

WATSONVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE HIRING STANDARDS

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Watsonville Police Department– in conjunction with the City's Personnel Rules and Regulations– to hire police staff using a uniform, job-relevant, and non-discriminatory process, who is of the highest character and integrity, and who will conduct themselves with the highest professional standards.

PROCEDURE:

Applicants declared qualified for employment with this department as established by the Personnel Rules of the City shall undergo a four stage selection process which consists of; 1) Eligibility, 2) Pre-Employment Screening, 3) Psychological/Medical Assessment, and 4) Final Selection.

MINIMUM HIRING STANDARDS - PEACE OFFICERS:

The California Code of Regulations, Title 11, Division 2, section 1002 and the City of Watsonville Personnel Rules and Regulations set the minimum standards for employment forth. The minimum standards are set forth as follows:

- No felony conviction(s)
- Submit to a fingerprint and criminal history check
- Must be a United States citizen. Legal residents may be appointed, but must have an active application for citizenship and have citizenship granted within one year of appointment as a peace officer.
- Minimum age of 18 years. **Note:** *The Watsonville City Council has established peace officer candidates must be 20.5 years of age to participate in the testing process, and 21 years of age at the time of appointment (City Council Resolution 248-94).*
- Good moral character as determined by a thorough background investigation.
- United States high school graduate, GED, or equivalent.
- Medical and psychological suitability.
- Submit to an interview.
- Successful completion of a POST certified test, which measures reading and writing ability.

MINIMUM HIRING STANDARDS - CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES:

Minimum hiring standards for non-sworn employees is established by the City's Personnel Commission and varies based on the classification for each position, however, in addition each employee must meet the following minimum standards for employment at the police department:

No felony conviction(s)

- Submit to a fingerprint and criminal history check.
- Must be a legal United States resident.
- Minimum age of 18 years.
- Good moral character as determined by a thorough background investigation.
- United States high school graduate, GED or equivalent
- Medical examination.
- Submit to an interview

BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS FOR CANDIDATES:

The purpose of establishing behavioral standards shall be to promptly, efficiently and fairly identify those applicants who are unfit for public service, or whose prior conduct is contradictory to, or incompatible with the law enforcement mission, the fair and impartial administration of law, or the provision of community service. No selection standard of the department shall be in conflict with or contrary to the spirit or letter of fair employment laws of the State of California, or of the laws of the United States. The department enthusiastically declares itself to be an equal opportunity employer.

Felony Conviction/Disqualification. No person who has ever been convicted of any offense declared by law to be a felony in this or any other state shall be eligible for appointment to any position with the department.

Misdemeanor Conviction/Disqualification. No person who has been convicted within the past four years of any criminal offense declared by law to be a misdemeanor in this or any other state shall be eligible for appointment to any position with the department.

No person still on probation (supervised or unsupervised) for any criminal conviction shall be eligible for appointment to any position with the department.

Any person convicted of any of the following misdemeanor offenses may not be eligible for appointment with the department:

- Larceny/Theft
- Assault or Battery

No person convicted of any of the following misdemeanor offenses shall be eligible for appointment with the department:

- Indecent exposure
- Annoying children
- Perjury
- Resisting arrest
- Filing a false police report
- Impersonation of a peace officer
- Domestic violence
- Fraud

Any person whose conviction has been set aside pursuant to Penal Code § 1203.4a shall be considered to have been convicted within the meaning of this section. Peace Officer applicants whose conviction has been set aside pursuant to Penal Code § 1000.4 shall be considered to have been convicted within the meaning of this section. Persons whose juvenile records have been and remain sealed or expunged pursuant to Penal Code § 851.7 or 851.8 shall be deemed never to have been convicted within the meaning of this section.

Criminal Conduct:

Applicants for employment with this department whose prior conduct includes involvement in criminal conduct as specified shall not be eligible for appointment with the department. "Involvement in criminal conduct" specifically includes acts that may have gone undetected, unreported and/or un-prosecuted, or resolved in a civil court process.

- As an adult, any act that would constitute a felony offense in this state committed within the past seven years.
- Any act that would constitute a misdemeanor offense in this state committed at any time after application for employment with the department.
- Any act, as specified, committed at any time prior to or following application for employment with the department, including:

1. Forcible Rape
2. Robbery
3. Possession of controlled substances for sale
4. Assault with a deadly weapon
5. Lewd Acts with a Child
6. Perjury
7. Homicide
8. Grand Larceny
9. Theft of Public Funds
10. Assault under color of authority
11. Any offense declared by law to constitute a "hate crime"
12. Embezzlement
13. Sexual Assault

Criminal Conduct/Lateral Applicants:

Applicants for employment with the department who are presently employed by any public criminal justice agency shall be required to sign a disclosure statement authorizing the department to reveal to their present employer any admissions of criminal conduct which occurred or which may have occurred during their employment for that agency. Upon written demand of the department head of any such agency and consistent with this Order, the department shall fully cooperate with any official investigation initiated by that applicant's present employer concerning any such admissions of criminal activity.

