

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICY AND PROCEDURES

No. 1000

Supersedes: PD1-109.01

Effective: July 6, 2018

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Date: September 10, 2003

SELECTION AND HIRING PROCEDURES

- I. **PURPOSE:** To standardize the procedures for the selection and hiring of police officers by the Upper Merion Township Police Department.
- II. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Police Department to utilize selection and hiring procedures that meet all legal requirements, and are accessible and fair to all applicants. The Upper Merion Township Police Department will only hire full-time police officers.
- III. **CROSS-REF:** Upper Merion Township Policy #1350, DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY
- IV. **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:**
1. *Citizenship:* Citizen of the United States.
 2. *Age:* Applicant must reach 21 years of age by the day of the written test.
 3. *Height & Weight:* The applicant's height and weight must permit the applicant to perform the essential functions of an Upper Merion Township Police Officer.
 4. *Vision:* 20/70 uncorrected in better eye, correctable to 20/20
20/200 uncorrected in poorer eye, correctable to 20/40
Normal color and depth perception
 5. *Physical:* Applicants must pass a rigid physical examination, and physical agility test.
 6. *Education:* Applicants must possess a high school diploma, or a G.E.D. Certificate; **plus** an Associate's Degree, or 60 semester credit hours in an accredited institution of higher education at the time of appointment. Applicants without an Associate's

Degree may use one of the following waivers to reduce the 60 semester credit hour requirement. Only **one waiver** per candidate, as follows, is allowed:

- a. Sixty (60) semester credit hours waived for those applicants with two full years as a full-time police officer as certified by the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission (MPOETC).
 - b. Thirty (30) semester credit hours waived for those applicants with two full years of any law enforcement experience that encompasses the powers of arrest under State or federal law; e.g., Corrections Officer, Liquor Enforcement Officer, Board of Probation and Parole, Fish and Game Commission Officers. Determination of relevant law enforcement experience to be made by the Upper Merion Township Police Department on a case-by-case basis.
 - c. Thirty (30) semester credit hours waived for those applicants with at least two years of full active military duty with an Honorable Discharge.
 - d. A maximum of fifteen (15) semester credit hours waived for those applicants who have successfully completed Act 120 training, as certified by the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission.
7. *Driver's License:* Must be licensed to operate a motor vehicle in Pennsylvania; or obtain a Pennsylvania operator's license prior to employment.
8. *Background:* Applicant must have an excellent reputation. An extensive background investigation will be conducted on all applicants considered for employment,

V. **NEPOTISM POLICY:**

1. Upper Merion Township has a Nepotism policy that prohibits immediate family members from working within the same department. The definition of immediate family members include spouse, parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, all in-law relations as well as any individual residing with the employee.

VI. **SELECTION PROCESS:**

1. The Police Department's selection and hiring process shall be determined by the Township Manager and the Chief of Police, but shall be in accordance with the following selection criteria:
 - a. Preliminary police officer application.
 - b. Entry level test.
 - c. Physical fitness test.
 - d. Comprehensive police officer application.
 - e. Preliminary screening interview.
 - f. Background investigation including polygraph and/or CVSA.
 - g. Command Staff interview.

