

Confronting Bias in Police Selection and Hiring

February 10, 2021

Department of Human Resources

SF Police Department



Charter Authority

- The City and County of San Francisco operates within a “merit-based” system overseen by the Civil Service Commission [CSC].
- CSC volume II covers the uniformed ranks of the San Francisco Police Department and provides guidance to selection process procedures, the rules also afford appeal rights to applicants and candidates.
- DHR City-wide authority over development and administration of selection procedures and creation and management of eligible lists.

Hiring

Application Process

SFPD Recruitment Unit conducts **specific outreach strategies** to make potential candidates aware of Police Officer opportunities

Examples include attending recruitment fairs and forums, and running multimedia advertising campaigns

DHR

- Online job application
- Written test (NTN)
- Oral Interview
- Physical Ability Test



SFPD

- Background Investigation
- Medical Evaluation
- Psychological Evaluation
- Polygraph Exam

Application Process

WRITTEN EXAMINATION & ORAL INTERVIEW

DHR contracts with the National Testing Network (NTN) for entry-level test administration and scoring.

- The NTN tests measure behavioral indicators of good and poor performance as a police officer.
- These include contraindicated behaviors such as a propensity to misuse authority and bias.
- The new Public Safety Job Suitability Assessment focuses on specific biases present, as well as the potential for biases to evolve over time as an officer.

Application Process

PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST (PAT)

The PAT is administered by DHR.

- Applicants are required to pass the PAT. This test is used to assess the candidate's physical abilities which are needed to perform essential Police Officer tasks to successfully complete the Academy training.
- Candidates who successfully complete the PAT:
 - Meet with on-site Background Unit members.
 - Are provided a link to complete the POST Personal History Statement and are provided information on the background process.

Backgrounds Investigations

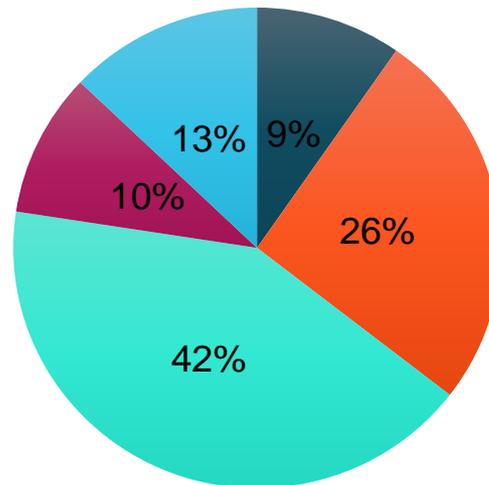
BACKGROUND UNIT

- Investigators are required to complete a 32-hour POST certified course in Background Investigations
- The unit is comprised of 4 full-time sworn members and part-time retired (Prop F) members.

Backgrounds Unit 2021 first quarter diversity

Male 21
Female 10

Total: 31



Asian	3
Black	8
White	13
Filipino	3
Hispanic	4
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 31

■ Asian ■ Black ■ White ■ Filipino ■ Hispanic

Backgrounds Investigations

PERSONAL HISTORY STATEMENT (PHS)

- CA Government Code Sec. 1031(d) requires every peace officer candidate to complete a thorough background investigation to verify good moral character and the absence of past behavior indicative of unsuitability to perform the duties of a peace office.
- CA Post Regulation 1953 requires the completion of a PHS, which is a comprehensive review of family, educational, financial, employment, military, drug-use, driving, and criminal history.

Background Investigation

COMPLETING THE BACKGROUND

- Candidates are evaluated on 10 background dimensions as outlined POST:
 - Integrity
 - Impulse Control/Attention to Safety
 - Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior
 - Stress Tolerance
 - Confronting and Overcoming Problems, Obstacles, and Adversity
 - Conscientiousness
 - Interpersonal Skills
 - Decision-Making and Judgment
 - Learning Ability
 - Communication Skills

Background Investigation

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING & POLYGRAPH

- Upon successful completion of the review of the PHS, candidates are required to complete Psychological Testing by a POST-certified psychologist.
- Assembly Bill 846 was signed into law 9/30/20 and effective 1/2022
 - AB 846 requires POST to develop a process to identify explicit and implicit bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation in applicants during the pre-employment emotional and mental condition evaluations.
 - POST is working with psychologists and law enforcement experts to incorporate these new requirements to the current psychological screening manual, the deadline for completion is January 2022.
- Upon successful completion of the Psychological Test, candidates must pass a Polygraph exam. The Polygraph exam verifies a candidate's truthfulness regarding answers that the candidate has given throughout the background process.

Promotions

Job Analysis

DHR conducts a job analysis to identify/confirm the essential day-one tasks, knowledge areas, and abilities.

- Job analysis information is intentionally gathered from a large, representative sample of permanent incumbents as subject matter experts [SMEs].
- SMEs are representative of the class as far as race, sex, assignment, etc.

New Disqualifier in Q-50 Sergeant announcement.

- Sustained allegation of any misconduct for race-based conduct may disqualify a member from the selection process and eligibility list:
- *Subject to the current terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, any applicant with a sustained allegation of misconduct for race-based conduct, for example, use of racial slurs, racial bias, racial disparate behavior or treatment of others or selective enforcement based on race, may be prohibited from moving forward in the selection process.*

Test Development

A Test Development Committee [TDC] convenes to build test components.

- TDC comprised of a diverse group of permanent incumbents and/or supervisors.
- Test components designed to measure knowledge of and ability to apply policies and procedures to simulations of “current” behavioral-critical scenarios.
 - Current issues
 - New policies and procedures
 - Historically problematic areas
- Appropriate behaviors tied directly to SFPD policy and procedure and the expertise of the TDC.

Test Development- SFPD

- The Police Department identifies “Subject Matter Experts” for each test the DHR presents in the promotion process.
- *A complete review of the identified SME’s work history is conducted to include Internal Affairs complaints, EEO, and DPA and any disciplinary history of bias or disparate treatment. This review is conducted prior to the Department member being certified as a Subject Matter Expert.*
- DHR testing is created to promote a bias free atmosphere throughout the testing process.
- The Chief of Police has recently incorporated an interview segment in the promotion process.

Test Response Evaluation

DHR oversees all Public Safety test administration.

- DHR recruits a diverse group of raters who have experience at or above the rank being tested.
- Raters are trained to accurately and consistently apply the list of SFPD-specific behaviors to candidate responses.
- Training includes recognition and mitigation of “rater error”.

Learning and Development

- Prior to Covid-19, SFPD scheduled 4 in-person Implicit Bias training sessions per month which were facilitated by DHR trainers.
- Training started in 2016 with a redesigned program launched in 2019.
- The training has been presented to all members of the Department (Sworn and Professional Staff).

Thank you