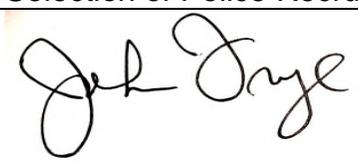




CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Directive:	61	Chapter:	1: Organization and Management
Effective Date:	09/29/09	Section:	9: Selection
Issue Date:	06/15/20	Title:	Selection of Police Recruits
Reevaluation Date:	06/15/22	Issued By:	 John Frye, Chief of Police

Replaces:	Previous version issued 08/23/11
Distribution:	All Members
PLEAC References:	1.5.1, 1.9.1, 1.9.2, 1.9.3, 1.10.3
Revisions:	FINAL

I. PURPOSE:

To provide members with guidelines on the selection process for sworn members of the Police Department as directed by the Civil Service Regulations and the administrative practices and procedures relative to the selection process for the position of police officer.

II. POLICY:

A. Method of Announcement: The Police Department will maintain an authorized civil service list of candidates for the position of Probationary Police Officer and shall conduct an examination process as directed by the Chief of Police per Cheltenham Township Code. The examination announcement will be posted on the Township website, and advertised in the major newspapers and other media outlets as directed by the Chief of Police. In addition, local community organizations will be notified as directed by the Chief of Police.

B. Purpose: The recruitment and selection process of the Cheltenham Township Police Department is designed to select the highest quality of individuals to serve as Police Officers; to have a police department that reflects the diverse community we serve; and to adhere to all applicable laws, including, but not limited to:

1. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
2. Title VII – Civil Rights Act of 1964
3. Age Discrimination Act of 1967
4. Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, as amended
5. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
6. Municipal Police Officers Education and Training Commission guidelines
7. The Code of Cheltenham Township

C. Standards and Hiring Criteria: The minimum standards and criteria for the position of Police Officer shall be according to MPOETC regulations and Cheltenham Township Civil Service code. Applicants must have the following qualifications (PLEAC 1.5.1):

1. Must be a citizen of the United States of America.
2. There is no residency requirement.
3. The applicant must be 21 years of age at the date of hire.
4. The applicant must possess a valid driver's license.
5. The applicant must be in good mental and physical condition, with an absence of major injuries to the muscles, ligaments, bones or joints that would limit the applicant's ability to perform his/her duties.
6. The applicant must be a graduate of high school or its equivalent GED.
7. The applicant must be of good moral character and provide three personal references.
8. The applicant must provide a complete employment history.
9. **Civil Service Rules and Regulations:** Detailed police recruit qualifications are found in Section 5.01 of the Cheltenham Township Police Civil Service Personnel Rules and Regulations. Detailed applicant requirements are found in Section 5.01 C. If Civil Service testing and police recruit selection requirements are revised at some future date, the most recent revision of the Township Code will supersede this Directive until this Directive is revised to reflect the changes to the Township Code.

III. REGULATIONS:

- A. Candidates Must Successfully Complete Entire Process:** All candidates for the position of Police Officer are required to satisfactorily complete the entire Civil Service selection process. There are no provisions for lateral entry into the Cheltenham Township Police Department.
- B. Coordination:** The Commander of the Professional Standards Division or a designee shall coordinate the entry level testing process.
- C. Secure Storage of Candidate Records:** The Commander of the Professional Standards Division shall ensure secure storage of all records of candidates **not hired** from each selection process for a period of 5 years.
- D. Pre Employment Investigation Records:** The Deputy Chief of Police shall ensure that all selection materials from candidates **hired** by this Department are added to the employee's Personnel File for the duration of their employment with the police department.
- E. Zero Tolerance for Domestic Violence:** All candidates shall be clearly informed of the Department's position of **zero tolerance concerning domestic violence** by police officers. (See Directive 68).
- F. Probationary Period:** All entry level Cheltenham Police Officers shall be placed on a one (1) year probationary status commencing on the date that they take the Police Officer Oath of Office.
- G. Field Training Program:** All entry level candidates are required to successfully complete the **Cheltenham Township Police Field Training Program** as well as a one year probationary period prior to obtaining permanent appointment.

IV. PROCEDURES:

- A. Announcement:** When an examination for entry level police officer has been announced, applications shall be available for pick up at the Police Administration Building or by downloading one from the Township's web site.
- B. Written Exam:** The Commander of the Professional Standards Division shall either in conjunction with, or independent of, the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities, coordinate the use of an approved testing agency to provide and independently grade the written examination.
 - 1. All passing grades and processes will follow the Cheltenham Township Civil Service rules and procedures.

