JOPLIN POLICE DEPARTMENT	STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE
SUBJECT: 3-07 Hiring Sworn Personnel	**REVIEW DATE: Annually - March**
EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/28/2021	**ACTION DATE:**
AMENDS/SUPERSEDES: 3-07 11/1/2018	**AMEND DATE: 09/11/2024**
ACCREDITATION INDEX: 16.3.2,31.3.3, 31.3.4, 32.1.1, 32.1.2, 32.1.3, 32.1.4 a, b, c, 32.1.5, 32.1.6, 32.1.7, 32.1.9, 32.2.1 a, b, c, 32.2.2, 32.2.3, 32.2.4, 32.2.5, 32.2.6, 32.2.7, 32.2.8, 32.2.9, 33.8.4	**APPROVED:** Richard A. Pearson **Chief of Police**

I. POLICY

The Joplin Police Department is committed to employing the highest quality law-enforcement officers possible to help achieve the department's mission. To that end, the department shall practice a rigorous selection procedure while simultaneously affording all applicants equal consideration regardless of race, national origin, age, veteran status, marital status, or the presence of a non-job-related medical condition or disability, handicap, creed, color, sex, or religious affiliation. All job appointments are based on merit and fitness for the position. Where possible, the department provides reasonable accommodation to the known disabilities of qualified people. All personnel who participate in screening and hiring applicants shall be guided by fairness, equal opportunity, and consistency in applying the procedures set forth in this order.

II. PURPOSE

This policy is designed to create the establishment, implementation, and maintenance of a viable and equitable method for employment with the Joplin Police Department. It is developed in accordance with the Municipal Code of the City of Joplin, which outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Personnel Board and Director of Human Resources and is designed to supplement municipal policies and procedures; it is not intended to revise, amend, or supersede policies, regulations and procedures pertaining to the general personnel hiring process of the City of Joplin.

III. DEFINITIONS

Disability - A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities.

Good moral character - The attributes of a prospective employee that enhance their value to the department and the goals of community-oriented policing which include honesty, integrity, truthfulness, obedience to the oath of office and the code of ethics, respect for authority, and respect for the rights of others.

Reasonable accommodation - The modification of existing facilities to render them more accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. Also, refers to restructuring the job or modifying work schedules to assist in the assignment of a disabled employee.

Classification – The specific job the applicant has applied for within the organization.

IV. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER (HR 3.01)

V. JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS (HR 3.02)

Advertising a job opening should be handled in a uniform manner. All announcements and notices should provide the following information on advertisements distributed through electronic, print, or other sources:

A. The description of the duties, responsibilities, requisite skills, education level, and other minimum qualifications or requirements for the specific job classification. (job description)

B. Indicate "equal opportunity employer" on the advertisement

C. Indicate official application deadlines

VI. APPLICATION (HR 3.03)

To be considered for employment an individual must first make application to the City of Joplin Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Department will process applications for completeness and adherence to minimum qualifications described in classification specifications, and using the guidelines set forth by the Personnel Director. All applications shall be screened and maintained by the Human Resources Department. Applications will not be rejected because of minor omissions or discrepancies that can be corrected prior to a testing or selection process.

VII. SELECTION PROCESS

The hiring selection process involves various elements that will be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner. A copy of the process will be provided to each applicant. The anticipated duration of the selection process will be seventy-four to one hundred twenty-five [74 - 125] days. The following information is indicative of this process:

A. **Automatic Disqualifiers:**

1. Must be a United States Citizen.
2. Must be a high school graduate or equivalent.
3. Must be at least 20 years of age.
4. Must have a valid driver's license.
5. Must have a good driving record.
6. Failure of written testing (if applicable).
7. Failure of fitness testing (if applicable).
8. Tattoos displayed on the face, head, neck, or hands Waivers may be requested in writing from the Chief of Police for prior existing, or special circumstances involving tattoos on the face, head, neck, or hands. (2-05).
9. Tattoos that could be considered obscene, offensive, sexually suggestive, profane or discriminatory towards persons on the basis of their race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, age, sex, sexual preference, or disability This list is not all inclusive and is subject to final interpretation by the Chief of Police or his designee(s). (2-05).
10. Piercings shall not be apparent or visible when in uniform. The only exception will be for female officers who are permitted to wear one pair of small stud type earrings in the lobes of their ears (2-05).
11. Found guilty or nolo contendere to any felony or serious misdemeanors, including domestic violence and cases of moral turpitude.

