

MISSOULA POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY MANUAL



<i>Subject:</i> HIRING		
<i>Effective Date:</i> 6/8/2017	<i>Original Date:</i> 12/12/2001	<i>Next Review:</i> 6/8/2019
<i>Chapter</i> 13	<i>Policy #</i> 13.10	<i>Distribution:</i>
<i>References:</i>		

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for hiring Missoula City Police Officers.

II. Policy

This department recognizes the need to be staffed with sworn police officers who merit an extraordinarily high level of community trust. Included among the characteristics of an acceptable police officer are honesty and integrity, maturity, sound judgment, physical and moral courage, intelligence and the ability to learn, and the ability to communicate clearly and accurately in both verbal and written forms with the diverse elements of our community. Police officers must also be hired in a manner that is consistent with the policies set forth by the City of Missoula in Chapter 1, Section 01-02 of the City of Missoula Personnel Policies, and in accordance with the minimum qualifications set forth in Title 7-32-303, Montana Codes Annotated, and in accordance with minimum qualifications established by the Missoula Police Department.

III. Definitions

A. *Applicants* are persons who are seeking employment with the Missoula Police Department, and who have submitted the following documents to the Missoula Police Department:

1. Standard Application for Position of Peace Officer in the State of Montana signed by the Applicant.
2. Missoula Police Department Personal History Statement signed by the Applicant.
3. Missoula Police Applicant Letter of Understanding signed by the Applicant and witnessed by a certified Notary Public.
4. Authorization to Release Information signed by the Applicant and witnessed by a certified Notary Public.
5. Applicant Information Certification signed by the Applicant and witnessed by a certified Notary Public.
6. Disclosure of Court Ordered Child Support signed by the Applicant and witnessed by a certified Notary Public.

7. Two (2) sets of fingerprints obtained by a law enforcement agency.
8. Certified copy of the applicant's birth certificate.
9. Photocopy of the Applicant's driver's license.
10. Photocopy of Selective Service Registration card, if applicable.
11. All marriage licenses and divorce decrees.
12. Any name change documents.
13. Military discharge papers if applicable.
14. High school diploma or GED certificate, or college diploma(s).
15. Certified official copies of all high school and/or college transcripts. THE TRANSCRIPTS MUST BE PROVIDED IN A SEALED ENVELOPE DIRECTLY FROM THE SCHOOL(S).
16. Valid passing scores on the certified Reading Skills, Writing Skills and Law Enforcement Officer tests. Written test scores are considered valid for twelve months after the date the tests were administered.
17. Documentation they have completed MPAT in 6:30 (six minutes and thirty seconds) or less. MPAT results are considered valid for six months after the date the tests were administered.
 - This requirement is waived for applicants who possess a valid P.O.S.T. basic certificate and who have completed at least one year of service as a sworn law enforcement officer.
19. Copy of citizenship or naturalization papers if appropriate.
20. Documentation of any other factors which the applicant wishes to have considered.

Persons who fail to provide all of the above listed items, or acceptable reasons (as determined by the department) the documents were not provided will not be considered applicants, and will not be considered for employment.

B. ***Background Investigation Manager*** is a Staff Officer of the rank of Assistant Chief of Police or Captain, who is appointed by the Chief of Police to manage all background investigations.

C. ***Conditional Offer of Employment*** is defined as an offer of employment based upon the satisfaction of several conditions, including but not necessarily limited to:

1. Passing a physical examination conducted by a physician of the Department's choosing, and at the Department's expense. (Statutory requirement.)

