

# WINTER HAVEN POLICE DEPARTMENT

## GENERAL ORDER 32.1

### SELECTION

**ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: CALEA – 22.2.2, 31.4.1, 31.5.1, 31.5.7; CFA – 9.01, 9.06, 10.15**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 1996**

**RESCINDS: G.O. 32.1 April 14, 2021 and all applicable Amended/Temporary Orders prior to June 12, 2025**

**LAST REVISED DATE: June 12, 2025**

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### **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Winter Haven Police Department that the selection process be designed to evaluate applicants in terms of job related standards and ensure the selection of those applicants who meet the standards. This policy sets forth the processing and identifies the functional aspects of the employment process.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines for the selection of new Department members.

### **SCOPE**

This General Order shall apply to all Department members.

### **DISCUSSION**

To attract and appoint qualified personnel, a valid and measureable selection process that has minimum adverse impact is vitally important. Persons seeking employment shall be treated equally with respect to all hiring practices; including screening, advertising, recruitment, selection, appointment, promotion, demotion, assignment, hiring, leave practices, rate of pay, fringe benefits and other forms of pay or credit for services rendered.

## **PURPOSE**

### **I. Adverse Impact**

- A.** The Winter Haven Police Department shall endeavor to minimize any adverse impact within the selection process. The selection process shall use only those components that have been documented as having job relatedness, usefulness, minimum adverse impact and non-discriminatory.
- B.** Adverse impact in the selection process shall be measured by comparing the selection rates for each race, gender and ethnic group with the group having the highest selection rate. All records and data used to monitor adverse impact within the selection process shall be kept on file in the Police Department.
- C.** All components of the selection process shall be administered, scored, evaluated and interpreted in a uniform manner. Whenever possible, Department members' representative of race, gender and ethnic groups in the Department shall be included in the selection process. (CFA 9.01a,b)
- D.** Validity of the selection process, as a whole, or individual components of the selection process, is determined in one or more of the following ways:
  - 1.** Criterion validation identifies criteria that reflect successful performance of the job, correlating test scores with performance ratings. A high correlation of these criteria demonstrates that the test is a useful predictor of the candidate's job performance;
  - 2.** Construct validation involves the identification and measurement of characteristics or traits believed to be important to successful job performance; and/or
  - 3.** Content validation measures a significant part of the job (e.g., a typing test for a typist).

### **II. Application Process – Procedures (CALEA 31.4.1) (CFA 9.06)**

- A.** The City of Winter Haven Human Resources Division maintains overall responsibility for the selection process for all City employees through Section III of the City of Winter Haven Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual.
- B.** The Chief of Police maintains the responsibility within the Police Department, for administering the Department's role, to include, but not limited to the following (CFA 10.15)
  - 1.** Oral Review Board;
  - 2.** Conducting the background investigation; and
  - 3.** Events as outlined in this General Order.

- C. The Department utilizes two other reference sources that outline the following:
  - 1. Documentation;
  - 2. Testing;
  - 3. Training; and
  - 4. Selection requirements for sworn law enforcement positions.
- D. The Department meets and exceeds the minimum requirements of these sources:
  - 1. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Policy and Procedures Manual; and
  - 2. Florida State Statute 943.13.
- E. All applications for employment with the Winter Haven Police Department shall be considered for the current selection process only. All posted vacancies are advertised by the City of Winter Haven Human Resources Division. All applications are initially accepted in the Human Resources Division so that they can be reviewed to determine if the applicant meets announced minimum requirements. From those that meet these requirements, an applicant referral listing is produced. This listing is then forwarded to the Police Department for employment considerations.
- F. Each candidate who applies for a position with the Winter Haven Police Department shall receive the following information in writing from the Chief or Police or their designee.
  - 1. General information applicable to the position being sought and a description of all elements of the selection process;
  - 2. Expected duration of the selection process; and
  - 3. The agency's policy on reapplication.
  - 4. Applicants not eligible for employment or those not hired because of a single test, examination, interview, or investigation are to be informed in writing within 30 days.
- H. A physical agility examination shall be conducted for Community Service Officer and Police Officer positions. This agility test is designed to determine each candidate's strength, endurance, coordination, and ease of movement. (CALEA 22.2.2)

### **III. Application Process Administration**

- A. The Chief of Police or their designee shall have the authority and responsibility for administering the selection process.
- B. All materials used in the selection process shall be stored in a secure manner. All records, of those applicants not appointed to probationary status, shall be kept on file as required by the Florida General Records Schedule GS1-SL. When selection materials are disposed of, they shall be disposed of in a manner prescribed by Florida General

Records Schedule GS1-SL to prevent any disclosure of information pertaining to the selection process.