- C. Physical Agility Test:** Candidates scoring high enough on the written examination will be invited to a physical agility test consisting of several phases of strength, endurance and agility as designated by Civil Service rules.
1. This is a pass / fail examination. Failure to successfully complete any phase of the physical agility testing shall remove the candidate from the selection process.
 2. Candidates reporting to the physical agility test shall be required to present their invitation letter and current valid photo identification.
 3. Candidates will be photographed and weighed at this phase of the process and have their identification verified.
- D. Oral Interview:** Candidates who successfully complete the Physical Agility Test shall be scheduled for an oral interview conducted by a panel of assessors. Applicants who successfully complete the Oral Interview shall be placed on the eligible list in accordance with Civil Service Regulations.
- E. Veterans Preference:** Honorably discharged military veterans shall have ten (10) points added to their final score and their position on the certified list shall be adjusted accordingly. A valid copy of the applicant's discharge form **DD-214 Long Form** is required to receive veteran's preference.
- F. Pre-Background Interview:** Prior to the initiation of the background investigation, each candidate shall be issued a Personal Data Questionnaire (PDQ) with instructions for completion and the suspense date for return to the police department. Once the PDQ is returned, each candidate shall then review his/her PDQ with the Background Investigation Unit (BIU).
1. Failure to return a properly completed PDQ by the suspense date shall remove the candidate from the hiring process.
 2. During the course of this interview the applicant shall verify all of the information contained in the PDQ by reading and initialing each page. The applicant's signature acknowledges all information contained in the PDQ is true and correct.
 3. Any deception or omissions in the PDQ is sufficient grounds for removal from the hiring process.
 4. **Release of Information:** Candidates will be required to sign a "Release of Information Form" as well as a "Release of Financial Information Form" which will be copied and distributed as needed for the background investigation.

G. Background Investigation: The Background Investigation Unit shall conduct a thorough and comprehensive investigation on the number of candidates necessary to address the available vacancies, as determined by the Chief of Police or designee, prior to appointment. The background investigation shall include, but is not limited to (PLEAC 1.9.1 a, b, c):

1. verification of qualifying credentials.
2. a review of any criminal or non-criminal record.
3. verification from at least three personal references.
4. verification of any and all information declared in the PDQ as well as any additional areas as deemed necessary by the Background Investigation Unit.
5. Driving record.
6. Credit record.
7. Neighborhood interviews.
8. Work history.
9. Internet and Social Media use.

H. Domestic Violence Check: The pre-hire background investigation shall also include a comprehensive search to determine if the candidate has been involved in any domestic violence situations as well as current or past Protection From Abuse Orders.

I. Polygraph Examination: Certified candidates who pass the background investigation shall undergo a polygraph examination given by a certified polygraph operator selected by the Chief of Police or his designee. Candidates must pass this examination to proceed further in the process.

J. Final Interviews: Candidates who satisfactorily complete the polygraph examination shall be scheduled for two final interviews: The first interview will be as designated by the Chief of Police. The second and final interview shall be with the Township Manager. Candidates must satisfactorily complete both interviews to be issued a conditional offer of employment.

K. Conditional Offer of Employment: When an applicant has satisfactorily completed all phases of the selection process and is deemed to be an acceptable candidate for the position of Probationary Police Officer; the Township Manager may extend a conditional offer of employment to the candidate. This offer is conditioned upon the candidate passing the following exams to certify that the candidate is in good health and able to perform the duties of a police officer:

1. **Psychological fitness and emotional stability examination**, conducted by a licensed psychologist, prior to appointment, to certify the mental health and emotional stability of the potential candidate for the position of police officer (PLEAC 1.9.3).
2. **Pre-Employment medical exam and drug screen** conducted by a licensed physician, physician's assistant, or certified nurse practitioner who is licensed in Pennsylvania (PLEAC 1.9.2).

V. PROCEDURES FOLLOWING A CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT:

A. Candidates with Act 120 Certification: Candidates who have been Act 120 certified by the Municipal Police Officer Training and Education Commission within the previous two years need no further testing to complete the hiring process. These candidates may be appointed directly and shall begin their one year probationary period upon being sworn in. Upon completion of the recruit orientation school, the recruit will be assigned to a Field Training Officer.

B. Police Academy: Police recruits who have not been certified in the previous two years in accordance with Act 120 and the Municipal Police Officers Training and Education Commission are required to successfully complete a certified police academy as assigned by the Chief of Police or his designee prior to assuming his/her law enforcement duties. The Department will send candidates through an accredited Police Academy if they do not yet possess Act 120 certification, but it is the candidate's responsibility to successfully complete the Police Academy prior to taking the Oath of Office as a Police Officer. (PLEAC 1.10.3).

1. **Pre-Academy PT and Reading Comprehension Test:** Prior to starting the Police Academy, recruits are required to successfully complete a pre-admission physical agility and reading tests. The PT test must be completed at the 30th percentile for their age and gender group per MPOETC standard. Failure to pass the Pre-Academy PT or Reading Comprehension Test precludes the recruit from proceeding further in the hiring process.
2. **Recruit Orientation School:** Upon graduation from the Police Academy, all probationary police officers shall successfully complete an in-house recruit orientation school prior to being assigned to their respective Field Training Officer (FTO).

3. Oath of Office: New Probationary Police Officers shall take the Oath of Office and begin their one year probationary period.

C. 3 Year Minimum Commitment Required: All probationary police officers are required to sign a three year commitment to the Cheltenham Township Police Department. Should the police officer voluntarily separate from service within that three year agreement, he/she shall repay the Township a pro-rated portion of the Act 120 training expenses (if applicable) as directed by the Chief of Police.

MPOETC Physical Fitness Test Requirements and additional resources can be found on the MPOETC website:

http://www.mpoetc.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/mpoetc/7545/officer_certification/561278