

PUBLIC SAFETY

Update from Police Chief Mangseth



Sustaining a healthy and productive workforce includes careful consideration to recruitment and selection of eligible and qualified candidates. Recruitment and selection of qualified police officer candidates has become increasingly challenging for our agency, as well as police agencies across the state

and nation. There are several things that must be considered.

POLICY

In accordance with applicable federal, state, and local law, the St. Anthony Police Department 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 Department does not show partiality or grant any special status to any applicant, employee, or group of employees unless otherwise required by law. The Department 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.

RECRUITMENT

The police department strives to employ a comprehensive recruitment and selection strategy to recruit and select employees from a qualified and diverse pool of candidates. The strategy includes:

- Identification of racially and culturally diverse target markets
- Use of marketing strategies to target diverse applicant pools
- Expanded use of technology and maintenance of a strong internet presence
- Expanded outreach through partnerships with

media, community groups, citizen academies, local colleges, universities and the military

- Employee referral and recruitment incentive programs
- Consideration of shared or collaborative regional testing processes

SELECTION PROCESS

The Department actively strives to identify a diverse group of candidates that have in some manner distinguished themselves as being outstanding prospects. The Department employs a comprehensive screening, background investigation and selection process that assesses cognitive and physical abilities and includes review and verification of the following:

- A comprehensive application for employment (including previous employment, references, current and prior addresses, education requirements, military record)
- Driving record
- Reference checks
- Citizenship eligibility, including U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
- Information obtained from public internet sites
- Financial history consistent with the Fair Credit Reporting Act
- Local, state, and federal criminal history record checks
- Medical and psychological examination (may only be given after a conditional offer of employment)
- Review board or selection committee assessment

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

Every candidate must 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 St. Anthony Police Department.

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The background investigation must determine whether the candidate meets the standards established by the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) as well as the security standards established to access state and national computerized record and communication systems.

STANDARDS FOR OFFICERS

- Candidates shall meet the minimum standards established by Minnesota POST:
- Citizen of the United States
- Possess a valid driver's license
- Free of any felony conviction
- Not be required to register as a predatory offender under state law
- Free of conviction of any controlled substance law or of any misdemeanor conviction listed in Minn. R. 6700.0700
- Fingerprinted for purposes of disclosure of any felony convictions
- Submit to a medical examination and psychological evaluation to ensure that the candidate is free from any physical, emotional or mental condition which might adversely affect his/her performance of peace officer duties
- Successfully complete a physical strength and agility examination
- Successfully complete an oral examination

Upon arriving at a decision on a potential candidate, a conditional job offer is extended so that we may conduct more invasive checks to include; psychological evaluation (by a licensed psychologist), physical exam, drug test, physical agility test and background check. Typically, we begin with a comprehensive background investigation that will provide the foundation for making the hiring decision. The results and review of the other testing will more than likely be validated through the background investigation. For example, the results of psychological testing would pair with information gained through interviews with past references, teachers, family, etc. In other words, what an employer learns through the testing tools should be proven in what is learned through the comprehensive background.

Once a candidate successfully passes these evaluations, a formal job offer is extended. The probationary officer is sworn in by the Mayor or city clerk and embarks on a 16 week Field Training Program, which is administered by nationally accredited, in house, Field Training Officers (FTO). Upon successfully completing FTO, an employee has a one year probationary period. In addition, the probationary officer is linked with a peer support officer. This peer support officer is drawn from a select pool of our own officers who have volunteered to be a peer mentor/coach that is available outside of the training process to assist recruits with adjusting to a new way of life as a police officer.

I must emphasize that a very real challenge for most every police agency is that the number of students earning law enforcement skills certificates has declined over the past few years. I want to assure our community that we remain cognizant of our challenges related to recruitment and selection of qualified police officer candidates. Our strategic vision supports a commitment to hire, develop, and retain dedicated professionals who are devoted to exceptional policing service and creating a safe and secure community that is a desirable place in which to live, learn, work, and play. ■



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