- h. Conditional offer of employment.
 - i. Physical and psychological examinations.
2. The following is an explanation of the steps in the selection and hiring sequence:
- a. Application: All applicants shall submit a preliminary police officer application. The applicant must complete the form and return it by the announced date to the Police Department.
 - b. Entry Level Test: All qualified applicants are notified of the date, time, and location of the entry level test. Applicants who require reasonable accommodations in order to take the entry level test are invited to notify the Township of the need for the accommodations as soon as possible.
 - (1) Initially, Upper Merion Township takes the top 75 scores equal to or greater than the median score or 75 percent, whichever is greater. If less than 75 scored equal to or greater than the median or 75 percent, then only those applicants would proceed in the selection process. If this initial group of applicants does not yield a sufficient number of successful candidates to meet the departments staffing requirements, a second group from the written test may be selected to proceed in the hiring process, provided that they attained a score equal to or greater than the median score or 75 percent.
 - (2) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this procedure, any current non-probationary Township employee in good standing who achieves a passing score on the entry level test shall be admitted to the Physical Fitness step of the application process. For the purpose of this Selection and Hiring Procedure, the potential appointment of any said Township employee as a police officer will be considered a promotional opportunity for that employee and not an initial hiring.
 - c. Physical Fitness Test: This test is administered by members of the Police Department at the announced date, time and location. The individual events are “pass” or “fail”. Applicants are required to achieve scores in the 50th percentile or above in all four assessment areas of the Graduation Physical Fitness Test Requirements established by the PA Municipal Police Officers Education and Training Commission.
 - d. Comprehensive Police Officer Application: The comprehensive application for police employment and the authority to release information forms are given to the applicant after successful completion of the Physical Fitness Test. The application forms must be returned to the Police Department by the required date. Falsification or omission of any of the requested information can mean disqualification.
 - e. Preliminary Screening Interview: Applicants who successfully complete the Physical Fitness Test proceed to an Interview Board composed of eight (8) individuals: two professionally competent civilians; two command officers; two

supervisors or line officers; and two Township employees. The non-police Board members are appointed by the Chief of Police. The questions to be asked of each applicant will be determined at a meeting of the Board members before the interviews begin. The questions shall be the same to every applicant with the same Board member asking the same question of each applicant.

- (1) Any member of the Board can ask follow-up questions based on the applicant's responses. The applicants will also be graded on their bearing, mannerisms, voice quality, language skills and other verbal and non-verbal communication traits. The questioning will be designed to last approximately 15-20 minutes, and applicant permitted to summarize at the end. The scores of each interviewer will be tallied on a combined grade sheet. After all the interviews are completed, the combined scores are summarized and ranked. The top 25 candidates will proceed from this point in the selection process. The list may be reduced in size after each subsequent stage of the selection process based on departmental hiring needs and candidate qualifications.
- f. Background Investigation: Those applicants selected to continue in the hiring process will be subjected to a background investigation. The background investigation probes many areas of the applicant's life and includes, but is not limited to: associations, organizations, character, reputation, previous employment, military record, credit rating, criminal record, educational record, accident and driving record. The officer assigned to complete the background investigation shall, at a minimum, complete the following:
 - (1) Verification of qualifying credentials.
 - (2) A review of the applicant's criminal record, driving record and credit history
 - (3) Verification of at least three personal references.
 - (4) Arrange for the applicant to undergo a polygraph and/or CVSA examination.
 - h. Command Staff interview: Based on department hiring needs, applicants who are not eliminated through the background investigation will be interviewed by a panel of Command Officers who shall jointly determine whether an applicant is qualified to serve as an Upper Merion Township Police Officer.
 - i. Selection of employment: As a result of the Command Staff interview, the Chief of Police shall recommend to the Township Manager three (3) applicants who have successfully completed the aforementioned steps of the Selection Process for each vacant patrol officer position in the department. For each additional position, one additional qualified applicant will be recommended.
 - j. Veteran's Preference Act: If a veteran in possession of the requisite qualifications for veteran's preference for appointment to a public position is among the three (3) qualified candidates recommended, the veteran shall be selected to fill the position. In the event that there is more than one veteran among the three qualified candidates recommended, the most qualified veteran shall be selected.
 - k. Physical and Psychological Tests: After the offer of conditional employment is made, the applicant will be notified to report to a licensed physician selected by

Upper Merion Township for a physical examination. A drug screening shall be conducted in accordance with Upper Merion Township Policy #A1-125-01, DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY. The applicant will also be notified to report to a licensed psychologist selected by Upper Merion Township for a psychological examination. The applicant must pass both tests to be considered for probationary employment.

3. Successful applicants will either be offered conditional employment as a provisional officer or placed on an eligibility list. A one-year probationary period shall begin on the date of certification by MPOETC.

APPROVED: Thomas M. Nolan
Chief Thomas M. Nolan

DATE: 06/21/2018

APPROVED: Jeremy Johnson
Captain Jeremy Johnson

DATE: 06/21/2018

TO BE REVIEWED: ANNUALLY

DISTRIBUTION: All police officers
All civilian employees
Township Manager
File