

Improvements in the Police Recruiting Process

The Personnel Department has been working diligently with the Police Department over the past nine months on hiring process improvements. This collaboration appears to be working well, and the hiring process for Police Recruits has been streamlined. The revised processes for Police Recruit hiring began in March 2013.

The old recruitment process took an average of 339 days from application date to start date (based on recruits that applied from January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2012). The new recruitment process took an average of 224 days from application date to start date (based on recruits that applied on or after January 1, 2013). Note that this data includes recruits hired between January 1, 2013 and October 31, 2013. Additionally, there were a number of other process improvements the Police Department requested of the Personnel Department. These have been addressed to the Police Department's satisfaction.

It is important to realize that the Police Recruit hiring process is by nature larger in scope than that of other City recruitments. The thorough background reviews are very time-consuming. The Police Department process is designed to acquire the best candidates to protect the safety of the City and its citizens.

After the initial application is received, candidates' minimum qualifications are reviewed by the Personnel Department. The candidates then self-schedule the written exam, the first hurdle in a lengthy evaluation process. If the written exam is passed, the physical abilities test is scheduled and completed. Upon successful completion of the physical abilities test, a number of reviews and other evaluations are performed. The candidate must pass each successive Police Department review step:

- Candidate background information is gathered and reviewed in the Pre-Investigative Questionnaire and then the more comprehensive Personal History Statement;
- The Department performs reviews of college transcripts, military, financial and DMV records, among other required documentation;
- A polygraph examination is conducted;
- An appointing authority interview is conducted;
- The psychological and medical background check process is initiated (after the conditional job offer is made); and
- A review is made of any outstanding background checks and other information to make sure the conditions of the job offer are satisfied.

Note that a conditional job offer is only given when funding is available. This can lead to delays in hiring. The Police Department has indicated that hiring is at times constrained by vacancy savings that must be achieved in order to balance to the Department's bottom line budget. Our office is currently looking into this matter with the Police and Financial Management Departments.

Additionally, along the way in the candidate evaluation process there are numerous scheduling instances for the various tests and interviews, which require coordination between the candidate and the Police Department or outside agencies (for medical and psychological exams). This

contributes to the length of time spent in the process. Many delays can occur in the hiring process as well, including having to reschedule one (or more) of the tests or interviews.

The Police Department is continuing to work with the Personnel Department to refine the process and to achieve further efficiencies and time savings.