



GENERAL ORDER ADM-63 SELECTION OF CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

EFFECTIVE APRIL 9, 2015

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. PROFESSIONAL AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS
- III. ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES
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I. POLICY

The Howard County Department of Police (HCPD) shall maintain an efficient, effective, and fair selection process for civilian HCPD employees that results in the appointment of those individuals who best possess the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary. The HCPD will work closely with the Howard County Office of Human Resources (County HR).

II. PROFESSIONAL AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. In accordance with County Law, the County HR Administrator coordinates all original appointments in the classified service.
- B. Although authority for selection is shared with County HR, the HCPD maintains the primary responsibility for background investigations, oral sequences, selection and probationary period assessment. These processes will be coordinated and administered by the Employment Services Division of the HCPD Human Resources Bureau in conjunction with County HR.
 - 1. The Chief of Police will retain certain responsibilities in the selection of personnel. These include identifying specific needs of the HCPD, and determining skills and personal attributes required for positions.
 - 2. The Chief of Police, or his designee, will make the actual selection for all vacancies pursuant to Howard County Code Section 1.106(i).
- C. The selection process shall be comprised of various elements including, but not limited to, an interview process, Personal History Questionnaire (PHQ), background investigation, and pre-employment physical examination. Specific civilian positions may also require a written or skills assessment test, polygraph examination, applicant observation review or psychological examination.¹
- D. All elements of the HCPD selection process for civilian members shall be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner within the classification and under the auspices of County HR.²
- E. Selection materials (blank written tests, answer keys, study materials, etc.) used by either the HCPD or County HR will be stored in a secure area when not being used. Access to the materials will be permitted only to those employees who are involved in the administration of the selection process.³

¹ CALEA 32.1.1

² CALEA 32.1.3

³ CALEA 32.1.7

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

- A. When there is a civilian vacancy within the HCPD, the Personnel Section will send an employee requisition request to County HR, after approval by the Deputy Chief for Administration.
- B. Once the request to fill the vacancy is approved, the County HR Administrator shall ensure public notice of the vacancy. When the HCPD identifies a position that requires a particular skill set, the HCPD Human Resources Bureau may initiate additional outreach efforts to target the appropriate applicant pool. This may include community leaders and professional associations.⁴ The Job Announcement notice will be posted on-line through the County's website and will include a closing date or testing date.⁵
- C. The job announcement shall include:
 - 1. A description of the duties, responsibilities, requisite skills, educational level, and other minimum qualifications or requirements;⁶
 - 2. A notation that the HCPD is an equal opportunity employer;⁷
 - 3. All elements of the selection process;⁸
 - 4. The expected duration of the selection process; and,⁹
 - 5. The agency's policy on reapplication¹⁰
- D. The Personnel Section supervisor, will preliminarily review all applications and provide those that match qualifications, experience, and other eligibility requirements. The Personnel Section Supervisor shall then return a list of recommended candidates to County HR, who will finalize a list of at least three (3) and up to ten (10) names of applicants deemed most qualified for the position.
- E. Applications shall not be rejected due to minor omissions or deficiencies that can be corrected prior to the testing or interview phase.¹¹
- F. The County HR Administrator shall forward the finalized list to the Personnel Section supervisor, who will coordinate with the hiring manager/supervisor. The hiring manager/supervisor shall then attempt to make contact with each applicant to schedule an interview. The Personnel Section supervisor shall be responsible for maintaining documented contact with the applicant through the final employment decision.¹²
- G. After conducting an interview of all available applicants, the supervisor shall recommend a candidate from the eligibility list. The supervisor will forward a memo, through his chain of command, to his respective Deputy Chief with his recommendation and justification for the selection. The Deputy Chief will request a background investigation through the Human Resources Bureau. Upon the return of the investigation the Deputy Chief will make his recommendation to the Chief of Police.
- H. Applicants not selected for hire will be informed, in writing, by the HCPD Personnel Section.¹³
- I. Upon approval from the Chief of Police, the County HR Administrator will extend an offer of employment to the selected applicant.

