

# Primer For Prospective Police Applicants

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## Primer For Prospective Police Applicants

### REQUIREMENTS \*\*

- \*\* Will differ from agency to agency and state to state, but these appear to be the most common.
- \* Applicants must be at least (18-35) years of age.(Most require 21 years of age for entry, and a maximum of 35. Some hire as low as 18, and some have no maximum age limit for entry.
- \* Must have a high school diploma or GED.
- \* Must have a valid driver's license.
- \* Must be free from defects in color vision and hearing.
- \* Weight/Height proportionate.
- \* Must pass a physical examination.
- \* Must complete a background investigation.
- \* May be required to pass drug screen.
- \* Must have no felony convictions or misdemeanor convictions involving moral turpitude.
- \* Veterans must have a honorable discharge.
- \* Must not have excessive traffic violations.
- \* No DWI/DUID convictions.
- \* Must have stable employment history.

### The Application and Testing Process

Provided below is a brief description of the testing process used by many agencies.

#### WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Usually a test of basic reading comprehension and writing skills necessary to perform police tasks.

#### POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION

Used to verify information provided on the initial application and personal history questionnaire.

#### PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Used to eliminate applicants with medical conditions or limitations that would prevent them from safely performing police duties. Drug testing will probably be included in the exam.

#### BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

A check of the information you provided on the personal history questionnaire. It will include a check of your criminal history and driving record. May also include a check of your employment history, credit history, personal/business references and educational background.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION

Used to evaluate your psychological and emotional health as it relates to the position you are seeking.

## PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST

This test will include such events as:

Running a pre-determined distance. You might have to run in order to catch a suspect. Climbing flights of stairs. You may have to answer calls for service or pursue suspects in multi-story buildings. Dragging a dummy. You may have to drag an unconscious person to a place of safety at an accident scene or other disaster. Climbing over walls or obstacles. You may have to climb over fences or walls to check buildings or pursue suspects. Negotiating an obstacle course. You may have to avoid different types of obstacles quickly while running, such as if you are pursuing a suspect through a crowd of people. Broad jump. You may have to jump across a ditch. Walking a beam. You may have to walk on a log, etc. to get across a creek or ditch. Weight lifting. You may have to lift heavy objects or push people or objects off of you. (usually demonstrated with the bench press and leg press and other exercises) Most of these events are timed.

## ASSESSMENT CENTER

More departments are utilizing this form of "hands on" type of test. Assessment centers subject the applicant to a battery of job related reasoning and decision-making exercises. This procedure may also include group discussion exercises with other applicants and an oral interview. The applicant usually participates in most of these events before a panel of "assessors".

## ORAL INTERVIEW

Finally, there is usually an oral interview conducted as part of the assessment center, or before the department head, or both. You are certain to be asked questions such as: "Why do you want to be a police officer?" or "Why do you feel you are more qualified than the other applicants to be a police officer?" or "Describe your strengths and your weaknesses." You may also be asked to give the interviewer(s) a short history of your background, etc. You could be asked to give your opinions on current events in the field of law enforcement.