2. Passing a psychological examination conducted by a licensed professional of the Department's choosing and at the Department's expense. (Statutory requirement.)
 3. Passing a vision test at the Departments' expense
 3. Passing a drug screen administered at the time of the physical examination. (Departmental requirement.)
 4. Passing the Montana Physical Abilities Test (MPAT) in 6:30 (six minutes, thirty seconds) final time to assure that the individual can successfully meet the training standards of the Montana Law Enforcement Academy Basic School.
 5. Resolution of any issues that may arise as a result of the physical and psychological examinations, drug screen, and physical agility test, as well as any other issues that are properly raised by the Department, the City of Missoula, or the Officer Candidate.
 6. Approval by the Missoula Police Commission.
- D. ***Former Officers in Good Standing*** are those Officers who have resigned or retired from the Missoula Police Department for reasons that are completely voluntary. ***Officers who leave employment with the Missoula Police Department as part of an agreement to avoid disciplinary action or criminal prosecution shall not be considered former officers in good standing.***
- E. ***Former Officers Not In Good Standing*** are those officers whose employment with the Missoula Police Department ended under conditions that, while voluntary, were nonetheless related to a course of disciplinary action, investigation for alleged criminal activity, or criminal prosecution.
- F. ***Hiring Board:*** The Administrative Captain will select the proposed voting and non-voting members of the hiring board. The selections must be approved by the Chief of Police before the board is actually convened.
- G. ***Hiring Pool:*** Those Applicants who have been selected by the Hiring Board as eligible to receive a Conditional Offer of Employment.
- H. ***Probationary Officers*** are new Officers in their first year of employment or re-employment by the Missoula Police Department.
- I. ***Terminated Officers*** are those who have been terminated for cause from the Missoula Police Department.

IV. Procedures

New Officer Application & Hiring

- A. Persons inquiring at any time about employment as a Missoula City Police Officer will be given an information packet provided by the Administrative Division. The information will also be posted on the Police Department web site. It will include, at a minimum, a general description of the hiring process and a list of all

material that an individual must submit in order to be considered an Applicant. The information may also contain additional recruiting information as directed by the Chief of Police or the Captain of the Administrative Division.

- B. Applications will be accepted and screened throughout the year.
- C. Application screening for compliance with minimum State of Montana and Departmental qualifications will be performed by the Human Resources Department as well as Administrative Captain and any Missoula Police Department Background Investigators the captain selects to assist. The screening will be conducted in accordance with the Missoula Police Department Background Investigation Manual.
 - 1. Applicants who are disqualified will be notified.
- D. Unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police, The Hiring Board will convene for interviews at least once a year or more often as needed.
 - 1. Prior to the date when interviews begin, a MPD Staff member and an MPD Background Investigator(s) will review the preliminary background investigation reports of all Applicants who meet the minimum State of Montana and Departmental qualifications, and, by applying the standards set forth in Section IV.C of the Background Investigation Manual, select by majority vote those Applicants who will be offered an interview.
 - a. Applicants who are not selected to be interviewed will be notified.
 - 2. Interviews will be conducted in a structured format before the entire Hiring Board. Each Applicant will be asked the same set of prepared questions, and Board members will be allowed to ask only those follow-up questions that seek to explore the applicant's original answer. All Board members will score each answer.
 - a. Applicants not selected for the Hiring Pool will be notified.
 - b. All applicants selected for the Hiring Pool must be approved by the Missoula Police Commission.
- E. Prior to being extended a Conditional Offer of Employment, Applicants in the Hiring Pool will undergo a completed background investigation conducted in accordance with the Background Investigation Manual under the direction of the Background Investigation Manager.
 - 1. Based upon the completed background investigation report, the Hiring Board may remove an Applicant from the Hiring Pool based upon application of the qualifications set forth in Section IV.C. of the Background Investigation Manual.
- F. Applicants will remain in the hiring pool, with certain provisions.
 - 1. Such Applicants must provide a personal history update, and participate in the interview process if requested during each cycle, and be selected by the Chief of Police to be retained in the Hiring Pool.