12. Pending indictment of any felony or serious misdemeanors, including domestic violence and cases of moral turpitude.

13. Sold, transported, traded, or dispensed drugs or contraband illegally.

14. Use or attempted use of political pressure or bribery to secure an advantage in an examination or other determining factor for securing a position as a police officer.

15. Established an unsatisfactory employment or personnel record, evidenced by a reference check, of such a nature as to demonstrate unsuitability for employment.

16. Served in the Armed Forces and was released or discharged under less than honorable conditions.

17. Intentional omissions, fraudulent entries or deceptive behavior found at any point in the selection process.

18. Does not pass or complete the required psychological examination.

19. Does not pass or complete the required pre-employment physical and drug screening.

20. Violation of any of the prohibitions as stated in the City of Joplin's Home Rule Charter (Article V, Section 5.12).

21. Does not meet the requirements of the State of Missouri Public Safety "Police Officers Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.)" requirements. (POST)

22. Failure to submit and certify the Personal History Questionnaire in Guardian by the predetermined deadline, it is returned incomplete, or verification of required information cannot be made.

23. Failure to provide supporting documents requested for conducting a background investigation.

B. **Discretionary Disqualifiers:**

An applicant may be disqualified and ineligible for employment under any of the following conditions:

1. Application was not filled out completely.

2. Plead guilty or nolo contendere to, or has been found guilty of, or has a pending indictment of any misdemeanor charge, ordinance violation or infraction.

3. Abuse or misuse of alcohol or a controlled substance over a significant period without successfully completing an acceptable alcohol or substance abuse treatment program.

4. In arrears on taxes.

5. Demonstrated unwillingness to honor fiscal contracts or just debts.

6. Excessive number of traffic violations or one or more serious traffic violations.

7. Applicant has demonstrated immaturity or poor judgement within the past ten (10) years giving rise to concerns of poor critical thinking skills.

C. **Cognitive & Situational Written Testing:**

The Next Generation Entry-Level Law Enforcement Aptitude Test (NGLE) is used to test applicants who are not already licensed law enforcement officers, have not been full-time employed as a law enforcement officer for a period longer than one year, or if it has been longer than one year since becoming licensed by Missouri POST. The NGLE was originally developed by CWH Research as their premier entry-level law enforcement examination offering. The NGLE combines a straightforward cognitive ability measure with multiple situational judgment measures. The NGLE focuses on utilizing tools and measures that have minimal impact on protected classes. The scoring algorithm of the NGLE focuses on increasing diversity.

1. This exam measures the following components:

   Cognitive: Reading Comprehension, Grammar, and Reasoning

   Situational Judgment: Professional Skills, Community Interaction, Conscientiousness, Critical Thinking, Emotional Stability, and Social Engagement

2. The NGLE is delivered in electronic format. The NGLE is scheduled and administered by a City of Joplin employee.

3. The NGLE is scored automatically in electronic format.. The overall acceptable score is 70% or higher.

D. **Physical Ability Testing:**

This test is used to test applicant's relevant physical ability to complete physical tasks commonly associated with law enforcement physical activity. This test is used for applicants who are not already licensed law enforcement officers, have not been full-time employed as a law enforcement officer for a period longer than one year, or it has been longer than one year since becoming licensed by Missouri POST.

1. Scoring on this test is pass/fail. Failure to complete any required task will eliminate the applicant from the selection process.

2. Each applicant will sign a waiver relieving the City of Joplin from liability. The completed waiver of liability form will be forwarded to the Records Division of the Joplin Police Department for proper filing and retention.

3. Applicants must complete the timed portion of the physical ability test in 2 minutes and 33 seconds in order to move to the gun fire simulation portion of the physical ability test.

