

Recruitment and Selection

1000.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Best Practice

This policy provides a framework for employee recruiting efforts and identifying job-related standards for the selection process. This policy supplements the rules that govern employment practices for the Atlantic Beach Police Department and that are promulgated and maintained by the Personnel Department.

1000.2 POLICY

Best Practice

In accordance with applicable federal, state, and local law, the Atlantic Beach Police Department provides equal opportunities for applicants and employees regardless of actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and any other classification or status protected by law. The Department does not show partiality or grant any special status to any applicant, employee, or group of employees unless otherwise required by law.

The Department will recruit and hire only those individuals who demonstrate a commitment to service and who possess the traits and characteristics that reflect personal integrity and high ethical standards.

1000.3 RECRUITMENT

Best Practice MODIFIED

The Atlantic Beach Police Department should employ a comprehensive recruitment and selection strategy to recruit and select employees from a qualified and diverse pool of candidates.

The strategy should include:

- (a) Identification of racially and culturally diverse target markets.
- (b) Use of marketing strategies to target diverse applicant pools.
- (c) Expanded use of technology and maintenance of a strong internet presence. This may include an interactive department website and the use of department-managed social networking sites, if resources permit.
- (d) Expanded outreach through partnerships with media, community groups, citizen academies, local colleges, universities and the military.
- (e) Employee referral and recruitment incentive programs.
- (f) Consideration of shared or collaborative regional testing processes.

The Department shall avoid advertising, recruiting and screening practices that tend to stereotype, focus on homogeneous applicant pools or screen applicants in a discriminatory manner.

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The Department should strive to facilitate and expedite the screening and testing process, and should periodically inform each candidate of his/her status in the recruiting process.

Officers not selected for positions shall be informed of such in writing.

1000.4 SELECTION PROCESS

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

The Department shall actively strive to identify a diverse group of candidates that have in some manner distinguished themselves as being outstanding prospects. Minimally, the Department should employ a comprehensive screening, background investigation, and selection process that assesses cognitive and physical abilities and includes review and verification of the following:

- (a) A comprehensive application for employment (including previous employment, references, current and prior addresses, education and military record)
- (b) Driving record
- (c) Reference checks
- (d) Employment eligibility, including U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and acceptable identity and employment authorization documents. This required documentation should not be requested until a candidate is hired. This does not prohibit obtaining documents required for other purposes.
- (e) Information obtained from public internet sites
- (f) Financial history consistent with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) (15 USC § 1681 et seq.)
- (g) Local, state, and federal criminal history record checks
- (h) Polygraph or voice stress analyzer (VSA) examination (when legally permissible) A polygraph examination of all sworn candidates, when performed, will be administered by an approved examiner who is licensed and trained in the use of polygraph procedures. Candidates will be provided a list of areas from which polygraph questions will be drawn prior to such examination. The results from a polygraph examination will not be used as a single determinant of employment eligibility.
- (i) Medical and psychological examination (may only be given after a conditional offer of employment) All candidates for sworn positions, who receive a conditional offer of employment will undergo an emotional stability and psychological fitness examination conducted by a department-approved and qualified professional prior to final selection and appointment to probationary status. All candidates who receive a conditional offer of employment will undergo a basic medical examination tailored to the specific job description for which they have applied to determine whether they can or cannot perform the essential duties of a particular job.
- (j) Review board or selection committee assessment

1000.4.1 VETERAN PREFERENCE

State

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The Department will provide veteran preference as required (S.C. Code § 1-1-550).

1000.5 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

Every candidate shall undergo a thorough background investigation to verify his/her personal integrity and high ethical standards, and to identify any past behavior that may be indicative of the candidate's unsuitability to perform duties relevant to the operation of the Atlantic Beach Police Department.

1. Minimum age requirements for Class 1 sworn positions is 21 years of age and is set by the Law Enforcement Training Council under the authority of South Carolina State Statute §23-23-40
2. Candidates must have a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent.
3. Evidence must be provided to the SC Criminal Justice Academy director that the officer candidate is a person of good character. This evidence includes, but is not limited to:
 - (a) Certification by the candidate's employer that a background investigation has been conducted and the employer is of the opinion that the candidate is of good character;
 - (b) Evidence satisfactory to the director that the candidate has signed an attestation form committing to the practice of ethical policing, which means the discharge of responsibilities, stemming from employment as a law enforcement officer, which is devoid of misconduct and which is carried out in conformance with this chapter, including the duty to safeguard life and the duty to intervene.
4. In addition to the requirements listed above, previously uncertified officers must also complete a reading comprehension test and psychological evaluation.