2. Selection for the Hiring Pool during one interview cycle does not infer any preference in subsequent cycles.
 3. Applicants in the Hiring Pool must maintain valid POST physical agility scores. The POST physical agility scores expire after six (6) months.
- G. The decision to extend a Conditional Offer of Employment is made by the Chief of Police. The decision will be based upon the Chief's assessment of the credentials and performance of each Applicant as demonstrated during the entire hiring process, and the Chief's best judgment as to how each Applicant may best meet the needs of the Department.
- H. To ensure the integrity of the hiring process, all application materials, notes, interview questions and score sheets will be made available to the City of Missoula Personnel Department.
- I. Probationary Period. Each new Police Officer must undergo a one-year probationary period, which begins with the date of employment. The Chief of Police may terminate probationary Police Officers without cause. In order to pass beyond the one-year probationary period, Police Officers must at a minimum:
1. Successfully complete the Montana Law Enforcement Academy Basic School and receive a P.O.S.T. Basic Certificate, unless the individual possesses a current Basic Certificate at the time of employment.
 - a. Those that hold a Basic Certificate or its equivalent from the federal government or a state other than Montana must complete the Montana Law Enforcement Academy Legal Equivalency requirements within the one-year probationary period.
 2. Successfully complete the Missoula Police Department's Field Training Program.
 3. Be confirmed by the City Council in the position of Police Officer upon recommendation by the Chief of Police.
- J. Once all action required within the Police Department is completed on an application, that application and its supporting file will be forwarded to the City of Missoula Personnel Department for retention and disposition in accordance with City of Missoula policies.

V. Procedure for Re-Employment of Former Officers in Good Standing

- A. The decision to re-hire former officers in good standing is at the sole discretion of the Chief of Police, subject to the provisions of this policy.
- B. Former officers in good standing whose employment ended within the twelve months prior to the date of requested reinstatement shall not be subject to the procedures for complete re-application and hiring. However, they must satisfy the following conditions:
1. Application by letter directly to the Chief of Police.

2. Completion within the previous six months of the MPAT test in 6:30 minutes or less.
 3. Successful completion of the physical and psychological examinations and drug screen required for new officers. The former officer must pay the costs of these examinations.
 4. Satisfactory completion of the Missoula Police Department's current firearms qualification course.
 5. The officer's work performance while with the Missoula Police Department must have been satisfactory in all areas, and he/she must not have received any Level II or higher discipline within the twelve months preceding retirement or resignation.
 6. Satisfactory results of a background investigation, which emphasizes the period of time after the former officer left employment with the Missoula Police Department. Background investigations for former officers in good standing will be structured to fit individual situations.
 7. Former officers in good standing who satisfy these requirements may be added to the current Hiring Pool by the Chief of Police and will be eligible to be hired for twenty-four (24) months under the following conditions.
 - a. Retirement and disability pension issues are governed by the appropriate fund.
 - b. Former officers in good standing who return to duty must serve a one year probationary period, during which they are paid at the rate received by all probationary officers. Following satisfactory completion of the one (1) year probationary period, they will be paid at a rate that reflects their total years of service.
 - c. Former officers in good standing return to duty at the rank of patrolman and at lowest point on the seniority list. At the conclusion of their one (1) year probationary period, the officer will be placed in the appropriate position on the department's seniority list.
 - d. Former officers in good standing who return to duty are not eligible for promotion during their one year probationary period. However, once the probationary period has ended, the officer's total years of service shall be used to calculate time of service requirements for the purpose of promotion.
 - e. Before the re-hiring of a former officer in good standing becomes final, it must be approved by the Missoula Police Commission, as required by Montana Statute.
- C. Former officers in good standing whose employment ended more than twelve months prior to the requested date of re-instatement shall be treated as new applicants, and required to successfully complete all phases of the competitive hiring process as specified in Section IV of this policy before being offered re-employment.

D. **MILITARY LEAVE EXCEPTION.** The return of former officers who have been absent from the Department due to extended military service as part of the Reserve or National Guard will be managed in compliance with applicable State and Federal statutes.

VI. Leaves of Absence and Other Forms of Unpaid Leave shall be managed in accordance with existing City of Missoula Personnel Policies.

VII. Former Officers Not in Good Standing who make application to the Chief of Police for reinstatement will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

VIII. Terminated Officers are not eligible for reemployment under any circumstances.