



POLICY & PROCEDURE

ELKHART LAKE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **RECRUITMENT/SELECTION**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual

REFERENCE: WI State Statute: 62.13(4), 103.14
2021 WI Act 82

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INDEX AS: Applicant Record Maintenance
Background Investigations
Equal Employment Opportunity
Job Announcements
Selection Process for Applicants

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to establish procedures for recruiting and selecting candidates to fill sworn officer vacancies at the Elkhart Lake Police Department. In addition, this Policy & Procedure also provides the procedure for conducting police applicant background investigations.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. RECRUITING PROCEDURES
- III. SELECTION GUIDELINES
- IV. SELECTION PROCEDURES
- V. BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS
- VI. RECORD MAINTENANCE

I. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Elkhart Lake Police Department to recruit and select the best possible candidates for employment opportunities occurring within the Department. The Department seeks to attract, assess, and select candidates that possess those organizational values and professional skills that are consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives of the department.
- B. The Chief of Police, in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes, shall appoint sworn officers to the Department subject to the approval of the Village of Elkhart Lake Board of Trustees.
- C. The Elkhart Lake Police Department is dedicated to recruiting and selecting professional men and women in a manner consistent with federal and state law, Village ordinances, Department policies, and equal opportunity guidelines.

II. RECRUITING PROCEDURES

A. Job Advertisement and Publicity

- 1. Employment announcements and recruiting advertisements should contain the following information:
 - a) A statement that the Village of Elkhart Lake is an equal opportunity employer.
 - b) Application filing deadlines clearly indicated.
 - c) A description of the duties and responsibilities of the job, as well as the requisite skills, educational levels, and physical requirements.
- 2. Employment announcements and recruiting advertisements may be distributed to:
 - a) Newspapers and professional periodicals
 - b) Professional organizations
 - c) Educational institutions
 - d) Employment offices
 - e) Advocates of EEO protected groups
 - f) Other appropriate organizations

III. SELECTION GUIDELINES

A. Administrative Practices

1. The Chief retains overall responsibility for the selection process and final hiring decisions.
2. Final approval of a candidate is the responsibility of the Village of Elkhart Lake Board of Trustees.

B. Notification to Applicants

1. At the time of application, candidates shall be informed of all elements of the selection process, as well as the expected duration of the process.
2. Applicants shall be kept informed of their status through each step of the process.

IV. SELECTION PROCEDURES

- A. Applicants must successfully complete all of the following elements in order to be placed in the availability pool (steps of the process can be changed at the discretion of the Chief of Police prior to the process starting):

1. Written Examination

- a) A comprehensive written examination shall be administered to all applicants. Applicants are asked to be present at the test site at least fifteen minutes prior to the start of the testing, and to bring two forms of identification.

2. Completion of Police Officer Applicant Questionnaire.

3. Protections of Persons and Property Oral Interview.

4. Psychological testing

- g) Both tests will be conducted at the Department's expense.

- h) A qualified professional shall be used for the psychological exam.

5. Background Investigation and Reference Check.

- B. Upon selection for consideration of employment, the applicant must successfully pass a medical examination, which includes drug screening, and given at the Department's expense.

- C. Recruit School: New officers will be scheduled to attend the basic recruit academy, if needed, as soon as practical after they are hired.

- D. If selected for hiring, all new officers shall be notified about any hairstyle, facial hair, or clothing requirement as required by WI State Statute 103.14, also refer to

V. BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

A. Requirements:

1. A personal history investigation shall be conducted on each applicant to determine character traits and habits indicative of moral character. Good character shall be determined from the following:
 - a) Police and credit checks in all areas of permanent residence.
 - b) Investigation at all schools attended beyond the age of 14. The intent of this requirement is to verify educational achievement.
 - c) Investigation in the applicant's current neighborhood and in neighborhoods of former permanent residence.
 - d) Investigation at each place of employment. The interview of the applicant's current employer shall be at or towards the end of the investigation. The applicant's specific permission for this interview shall be obtained.
 - e) Such other investigation as may be deemed necessary to provide a basis of judgment on the applicant's loyalty to the United States, or to detect conditions, which adversely affect performance of one's duty as a law enforcement officer.
2. Only applicants of good moral character may be employed.
3. The results of the personal history investigation on all police officers employed under the Law Enforcement Standards Act shall be retained on a permanent basis.