**IV. Background Investigations (CALEA 31.5.1) (CFA 9.06, 10.15)**

- A.** A background investigation of each candidate shall be conducted prior to employment. Any member used to conduct background investigations shall be trained in the proper methods to be used in collecting the required information. All investigations shall include but, are not limited to:
1. The verification of a candidate's qualifying credentials; (CALEA 31.5.1)
  2. A review of a candidate's former employers; (CALEA 31.5.1e) (CFA 9.05d)
  3. A criminal record check through NCIC/FCIC and fingerprint processing; (CALEA 31.5.1b) (CFA 9.05a,b,e)
  4. A check with law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction in areas where the applicant has resided, worked and/or attended school, to determine if the applicant has an arrest record; (CALEA 31.5.1b) (CFA 9.05c)
  5. The verification of personal and professional references; (CALEA 31.5.1c)
  6. A driver's license history check through DHSMV;
  7. A check of the applicant's neighborhood to determine suitability for employment; and
  8. A check with FDLE/CJSTC on an applicant for the reason of separation from any previous State of Florida law enforcement or corrections agency as a sworn law enforcement or corrections officer. (CALEA 31.5.1f)
  9. Verification of education (high school, college, etc.) (CALEA 31.5.1d)
- B.** A record of each candidate's application package, including the background investigation, shall be maintained on file in accordance with Florida General Records Schedule GS1-L.

**V. Disqualifiers of Employment and Reapplication**

- A.** Candidates for employment to the Winter Haven Police shall be disqualified for possible employment under any of the following conditions. The disqualification may occur at any point in the hiring process whether the item is disclosed in the employment application or disclosed/discovered during the background investigation process.
1. DD214: Any discharge from the armed forces that is not under honorable conditions
  2. Intentional falsification or omission of any information in the employment application or process
  3. Conviction of any felony

4. Conviction of any misdemeanor involving perjury, false statements, or domestic violence
  5. DUI conviction
  6. Conviction of any criminal traffic violation within 60 months prior to the application date or more than one total
  7. Accumulation of seven or more driver's license points at the time of the application
  8. Use or possession of any Schedule I or II controlled substance, except marijuana within 60 months prior to the date of the application (examples: heroin, ecstasy, cocaine, morphine, amphetamine, methamphetamine, etc.)
    - a. Use of LSD, PCP, or Psilocybin (Mushrooms) will be a lifetime disqualifier due to the potential of flashback occurrences related to its use.
  9. Use or possession of any Schedule III, IV or V controlled substance within 24 months prior to the date of the application (examples: medicines with codeine, steroids, Xanax, etc.)
  10. Use of a prescribed controlled substance without a prescription within 24 months prior to the date of the application.
  11. Use or possession of marijuana within 24 months prior to the date of the application.
  12. Sold or delivered any illegal controlled substance.
  13. Review of the totality of items in the background by command staff at any point in the process.
- B.** In accordance with the City of Winter Haven Personnel Policy Procedure Manual Section 3.04, all potential candidates may apply for posted positions at any time. However, candidates who have previously disqualified from consideration shall not be accepted into the hiring process by the department under the following time restrictions. Candidates may be notified of the time restriction when disqualified from the hiring process.
1. The department shall not reprocess at any time any candidate determined to have moral character issues in accordance with Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 11B-27.0011 Moral Character.
  2. Any candidate who has used or possessed narcotics in accordance with section V of this general order. The time frame will be in accordance with the listed time restriction and based upon the last occurrence of use or possession by the candidate.
  3. Any candidate who does not pass the panel drug screen administered as part of the new hire physical. The time frame will be in accordance with the listed time restriction in Section V of this general order and based on the date when the candidate was screened.

