



HOWARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

GENERAL ORDER ADM-22 SELECTION OF SWORN PERSONNEL

EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 21, 2009

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This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

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I. POLICY

The Howard County Sheriff's Office will maintain an efficient, effective, and fair selection process for sworn deputies that results in the appointment of those individuals who best possess the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary for an effective, respected law enforcement agency. The HCSO will work closely with the County Office of Human Resources to achieve this goal.¹

II. PROFESSIONAL & LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Role of Personnel Administrator

In accordance with Howard County Law, the County's Human Resource Administrator coordinates all original appointments in the classified service.

B. Role of the Sheriff's Office

Though authority for selection is shared, the Sheriff's Office maintains the primary responsibility for background investigations, oral interviews, and probationary period assessment. These processes will be coordinated with and administered by the Office of the Sheriff in conjunction with the County Office of Human Resources.

- 1. The Sheriff will retain certain responsibilities in the selection of personnel. These include identifying specific needs of the HCSO and determining skills and personal attributes required for positions.
- 2. The Sheriff, or his designee, may conduct an oral interview of all prospective employees eligible for selection.
- 3. The Sheriff, or his designee, will make the actual selections for all vacancies pursuant to Howard County Code Section 1.106 (i).

¹ CALEA 32.1.1

C. Uniform Selection Application

The selection process is comprised of many elements, which include a physical ability test, review of a Personal History Questionnaire (PHQ), oral interview, polygraph examination, background investigation, pre-placement physical, and psychological screening. All elements of the selection process will be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner under the auspices of the County Office of Human Resources.²

D. Selection Materials Security

Selection materials used by either the Sheriff's Office or the County Office of Human Resources will be stored in a secure area when not being used. Access to the materials will be permitted only to those HCSO employees who are involved in the administration of the selection process.³

E. Selection Materials Disposal

Selection materials no longer in use will be disposed of by shredding to prevent disclosure of the information they contain. The County Human Resources Administrator shall monitor the disposal of discarded selection materials.⁴

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES & PROCEDURES

A. The examination and selection process is comprised of many elements, including the following:⁵

1. Written examination
2. Oral interview
3. Background investigation
4. Polygraph examination
5. Physical examination (including drug testing)
6. Psychological examination

B. At the time of their formal registration, candidates will be given written notice identifying all elements and the expected duration of the selection process as well as the HCSO policy regarding re-application.⁶

C. Candidates not appointed for hire on the basis of a single examination, interview, or investigation will be informed, in writing, within thirty (30) calendar days by the Office of the Sheriff.⁷ Reasons for ineligibility may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Expiration of the eligibility list;
2. Candidate does not meet the minimum hiring standards;
3. Candidate is acceptable in all areas but is not the best candidate being considered

D. The County Office of Human Resources allows re-application, retesting, and re-evaluation of candidates not appointed to probationary status. If a candidate is eliminated by any step of the application process, the applicant may reapply during the next hiring process.⁸

E. Records will be maintained for the length of time determined by the County Office of Human Resources. The following procedures shall apply:⁹

² CALEA 32.1.3

³ CALEA 32.1.7

⁴ CALEA 32.1.7

⁵ CALEA 32.1.1

⁶ CALEA 32.1.4 a, b & c

⁷ CALEA 32.1.5

⁸ CALEA 32.1.4 c

⁹ CALEA 32.1.6

1. As a general rule, all records of candidates not appointed to probationary status will be maintained by the HCSO for a period of at least one (1) year.
2. The HCSO will comply with all local, state, and federal requirements for the privacy, security, and access to information of all candidates' records and data.

IV. POSITION FUNCTIONS

Howard County Sheriff's Office Deputy Sheriffs perform a wide range of job functions, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Service of Process
- Court Security
- Prisoner Transports
- Warrant Service & Extraditions
- Landlord/Tenant Postings
- Evictions
- Protective Order Service
- Writs of Execution
- Sheriff Sales

V. EMPLOYMENT QUALIFICATIONS

A. Physical and Age Qualifications

Physical and age qualifications for entry level and lateral deputy sheriff positions with the HCSO are established by the County Human Resources Administrator. These qualifications will meet professional and legal standards for job relevancy, usefulness, and fairness.¹⁰

B. Entry Level Deputy Sheriff

1. Minimum age of 21 years, by the date of the swearing in ceremony.
2. Possession of a High School Diploma, or equivalent.
3. Must be a United States Citizen.
4. Possession of a valid Driver's License.
5. Have NO serious driving infractions.
6. Have NO felony or serious misdemeanor convictions.

C. Lateral Deputy Sheriff

1. Possession of a High School Diploma, or equivalent.
2. Possession of a current Maryland Police Training Commission Certification as a Police Officer or a Deputy Sheriff.
3. Minimum of two (2) years experience with a police department or sheriff's office.