⁴ CALEA 31.3.2

⁵ CALEA 31.3.1b & d

⁶ CALEA 31.3.1a

⁷ CALEA 31.3.1c

⁸ CALEA 32.1.4a

⁹ CALEA 32.1.4b

¹⁰ CALEA 32.1.4c

¹¹ CALEA 31.3.4

¹² CALEA 31.3.3

¹³ CALEA 32.1.5

IV. ORAL INTERVIEW

An oral interview of each applicant shall be conducted using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures.

- A. A list of standardized questions will be asked of each applicant. Based upon the responses to the questions, the interviewer may ask additional follow-up questions for clarification purposes.
- B. Each interviewer shall take notes on applicant responses. After the applicant has completed the interview and left the interview room, the notes should be referred to for rating the different dimensions and making an overall rating.
- C. The hiring Supervisor/Commander will forward a memo of recommended applicants to the Chief of Police for his consideration. The Chief of Police, or his designee, may interview the top applicants at the conclusion of the selection process. The Chief of Police will approve the names of those applicants who he is choosing for appointment to probationary status.

V. BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

A. Background Investigation Requirement

The background investigation is the most useful and relevant component of the selection process. Whenever practical, the investigation should involve a home visit with the applicant and his family, as well as interviews with neighbors.

- 1. A background investigation will be conducted of the selected applicant prior to appointment to probationary status to include a review of criminal history checks, at least three (3) personal interviews or verification of three (3) personal references, verification of all credentials, and financial data.¹⁴
- 2. If a polygraph examination is administered, the background investigation will be conducted after the polygraph examination has been completed. The polygraph examination can point out areas that need particular attention in the background investigation.
- 3. Applicants who are scheduled for polygraph examinations will be provided with a copy of the areas that will form the basis of the polygraph questioning, prior to the examination.¹⁵
- 4. An indication of deception during the polygraph examination will not be used as the single determinant of employment status; however, pre-test and post-test discussions that reveal adverse information will be documented and used in the subsequent selection process.¹⁶

VI. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- A. Upon initial appointment to a position in the classified service, an employee will serve a probationary period consistent with the Howard County Employee Manual.

¹⁴ CALEA 32.2.1

¹⁵ CALEA 32.2.4

¹⁶ CALEA 32.2.6

- B. At the end of the probationary period, the appointing authority shall notify the County HR Administrator that he recommends:
 - 1. The employee be placed on permanent status;
 - 2. The employee's probationary period be extended for a period not to exceed six (6) months; or
 - 3. The employee be terminated because the employee's performance does not meet the required performance standards for the position or job assignment. A probationary termination is not appealable.
- C. A classified employee who is promoted shall serve a probationary period equal to the length of the probationary period for that position.
- D. If a classified employee is promoted, and during the probationary period the appointing authority determines that the employee's performance does not meet the required performance standards for the new position, the appointing authority may dismiss the employee. If a classified employee is dismissed under this paragraph, the appointing authority shall make a good faith effort to place the employee in a vacant position before the employee is terminated.
- E. Movement from a designated trainee class to a full performance class is not a promotion.


VII. RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSITION¹⁷

- A. The HCPD will comply with all local, state, and federal requirements for the privacy, security, and access to information of all applicants' records and data.
- B. Employment selection materials shall be stored, retained and disposed of according to Appendix A.
- C. Appendix A is subject to periodic review and revision by the Deputy Chief of Police, Administrative Command.

VIII. CANCELLATION

This General Order cancels and replaces General Order ADM-63, Selection of Civilian Personnel, dated April 3, 2009.

AUTHORITY:



Gary L. Gardner
Chief of Police

¹⁷ CALEA 32.1.6, 32.1.7, 32.2.3, 32.2.9