their ability to process and interpret information then articulate their response with clarity and confidence. It is necessary for Police Officers to communicate effectively reflecting adequate verbal and nonverbal language. Questions posed at the candidate's honesty and integrity if answered positively demonstrates professional character traits essential to law enforcement.
- B. Scoring Procedure.
 - 1. The oral interviews are rated utilizing an interview score sheet which has a scale from poor to excellent. Each candidate is rated on his/her response to each question.
 - 2. Each question has pre-determined answers that are scored on a range from poor to excellent with numerical values assigned.
 - 3. Each candidate is related on his/her professional appearance. Candidates are scored on a range from poor to excellent with numerical values assigned.

32.2.14 Civil Service Test

This examination will appraise the candidate's ability to reason and assess general knowledge questions. The test consists of various topics to include but not limited to basic math, honesty and integrity, objective reasoning, and word association. Basic knowledge of the above is a necessary skill for an entry level police officer. The test is administered by the civil service clerk. The passing grade is 60% or greater. The Civil Service Commission has waived the written test requirement for Lateral applicants.