D. Pre-placement Physical

A pre-placement medical examination of each candidate will be conducted prior to probationary status appointment using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures.¹¹ The purpose of the examination is to confirm a candidate's ability to perform essential functions. A record of the examination's results will be retained with the applicant's records by the Office of Human Resources.¹²

¹⁰ CALEA 32.1.2

¹¹ CALEA 32.1.2 & 32.2.7

¹² CALEA 32.2.9

E. Polygraph Examination

The polygraph examination is a critical element of the selection process and it complements the other aspects of the process.

1. Polygraph Examiner Credentials

The polygraph examiner administering the examination and evaluating the results in the selection process will have professional training, from a school accredited by the American Polygraph Association, in the use and interpretation of this investigative tool.¹³

2. Notification of Polygraph Areas

Candidates who are scheduled for polygraph examinations will be provided with a copy of the areas that will form the basis of the polygraph questioning.¹⁴

3. Adverse Polygraph Results

An indication of deception during the polygraph examination will not be used as the single determinant of employment status; however, pretest and post-test discussions that reveal adverse information will be documented and used in the subsequent selection process.¹⁵

F. Psychological Screening

A psychological screening designed to assess the emotional stability and psychological fitness of each candidate will be conducted by a qualified psychologist prior to appointment to probationary status using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures.¹⁶ A record of the results assessed and recommendations made by the examining psychologist will be retained with the applicant's records by the County Office of Human Resources.¹⁷

G. Physical Ability Test

A physical ability test of each candidate will be conducted prior to appointment to probationary status using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures.

1. A signed medical waiver and physical ability test authorization form will be completed prior to the physical ability test.
2. Several tests given in the course of the physical ability test measure the physical fitness level of the candidate and are evaluated according to the person's age, gender, and weight.
3. Applicants are evaluated on flexibility, strength, muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, and handgun trigger pull.

VI. HIRING PROCESS

A. Entry Level Deputy Sheriff Recruit

1. The hiring process for Entry Level Deputy Sheriff candidates is designed to help select those applicants who are the most qualified to be a Howard County Deputy Sheriff. The hiring process will consist of the following:

¹³ CALEA 32.2.5

¹⁴ CALEA 32.2.4

¹⁵ CALEA 32.2.6

¹⁶ CALEA 32.1.2 & 32.2.8

¹⁷ CALEA 32.2.9

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- a. Physical Ability Test
 - b. Oral Interview
 - c. Polygraph & Background Investigations
 - d. Medical & Psychological Examinations
2. The selected candidates will also be required to successfully complete an approved Maryland Police & Corrections Training Commission (MPCTC) accredited Police Academy during their first year of employment.

B. Lateral Deputy Sheriff Recruit

The hiring process for Lateral Deputy Sheriff candidates is designed to help select those applicants who are most qualified to be a Howard County Deputy Sheriff. The hiring process will consist of the following:

1. Oral Interview
2. **Polygraph** & Background Investigation
3. Medical & Psychological Examinations

C. Background Investigations

1. Whenever practical, background investigations should involve a home visit with the candidate and his family, as well as interviews with neighbors.
2. A background investigation will be conducted on each candidate prior to appointment to probationary status, to include review of criminal history, at least three personal interviews, reference checks, verification of credentials, financial data, and other MPCTC requirements.¹⁸
3. A background investigation will be conducted after the polygraph examination (~~entry level candidates only~~). The polygraph examination may point out areas that need particular attention in the background investigation.
4. Those HCSO personnel performing background investigations shall be specially trained in the techniques for collecting the required information.¹⁹
5. Information obtained during the course a background investigation will be kept within the County Office of Human Resources.
 - a. For those applicants who are selected for a position within the Howard County Sheriff's Office, background investigation reports will be kept for three (3) years after termination of employment and will then be destroyed.²⁰
 - b. For those applicants who are NOT selected for a position within the Howard County Sheriff's Office, background investigation reports will be kept for three (3) years after the application date and will then be destroyed.²¹

VII. **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**²²

- A. All entry level deputy sheriffs shall maintain a probationary status for eighteen (18) months, at a minimum, from the actual date of hiring. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, deputies may be granted permanent status.

¹⁸ CALEA 32.2.1 a, b & c

¹⁹ CALEA 32.2.2

²⁰ CALEA 32.2.3

²¹ CALEA 32.2.3

²² CALEA 32.2.10

- B. All lateral deputy sheriffs shall maintain a probationary status for twelve (12) months, at a minimum, from the actual date of hiring. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, deputies may be granted permanent status.
- C. Any request for extension of the probationary period for a deputy will be forwarded, through channels, to the Sheriff. The Sheriff, or his designee, will review the supportive documentation and forward any request for extension to the County Human Resources Administrator for final approval.

VIII. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

- A. The Howard County Sheriff's Office will comply at all times with the Howard County Government's Policies & Procedures concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act and Grievance Procedure (HCPP 100.4).
- B. All HCSO personnel shall follow the current procedures established by the Howard County Department of County Administration.
- C. Any questions regarding the ADA procedure or grievance procedures should be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer of the County.