4. Applicants who successfully complete all requirements of the physical ability testing will be eligible to continue forward in the selection process, unless there are extenuating circumstances, reasoning, or justification for disqualification of the applicant at this stage.

5. If an applicant fails to complete the physical agility test but makes it to the heavy bag obstacle prior to the 2:33 mark, they may have the opportunity to re-test within 30 days. If they fail a second time or do not make it to the heavy bag obstacle they must wait 6 months and resubmit an application at that time.

E. **Background Investigation**

1. The Police Department utilizes Guardian Alliance Technologies, an on-line background investigation platform, which archives all applicant backgrounds for Police Officers.

2. A complete, thorough, and confidential background investigation will be conducted upon every eligible candidate. The investigation shall include the applicant's education, character, reputation, financial arrearage, driving record, criminal record, military record, employment record, residency, qualifications, a check of the National Decertification Index (NDI), verification of at least three personal references, social media content, and other pertinent information. An in-person interview shall also be conducted by the assigned background investigator to cover applicant background details, issues, concerns, or any other pertinent information related to the applicant background investigation. The interview also provides an opportunity for the investigator to obtain a better understanding of the applicant's demeanor, professional appearance, and suitability for the role of a Police Officer for the City of Joplin.

3. The following is a list of information required from the applicant for the investigation to occur. Applicants shall be responsible for uploading copies of these documents into their Guardian profile or delivering physical copies or original documents to the Joplin Police Department:

    a. Personal History Questionnaire (administered through Guardian)

    a. Copy of Official Birth Certificate

    b. Copy of Valid Driver's License (front & back)

    c. Copy of High School Diploma or GED Certificate

    d. Sealed Official Copy of High School and/or College Transcripts

    e. Copy of U.S. Military Standard Form 180 (SF-180) if the applicant currently serves or has served military duty.

    f. Copy of U.S. Military Discharge Form (DD-214), Long Form if the applicant has served military duty.

    g. Copy of Missouri Peace Officer Standards and Training License (POST)

    h. Copies of any licenses, certifications, or training that could help support experience claims.

    i. Copy of Waiver of Release (must be notarized)

    j. Copy of Right to Inspect (must be notarized)

4. After the background investigation has concluded the background investigator will complete an investigation summary report of qualification findings as well as provide a recommendation to the Chief of Police as to whether the applicant should be considered for further screening or be disqualified in the selection process. These items will become part of the background investigation packet.

F. **Command Staff Interview**

This is a second panel interview in the selection process. The panel will be made up of the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, and Bureau Commanders. The Chief of Police will designate replacement interviewers in the absence of a Command Staff member as needed. This interview uses a mix of behavioral and situational questions and allows the Chief of Police and other command staff members to evaluate and determine if the applicant is properly prepared and a suitable fit for the Joplin Police Department.

G. **Conditional Offer**

The Chief of Police, at any stage of the selection process, may advise Human Resources to extend a conditional offer of employment to an applicant who has met qualifications to be eligible for hire and is suitable to become a police officer for the City of Joplin. The conditions of the offer are that the applicant will be hired if there are no disqualifying criteria identified in the remaining steps of the selection process.

H. **Polygraph Examination** (9-07)

A polygraph examination shall be conducted on the applicant by a certified polygraph technician trained to conduct such examinations and approved by the City of Joplin to administer the examination. The polygraph is considered an investigative aid and shall not be used as the only determinate in the selection process.

1. After the polygraph examination has concluded the polygraphist shall include the results of the polygraph and any admissions made by the applicant as part of the background investigation packet. This information shall be treated as confidential.

2. Any applicant who has previously separated employment with the Joplin Police Department for any time period or had previously undergone a pre-employment polygraph administered by the Joplin Police Department, shall be subject to a pre-employment polygraph examination as part of the hiring process. The polygraph examination may, at the polygraphist's discretion, limit the polygraph examination to matters from the date of their separation of employment at the Joplin Police Department or date of the last pre-employment polygraph examination to present.