4. Within 12 months for any candidate who does not pass the medical physical.
  5. Within 12 months after disqualification for a failure of the polygraph examination.
  6. Within 12 months after disqualification for a failure of the psychological examination.
  7. Within 12 months for any candidate that is disqualified for being a “no call/no show” for any part of the hiring process.
  8. Candidates who voluntarily withdraw from the process shall have no time restriction, but must reapply with City of Winter Haven Human Resources for tracking purposes.
- C.** Testing items that were successfully completed by a candidate during a previous application process may be used towards a second hiring process, when the candidate is accepted on an Applicant Referral Listing within the following time frames from the date of disqualification or withdrawal:
1. Within 12 months for the written examination and psychological examination.
  2. Within 6 months for the polygraph examination and oral review board interview.
  3. Within 3 months for the physical abilities test.

## **VI. Oral Review Boards**

- A.** The oral review board for sworn law enforcement positions shall be comprised of four members three sworn officers from the department and one citizen of Winter Haven shall be selected/designated to participate on this board.
- B.** The oral review board for non-sworn positions shall consist of at least four members, with one being a citizen of Winter Haven.
- C.** The review board shall interview the applicants to determine their acceptability for employment. The review board shall use only those questions that are job related and are non-discriminatory. (CFA 9.01a,b)
- D.** Each board member shall rate each applicant on a 100 point scale, each of the seven job related questions shall have a ten point maximum score and the five trait categories shall have a six point maximum score. The trait categories include:
  1. Demeanor;
  2. Attire;
  3. Attitude
  4. Honesty; and
  5. Character.

- E. The scores awarded an individual applicant by each board member on the graded categories shall be added and averaged together to compute the overall oral interview score.

**VII. Final Selection Process**

- A. The names of qualified applicants, recommended for employment and their completed background investigation files, shall be submitted for review to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police shall then interview these applicants and make the final employment decision with concurrence of the City Manager or their designee.
- B. All applicants shall upon a conditional offer of employment and prior to appointment to probationary entry-level training, undergo the following examinations using valid, useful and non-discriminatory procedures. The examinations are as follows:
  - 1. The administration of a polygraph examination by a trained and qualified polygraph examiner.
    - a. Prior to the start of the examination, the polygraph operator will review the list of questions to be used with the candidate.
    - b. Admissions concerning moral turpitude and illegal activities shall be reviewed as to their acceptability for employment and applicants may be advised of the results upon completion. Although the results of the polygraph will not be the single determining factor, questions that are corroborated by other investigative means may eliminate the applicant from further consideration.
  - 2. A complete medical and physical examination for sworn law enforcement candidates by a licensed physician to include but, not limited to: (CALEA 31.5.6)
    - a. E.K.G.,
    - b. T.B. test (PPD),
    - c. Chest X-ray,
    - d. Back X-ray,
    - e. Blood serology,
    - f. Range of motion,
    - g. Controlled substance testing.
  - 3. Each candidate for sworn positions shall undergo an emotional stability and psychological fitness examination which is conducted prior to employment using valid, useful and non-discriminatory procedures. Only licensed professionals shall be used to assess the emotional stability and psychological fitness of candidates. (CALEA 31.5.7)
  - 4. The results of the medical, emotional stability and psychological examinations shall become a part of the candidate's permanent file and retained from the date of application, as required by State of Florida General Records Schedule.
  - 5. Civilian candidates shall receive a medical exam consisting of:
    - a. Basic physical;
    - b. T.B. test (PPD); and

- c. Controlled substance testing.

## VIII. Employment

- A. Each newly hired candidate is required to satisfactorily complete entry-level training relevant to their position.
  - 1. The work performance of each newly hired police officer shall be measured and evaluated through the Field Training and Evaluation Program. Field Training Officers (FTO) shall use the current procedures for evaluating these new hires.
  - 2. Civilian members shall be evaluated by their trainer.
- B. The Chief of Police may extend a member's entry-level training period, if the member's evaluation indicates that remedial training is needed or their performance is not satisfactory. If the member's performance is still unsatisfactory, the member may be terminated.
- C. Newly hired sworn police officers shall serve a one-year probationary period prior to being granted tenured status. This one-year period shall commence from the date of hire. The length of the probationary period may be extended by the Chief of Police for due cause.
- D. Newly hired Civilian members shall serve a six-month probationary period. This six-month period shall commence from the date of hire. The length of the probationary period may be extended by the Chief of Police for due cause.

## IX. Definitions

- A. *Adverse Impact* – A substantially different rate of selection which has an unfavorable effect on members of a race, gender, or ethnic group.



APPROVED

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**Vance Monroe Jr.**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**