IX. CANCELLATION

This General Order cancels and replaces the following:

- General Order ADM-15, Americans with Disabilities Act, dated December 1, 2003; AND
- General Order ADM-22, Deputy Sheriffs Applicants, dated March 1, 2005.

Authority:

James F. Fitzgerald
Sheriff

APPENDIX A

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY LEVEL DEPUTY SHERIFF

Howard County Deputy Sheriffs are fully sworn police officers and perform a broad range of law enforcement functions. Duties include the enforcement of Maryland's Criminal, Civil and Traffic Laws; Service of Civil/Criminal Process, Judicial Security, Prisoner Transports, Fugitive/Warrant Investigation and Out of State Extraditions, Domestic Violence Enforcement and Landlord/Tenant Evictions. Deputy Sheriffs are classified as **essential employees** and subject to inclement weather and alternate shifts.

It is the policy of Howard County and the Sheriff's Office not to discriminate against anyone and to afford equal employment opportunity to all applicants. To be considered for employment the applicant must be 21 years old, a United States Citizen, have a high school diploma or equivalent, have a valid Driver's License and have no felony or serious misdemeanor convictions.

The hiring process for Deputy Sheriff Recruit candidates is designed to help select those applicants who are most qualified. The candidate must successfully complete each step of the following in order to advance to the next stage.

Physical Ability Test

You will be evaluated based on a standardized set of criteria. The standards are as follows:

- **FLEXIBILITY:** measured by a sit and reach test. Using a box designed for this exercise, the candidate will sit down and place their feet flush on the flexibility box. The candidate will be asked to push a small wooden block forward.
- **STRENGTH:** measured on a Variable Resistance Stationary Bench Press Machine by percentage of body weight.
- **MUSCULAR:** endurance measured by the number of bent-leg sit-ups performed in one minute.
- **CARDIOVASCULAR:** endurance measured by a 1 ½ mile run/walk.
- **HANDGUN TRIGGER PULL:** must pull trigger ten (10) times with each hand.

The candidate must achieve the following minimum score:

<u>MALE</u>	<u>SIT-UP</u>	<u>FLEX</u>	<u>BENCH</u>	<u>1 ½ MILE RUN</u>
20-29	38	16.5in.	.99%	12:51
30-39	35	15.5in.	.88%	13:36
40-49	29	14.3in.	.80%	14:29
50-59	24	13.3in.	.71%	15:26
<u>FEMALE</u>	<u>SIT-UP</u>	<u>FLEX</u>	<u>BENCH</u>	<u>1 ½ MILE RUN</u>
20-29	32	19.3 in.	.59%	15:26
30-39	25	18.3 in.	.53%	15:57
40-49	20	17.3 in.	.50%	16:58
50-59	14	16.8 in.	.44%	17:54

Oral Interview

Polygraph & Background Investigation

Medical & Psychological Examinations

Selection Committee

Upon the completion of all the above-listed steps, the candidate's employment package will be submitted to the Chief Deputy. The Chief Deputy will ensure a comprehensive review is conducted on all elements of the process. The Chief Deputy will then recommend to the Sheriff the candidate(s) most qualified for the position of Deputy Sheriff Recruit. The Sheriff will then make the final review and selection.

Police Academy

The selected candidate(s) will be required to successfully complete an approved Maryland Police Training Commission (MPTC) accredited Police Academy during their first year of employment.

APPENDIX B

REQUIREMENTS FOR LATERAL DEPUTY SHERIFF

Howard County Deputy Sheriffs are fully sworn police officers and perform a broad range of law enforcement functions. Duties include the enforcement of Maryland's Criminal, Civil, and Traffic Laws, Service of Civil/Criminal Process, Judicial Security, Prisoner Transports, Fugitive/Warrant Investigation and Out of State Extraditions, Domestic Violence Enforcement, and Landlord/Tenant Evictions. Deputy Sheriffs are classified as **essential employees** and subject to inclement weather and alternate shifts.

It is the policy of the Howard County Sheriff's Office not to discriminate against anyone and to afford equal employment opportunity to all applicants. To be considered for employment the applicant must be a United States Citizen, have a high school diploma or equivalent, be currently certified as a police officer through the Maryland Police Training Commission with at least one (1) year experience in law enforcement.

The hiring process for Lateral Deputy Sheriff is designed to help select those applicants who are most qualified. The candidate must successfully complete the following steps in order to be considered.

Oral Interview

Background Investigation

Medical & Psychological Examinations

Selection Committee

Upon the completion of the above listed steps, the candidate's employment package will be submitted to the Chief Deputy. The Chief Deputy will ensure a comprehensive review is conducted on all elements of the process. The Chief Deputy will then recommend to the Sheriff the candidate(s) most qualified for the position of Deputy Sheriff. The Sheriff will then make the final review and selection.