	<b>Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures</b>		
	Subject: <i>Employee Selection Process (Sworn)</i>	Issued: <b>10/19/2011</b>	TBP: 3.17, 4.01, 4.03, 4.04

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the hiring process for sworn personnel.

**Policy**

It is the policy of the Department that all phases of the hiring process will be fair, impartial and applied consistently to all applicants. The Department is an equal opportunity employer and will strive to meet the guidelines established by the United States Civil Rights Act and all other laws pertaining to employment practices.

**Procedures (TBP 4.01, 4.03)**

The Department will maintain a list which will be kept at the Training Division for all persons interested in applying for upcoming positions. Upon announcement of vacancies, notification will be made based on the existing list. All applicants will be advised to contact Human Resources, the Training Division or go online to the city’s website to complete an application. The requirements for sworn personnel differ slightly between new hires and lateral transfers.


Basic Peace Officer:

- A. Meet TCOLE qualifications and those set forth by the Department
- B. Pass physical agility test
- C. Pass background investigation
- D. Complete polygraph examination and pass psychological exams
- E. Pass Department interview board
- F. Pass medical and drug examinations

Lateral Peace Officers applicants (laterals) must meet aforementioned requirements and must have been employed in a position with a responsibility similar to those of a patrol officer of the Department.

**Background Investigations (TBP 3.17,4.03, 4.04)**

Background investigations are the most critical component of the selection process. It is the policy of the Department that a background investigation be conducted on all sworn and non-sworn applicants prior to and following a conditional offer of employment. Background investigations should be an objective, fact-finding process resulting in an accurate record of the applicant’s past behavior, conduct and job performance. While the background investigator must consider both positive and negative information, the reporting must be descriptive and factual.

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Background investigations shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable city, state and federal laws. Department personnel who conduct background investigations shall receive training prior to conducting applicant backgrounds.

While it is more reliable to conduct the background inquiry in person, many inquiries (criminal history/driving records) can be conducted by telephone and mail to avoid time and costs. If necessary, subject to prior approval by the background supervisor, background investigators may travel out of town to conduct the inquiry in person.

TCOLE requires employee selection records, including background investigations, to be kept for a period of five (5) years. Such files are considered confidential and shall be released or purged at the direction of the Chief of Police. All records of applicants for sworn positions (not hired) shall be maintained and secured by the Training Division. All non-sworn applicants (not hired) shall be maintained and secured by Human Resources.

**Procedure:**

The Human Resources Department will forward all applications directly to the Chief of Police, or a designee, who will be responsible to maintain a log of all candidates listing pertinent information regarding the selection process.

The Chief of Police, or designee, will be responsible for assigning applicant background investigations to sworn personnel.

Upon receipt of an application, the background investigator will use data available on the Personal History Statement as follows:

- A. To verify the candidate’s qualifying credentials;
- B. To review the candidate’s criminal history;
- C. To review the candidate’s driving record and
- D. To verify at least three personal references.

Verifications may be made by telephone, mail or personal interviews and documented in writing.

The background investigation will not begin without two (2) signed copies of the applicant’s Authorization to Release Information.

The first step in the background investigation process is to verify that the applicant has provided all required documents listed on the cover page of the Personal History Statement. If the application is incomplete, the investigator will notify the applicant that he cannot proceed with the background investigation until the required documents are provided to the assigned investigator.



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A complete Criminal History Statement and Driving Record shall be obtained:

- A. The background investigator will verify all arrests, citations, convictions and /or traffic collisions.
- B. If possible, the background investigator will obtain copies of arrest, offense, auto crash reports and court dispositions.
- C. The background investigator should contact each municipal court or justice of the peace which has jurisdiction in which the applicant resides, to verify the candidate's driving record.

The investigator should arrange to conduct a home visit with the candidate and their family as well as interview relatives, friends, neighbors and co-workers. It is an important investigative duty of each background investigator to develop additional points of contact during these interviews.

When the investigator has completed the background investigation, all notes, necessary documents and other pertinent information will be organized according to the background areas indicated in the Background Evidence Organizer. The narrative report shall be typed and should include all significant information related to the background areas.

If the investigator uncovers unfavorable information, the investigator should give the respective applicant the opportunity to rebut the information and/or provide an explanation of any circumstances that might mitigate the significance of the information.

The background investigator should not make any recommendations or opinions in the Background Evidence Organizer.

Following a polygraph and psychological evaluation by a licensed practitioner, the Background Evidence Organizer shall be reviewed by a supervisor appointed by the Chief of Police. The background investigation results will be objectively evaluated by an Oral Interview Board appointed by the Chief of Police.

If an applicant successfully passes the oral interview, he or she will be required to pass a medical examination by a licensed doctor. This medical examination will include a drug screen test.

As part of the criminal background check, the applicant's fingerprints will be submitted to both the Department of Public Safety in Austin and the FBI in Washington D.C.