I. **Psychological Examination**

A psychological examination will be conducted using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures. The examination is designed to assess an applicant's work habits and preferences and overall compatibility for the position. Only qualified professionals are used to administer the examination and evaluate the results.

1. The records of results of psychological examinations shall be added to the "MED/PSYCH CLEARANCES" section of the applicants Guardian profile.

2. All records of results of psychological examinations shall be considered confidential.

3. Applicant psychological examinations shall count as compliance with Revised Statutes of Mission (RSMo) section 590.192, in which peace officers shall be required to meet with a program service provider once every three to five years for a mental health check-in.

J. **Medical / Drug Screening**

1. A medical examination shall be conducted by a licensed physician approved by the City of Joplin to perform such examinations.

2. Drug screening (urinalysis) shall be conducted at a medical facility approved by the City of Joplin to conduct such tests.

3. The scheduling of the medical and drug screen examinations shall be coordinated by the City of Joplin Human Resources Department.

K. **Official Offer**

Once all applicable levels of the selection process have been completed, the Chief of Police or designee will advise Human Resources to provide the applicant with an official offer and coordinate an appropriate starting date for their new employment with the City of Joplin.

L. **Sworn Officer Licensing**
The Joplin Police Department requires sworn personnel to possess a Class A Peace Officer license from Missouri P.O.S.T..

VIII. ADMINISTRATION

A. Selection Process

1. The Training Division Sergeant shall act as the Police Department's liaison with Human Resources and shall be responsible for the administrative functions of the selection process.

2. The Training Division Sergeant will maintain contact with applicants from initial application to final employment disposition.

B. Background Investigation

1. The Police Department utilizes Guardian, an on-line background investigation platform, which archives all applicant backgrounds for police officers. Persons who may possess or access a Background Investigation:

    a. Training Division Sergeant.

    b. Background Investigator (specifically files pertaining directly to the applicant the officer is actively investigating).

    c. Polygraph Examiner (specifically for preparing questions for the respective candidate's polygraph examination).

    d. Command Staff.

    e. Chief of Police.

2. After the selection process is complete, the applicant background investigation will be archived in the Guardian on-line platform. Except as specifically noted in this section, no person shall have access to the information contained in this packet at any time without written permission from the Chief of Police. If a release of information is authorized the release shall be made in the form of a photocopy of the desired information. The original Joplin Police Background Investigation ~~Packet~~ shall remain archived in the Guardian on-line platform.

3. Disposal of selection process materials not stored in Guardian will be done by burning or shredding to prevent disclosure of information.

4. All background investigators will attend documented training in conducting a background investigation prior to being assigned to this duty.

5. Records of applicants that are not hired are subject to the Human Resources record retention policy.

6. Records of applicants that are hired are kept on file indefinitely while the person is employed. The records are subject to the Human Resources record retention policy after the departure of the employee.

C. **Lateral Entry**

Applicants who have been employed full-time as a law enforcement officer and are eligible to obtain a Missouri P.O.S.T. Class A Peace Officer License or who have been licensed by Missouri P.O.S.T within one-year of application are not required to pass the cognitive/situational written testing or the physical ability testing phases of the selection process.

D. **Retesting**

1. Applicants who fail any portion of the selection process are disqualified.

2. Applicants who fail to achieve a passing score on the written examination (70% or higher) shall have to wait a minimum of 30 days before being allowed to retake the written examination on a second attempt. An applicant's failure to achieve a passing written examination on a second attempt will be deemed disqualified from the current hiring/testing process. Applicants who fail to pass the written examination on the second attempt must resubmit a new application of employment through Human Resources to restart the hiring and testing process after a minimum of 6-month period has passed since their last examination date.

3. Candidates who successfully complete all phases of the hiring process but are not hired, will be placed on an eligibility list that will typically be valid for one year from the date of testing.

IX. COMPLIANCE

Violations of this policy, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action as described in the City of Joplin's Personnel Rules and Regulations or the Joplin Police Department's Rules and Regulations and General Orders. Members of the Joplin Police Department, assigned to or assisting other agencies shall comply with this policy.

X. APPLICATION

This document constitutes department policy, is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims insofar as the employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form a basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.