

Recruitment and Selection

1000.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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 Putnam County Sheriff's Office and that are promulgated and maintained by the Personnel Department.

1000.2 POLICY

In accordance with applicable federal, state, and local law, the Putnam County Sheriff's Office 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 Office does not show partiality or grant any special status to any applicant, employee, or group of employees unless otherwise required by law.

The Office 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

The Undersheriff should employ a comprehensive recruitment and selection strategy to recruit candidates who qualify for the Civil Service exam 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 office website and the use of office-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 Undersheriff shall avoid advertising, recruiting and screening practices that tend to stereotype, focus on homogeneous applicant pools or screen applicants in a discriminatory manner.

All job announcements must include a description of the duties of the position.

The Office 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.

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1000.4 SELECTION PROCESS

Upon the certification of a civil service list and following the laws and rules guiding selection from the list, the Office shall actively strive to identify the candidates who have in some manner distinguished themselves as being outstanding prospects. Minimally, the Office 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, military record)
- (b) Driving record
- (c) Reference checks
- (d) Employment eligibility, including U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 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)
- (i) An impartial medical exam by a licensed physician or practitioner that meets the Municipal Police Training Council standards (may only be given after a conditional offer of employment)
- (j) A psychological examination administered by qualified professionals to ensure psychological fitness (may only be given after a conditional offer of employment)
- (k) Oral interview with Command Staff

1000.4.1 VETERAN PREFERENCE

The Office will provide veteran preference credits as required (Civil Service Law § 85).

1000.5 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

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 Putnam County Sheriff's Office.

Background investigators will be provided with instructions and checklists to ensure thorough, comprehensive and objective investigations of candidates. Elements of the background investigation will include verification of employment, education and residences; interviews with previous and current employers, family members, neighbors, social contacts, provided references,

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developed references and organizations; and review of credit history, military records, and other public records searches.

1000.5.1 NOTICES

Background investigators shall ensure that investigations are conducted and notices provided in accordance with the requirements of the FCRA and the New York Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 USC § 1681d; General Business Law § 380-c).

1000.5.2 STATE NOTICES

Every applicant disqualified due to facts discovered during the background investigation by the Putnam County Sheriff's Office will be provided a written statement specifying the reasons for the disqualification and allowed an opportunity for rebuttal (Civil Service Law § 50).

Applicants who are or were subject to an extreme risk protection order (temporary or final) should be afforded an opportunity to explain the circumstances and provided with copies of records related to the order that are obtained by the Office (CPLR § 6346).

1000.5.3 REVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

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

The Undersheriff 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 Office fully complies with applicable privacy protections and local, state and federal law.

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

1000.5.4 RECORDS RETENTION

The background report and all supporting documentation shall be maintained in accordance with the established records retention schedule.

1000.5.5 DOCUMENTING AND REPORTING

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.

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The report and all supporting documentation shall be included in the candidate's background investigation file.

1000.6 DISQUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

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
- 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. State law provides for statutory minimal standards for disqualification as prescribed by Civil Service Law § 50.

1000.7 EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

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 Office 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 satisfactory 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 DEPUTIES

Candidates shall meet the following minimum standards:

- (a) Free of any felony convictions
- (b) Citizen of the United States or permanent resident alien eligible for and has applied for citizenship
- (c) At least 20 years of age and no more than 35 years of age with certain exceptions (Civil Service Law § 58)
- (d) Fingerprinted for local, state and national fingerprint check

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- (e) Good moral character as determined by a thorough background investigation
- (f) High School graduate, passed the GED or obtained a two year, four year or advanced degree from an accredited or approved institution
- (g) Free from any physical, emotional or mental condition which might adversely affect the exercise of police powers
- (h) Candidates must also satisfy the Municipal Police Training Council (MPTC) selection requirements

In addition to the above minimum MPTC required standards, candidates should be subjected to additional evaluations including physical ability testing, drug screening, polygraph and/or pre-offer personality test.

1000.8 PROBATIONARY PERIODS

The Undersheriff should coordinate with the Putnam 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.