B. Procedures:

1. The investigation shall be conducted by an experienced investigator.
 - a) The investigator shall have a diversified background in law enforcement and possess a fundamental knowledge of selection procedures, emotional stability and psychology.
 - b) The investigator must be able to interpret testimony and determine whether the information provided by a source is sincere or prejudiced.
2. All results of the personal history investigation shall be considered confidential and processed accordingly.

3. If the applicant lives, or has lived, in a distant community, a letter shall be sent to the local law enforcement agency requesting that an investigation be conducted in that locality.
3. A thorough investigation shall develop information to provide answers for the following questions:
 - a) Does the applicant display an unreasonable temper? When?
 - b) Does the applicant drink intoxicants to excess or is the applicant a user of controlled substances?
 - c) Does the applicant maintain composure in a crisis or dangerous situation?
 - d) Is the applicant well-adjusted and will the applicant make a good police officer?
 - e) Does the applicant possess high ethics and morals?
 - f) Is the applicant tolerant or prejudiced against other races or religions?
 - g) Is the applicant honest and trustworthy?
 - h) Was the applicant reasonably loyal to past employers?
 - i) What is the applicant's past work record in terms of his or her reliability?
 - j) Why does the applicant want to be a law enforcement officer?
4. Names of the spouse(s), close relatives and close friends shall be checked through appropriate files to determine whether they have criminal records, are in prison, or are in any status or position which might adversely affect the applicant's obligations as a police officer.
5. The investigation shall include a check of the following sources:
 - a) Military records - Form DD214 (if claiming military service)
 - b) All local police files
 - c) Police files in cities where the applicant has lived or worked
 - d) Previous employers
 - e) All schools attended
 - f) Present and past neighbors and landlords
 - g) Character reference
 - h) Fraternal and social organizations

- i) Credit records
- j) Any other source of information which previous contacts show to be important.

C. Personal History

1. Verification of the applicant's date and place of birth.
 - a) Birth certificate or statistics from educational or employment records.
 - b) If birth cannot be verified through these records, the investigator must resort to the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the community in which the applicant was born.
2. In the event the applicant is a naturalized citizen, inquiries will be directed to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service's Regional Office in which the applicant was naturalized.
 - a) A copy of the naturalization certificate will be required.
3. Marital Status
 - a) If the applicant is divorced or separated, the investigator shall verify local records to ascertain grounds, custody of children, etc.

D. Education:

1. Information secured from educational institutions include:
 - a) Date and place of birth
 - b) Inclusive dates of attendance
 - c) Program in which enrolled
 - d) Degree, diploma or certificate received
 - e) Grade average
 - f) Nature of any disciplinary action
 - g) Special activities
 - h) Scores of applicable placement examinations
2. Two or three instructors who have sufficient knowledge regarding the applicant's academic ability should be interviewed.
3. Advisors and counselors should also be interviewed.

E. Employment

1. All places of employment must be verified.
 - a) Date and place of birth (if needed)
 - b) Inclusive dates of employment
 - c) Job title and duties
 - d) Salary (beginning and final)
 - e) Performance
 - f) Any unfavorable information
 - g) Reason for leaving
 - h) If applicant is eligible for re-employment
2. Sources of information
 - a) Immediate supervisor
 - b) Co-workers
 - c) These sources can be helpful in relating the overall performance of the applicant, their level of responsibility and maturity and their ability to get along with others.
3. Per 2021 WI Act 82, when the Department recruits and does a background check for potential new officers, the Department shall require each candidate that it interviews for an Officer position, who is or has been employed by another law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency to execute a written waiver that explicitly authorizes each law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or other government agency to disclose the candidate's employment files to the Department, and releases the Department and each law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency that employs or has employed the candidate from any liability related to the use and disclosure of the candidate's employment files.
 - a) A law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency may disclose a candidate's employment files by either providing copies to the Department or allowing the Department to review the files at the offices of the law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency that employed the candidate.