Criminal Conduct/Outstanding Arrest Warrant(s):

No person who has an outstanding warrant for his/her arrest shall be eligible for appointment to the department. Any peace officer of the department aware of the existence of such a warrant shall immediately serve same.

Gross Misconduct:

No person who, as an adult, has been previously dismissed from any employment or discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States for proven acts of gross misconduct shall be eligible for appointment with the department. "Gross Misconduct" shall include, but not be limited to:

- Embezzlement
- Willful disobedience of a lawful order
- Sexual harassment
- False statements to superior officers
- Filing false official reports
- Desertion
- Assault under color of authority
- Battery against any co-worker or supervisor
- Terrorist threats against any co-worker or supervisor

Dishonorable Discharge from Military Service:

No person who shall have been dishonorably discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States shall be eligible for appointment to the department.

Selective Service/Failure to Register:

No person who shall have been legally required to register for Selective Service and knowingly failed to do so shall be eligible for appointment to the department.

Possession or Use of Illegal Drugs/Current:

No person who is a current user of illegal drugs shall be eligible for appointment to the department. "Current user" of illegal drugs shall mean any person who has illegally used any controlled substance (as defined in Schedules I through IV of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act) within one year prior to application for employment with the department. *All applicants for initial employment with the department shall undergo a chemical test designed to reveal the presence of illegal drugs.*

Possession or Use of Illegal Drugs/Prior:

The following types of illegal drug use or possession will be considered automatic disqualifiers in the pre-employment selection process for sworn police personnel:

- Persons who have previously and unlawfully ingested any controlled substance(s) classified as a hallucinogen or any other controlled substance (as defined in Schedules I through IV of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act) by means of injection shall not be eligible for appointment to the department.
- Person(s) who have within the past seven years and as an adult illegally possessed any controlled substance (as defined in Schedules I through IV of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act), excluding the simple possession of an ounce or less of marijuana, shall not be eligible for appointment to the department.
- Any adult use or possession of a drug classified as a hallucinogenic within seven (7) years prior to application for employment.
- Any adult use or possession of marijuana within one (1) year prior to application for appointment.

- Any other illegal adult use or possession of a drug not mentioned above (including cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine) within three (3) years prior to application for employment.
- Any illegal adult use or possession of an illegal controlled substance, or marijuana while employed in the capacity of a police officer, licensed security officer, military police, or as a student enrolled in college accredited courses of/or related to the criminal justice field.
- Any adult manufacture or cultivation of a drug.
- Any illegal sales, transportation or transportation for sales of any drug.
- Failure to divulge any information about personal illegal use or possession of drugs.

Possession or Use of Illegal Drugs/Exceptions:

The disqualification of an applicant for the following types of illegal drug use or possession will be considered in relationship to the overall background of that individual:

- Any illegal juvenile use or possession of a drug.
- Any illegal adult use or possession of a drug that does not meet the criteria of the automatic disqualifiers specified above.

False Statement(s) on Application:

Any applicant for employment with the department who makes any knowing and deliberate false statement or omission of material fact on any application document for the department shall be denied appointment. False statements include deliberately non-responsive answers and knowing evasions of any type. Knowing and deliberate false statements or omissions of material fact discovered on any application document at any time following appointment with the department shall be immediately investigated and, where proven, shall be grounds for dismissal and/or removal from office.

Fraudulent Application Document(s):

Any applicant who knowingly offers or furnishes any altered or fraudulent document(s) in connection with his/her application for employment with the department shall be immediately disqualified from further consideration. Where such altered or fraudulent documents are discovered subsequent to appointment with the department, such shall be immediately investigated and, where proven, shall be grounds for dismissal and/or removal from office.

Involuntary Separation from Employment:

Any applicant who, as an adult, has been dismissed from employment "for cause" two or more times shall not be eligible for appointment to the department.

Involuntary Separation from Employment/Exceptions:

The department may waive the “Involuntary Separation” rule if in its sole judgment, one or more of the “for cause” dismissals are found to be without merit. Within the meaning of this section, “layoffs” shall not be construed as “dismissal for cause.”

Delinquency on Financial Obligations/Child Support:

Any applicant for employment with the department who is presently delinquent or in arrears for any court-ordered child support payments shall be ineligible for appointment.

Delinquency on Financial Obligations/Collections:

Any applicant for employment with the department who is presently in collection for any valid credit obligation shall not be eligible for appointment.

Delinquency on Financial Obligation/Bankruptcy:

Any applicant who has filed for bankruptcy within the last five years of applying with the department shall not be eligible for appointment unless the bankruptcy is the result of an unexpected event (e.g. sudden death/loss of a second wage earner, loss of employment, serious illness). Outside of these circumstances, an applicant’s current credit history cannot show an amassed debt, which led to the original bankruptcy.