1000.5.1 NOTICES

Federal **MODIFIED**

Background investigators shall ensure that investigations are conducted and notices provided in accordance with the requirements of the FCRA (15 USC § 1681d). Personnel used to conduct background investigations shall be trained in collecting required information

1000.5.2 EVIDENCE OF BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

State **MODIFIED**

The Chief of Police shall submit evidence of the background investigation, for all law enforcement officer candidates, indicating the candidate meets the minimum selection requirements to the Director of the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy (SCCJA) (S.C. Code § 23-23-60).

All such investigations for sworn positions will be in compliance with applicable South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy and the Law Enforcement Training Council requirements. During the background investigation, the hiring agency must call the Academy in addition to the candidate's prior hiring agency(ies). The hiring agency must speak with a command staff member of the prior agency(ies) to provide information on the candidate. Only command staff designated by the agency head may provide information.

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1000.5.3 REVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

Due to the potential for accessing unsubstantiated, private or protected information, the Department should not require candidates to provide passwords, account information or access to password-protected social media accounts.

The Department should consider utilizing the services of an appropriately trained and experienced third party to conduct open source, internet-based searches and/or review information from social media sites to ensure that:

- (a) The legal rights of candidates are protected.
- (b) Material and information to be considered are verified, accurate and validated.
- (c) The Department fully complies with applicable privacy protections and local, state and federal law.

Regardless of whether a third party is used, the Department should ensure that potentially impermissible information is not available to any person involved in the candidate selection process.

1000.5.4 RECORDS RETENTION

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

The background report and all supporting documentation shall be maintained in accordance with the established records retention schedule. Materials used in the selection process shall be stored in a secure manner and disposed in a manner that prevents disclosure of the information within.

1000.5.5 DOCUMENTING AND REPORTING

Best Practice

The background investigator shall summarize the results of the background investigation in a report that includes sufficient information to allow the reviewing authority to decide whether to extend a conditional offer of employment. The report shall not include any information that is prohibited from use, including that from social media sites, in making employment decisions. The report and all supporting documentation shall be included in the candidate's background investigation file.

1000.6 DISQUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

Best Practice

As a general rule, performance indicators and candidate information and records shall be evaluated by considering the candidate as a whole, and taking into consideration the following:

- Age at the time the behavior occurred
- Passage of time
- Patterns of past behavior
- Severity of behavior

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- Probable consequences if past behavior is repeated or made public
- Likelihood of recurrence
- Relevance of past behavior to public safety employment
- Aggravating and mitigating factors
- Other relevant considerations

A candidate's qualifications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, using a totality-of-the-circumstances framework.

1000.7 EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

State **MODIFIED**

All candidates shall meet the minimum standards required by state law. Candidates will be evaluated based on merit, ability, competence and experience, in accordance with the high standards of integrity and ethics valued by the Department and the community.

Validated, job-related and nondiscriminatory employment standards shall be established for each job classification and shall minimally identify the training, abilities, knowledge and skills required to perform the position's essential duties in a uniform manner. Each standard should include performance indicators for candidate evaluation. The Personnel Department should maintain validated standards for all positions.

1000.7.1 STANDARDS FOR OFFICERS

State

Candidates shall meet the following minimum standards (S.C. Code § 23-23-60):

- (a) Free of any convictions that are punishable by a year or more of incarceration, or of an offense that involves moral turpitude.
 1. Conviction also includes a forfeiture of bond, a guilty plea, or a plea of nolo contendere.
- (b) Possesses a valid South Carolina driver's license with no record of suspension in the previous five years for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, reckless homicide, involuntary manslaughter, or leaving the scene of an accident.
- (c) Has a favorable local credit check.
- (d) At least 21 years of age.
- (e) Fingerprinted for local, state, and national fingerprint check.
- (f) Good character as determined by a thorough background investigation (S.C. Code Regs. 37-025).
- (g) High school graduate, or received an equivalency certificate recognized by the South Carolina Department of Education.
- (h) A medical history and certified exam by a licensed physician that meets standards established by the Atlantic Beach Police Department.

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- (i) Possess the physical fitness to fulfill the duties of a law enforcement officer.

1000.8 PROBATIONARY PERIODS

Discretionary MODIFIED

The Chief of Police should coordinate with the Atlantic Beach Personnel Department to identify positions subject to probationary periods and procedures for:

- (a) Appraising performance during probation.
- (b) Assessing the level of performance required to complete probation.
- (c) Extending probation.
- (d) Documenting successful or unsuccessful completion of probation.