- b) A candidate who refuses to execute the waiver shall not be considered for employment by the Department or considered for certification by the LESB.

- c) The Department shall, at least 30 days prior to making its hiring decision, submit the waiver to each law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency that has employed each candidate. Each law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency that receives a waiver shall make the requested employment files available to the Department no more than 21 days after receiving the waiver.

- d) The Department may also conduct an official oral interview of individuals from the law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency that employed the candidate.

- e) A law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency is not required to provide the candidate's employment records if the agency or facility is prohibited from providing the employment records pursuant to a binding nondisclosure agreement to which the law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency is a party if the agreement was executed before the effective date of November 8, 2021.
 - (1) No law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency may enter into a nondisclosure agreement preventing an interviewing law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, or juvenile detention facility from viewing employment files after the effective date of November 8, 2021.

- f) A law enforcement agency, tribal law enforcement agency, jail, juvenile detention facility, or government agency is not liable for complying with the provisions of this paragraph or participating in an official oral interview with an investigator from the Department, regarding the candidate.

F. References:

1. Unless personal references are located outside of the local investigation area, references shall be interviewed in person. Information to be secured from personal references include:
 - a) Full name of reference, age and address

- b) Occupation or position
 - c) Relationship with applicant
 - d) Length of relationship
 - e) Reference's general description of applicant as regards to personality and sociability
 - f) Reference's opinion of the applicant in regard to the maturity and integrity
 - g) Any unfavorable information
 - h) Whether reference recommends the applicant for appointment.
 - i) Have the reference list two jobs that the applicant previously worked at.
2. It is always advantageous to ask listed references for the names of other individuals who might have personal knowledge of the applicant's character.
- a) Developed references can often provide essential and candid testimony, whereas this is not always true when interviewing listed references.
3. Credit checks shall be made on all charge accounts, home, auto and personal loans, as well as checking and savings accounts to ascertain whether the applicant pays their bills and lives within their means.
- a) If the applicant is living beyond their means, yet meeting their financial commitments without difficulty, this issue will have to be resolved before consideration for appointment can be made.
4. The following information, to be obtained from landlords, rental agents and neighbors, is needed regarding the applicant's residence:
- a) Name and address of source
 - b) Occupation or position
 - c) Relationship with applicant (landlord - tenant, neighbor, etc.)
 - d) Period of residence
 - e) Monthly rent
 - f) Conduct as a tenant or neighbor
 - g) Occupants living with applicant
 - h) Any unfavorable information
 - i) Whether source recommends applicant for appointment

G. The Investigative Report

1. The investigative report shall be submitted in the Department's established format for uniformity for all those who must read, handle or process the reports.
2. A simple guide to what general elements shall warrant rejection of the applicant are as follows:
 - a) Conviction of a felony
 - b) Conviction of two (2) misdemeanors
 - c) A dishonorable discharge from the armed forces
 - d) Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude
 - e) Falsification of application
 - f) A conclusive reputation for being irresponsible, dishonest, immoral and unkempt.

VI. RECORD MAINTENANCE

- A. Police applicants' files not proceeding to the eligibility list will be secured by the Chief. The Elkhart Lake Police Department will secure all eligible police applicant files until such time as they are hired as an officer or are removed from the eligibility list. The file of police applicants hired by the Elkhart Lake Police Department shall be secured by the Chief. The file of police applicants removed from the eligibility list shall be secured by the Chief.
- B. All written examinations, other selection materials, and records regarding the recruitment and selection of all applicants will be maintained by the Chief or designee to prevent unauthorized disclosure of information.

Michael Meeusen
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 06/01/2015