

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR POLICE OFFICER

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

The application process for Police Officer consists of the following:

1. Completing an Application for Employment

Applying for the position of Police Officer is done exclusively online at policeapp.com. This is the most efficient and preferred method. If you don't have access to a computer with internet, our Recruiting Office will assist you. Remember, all employment information and personal references must be provided with complete mailing addresses and telephone numbers. High school and college transcripts must be sent directly to our department via U.S. mail or email. Out of state driver's histories (other than Georgia) must be requested and sent to our department or to the applicant via U.S Mail.

2. Initial Interview

Once the application has been received and accepted through policeapp.com, the recruiting and background unit will reach out to the applicant for an initial interview over the phone. This interview is a crucial step in our application process as it helps us understand your qualifications and suitability for the position. If the applicant does not answer, a notification will be sent via policeapp.com for the applicant to return our call. The applicant will then have five business days to return our call or risk being removed from the hiring process. If an applicant applies from Out of Town, this process will be somewhat different. This interview will determine whether the applicant meets all the prerequisites for the position. Any applicant meeting any of the listed automatic disqualifiers will be disqualified from advancing in the application process.

If an application is accepted, the applicant will proceed to the next phase, the Physical Agility Test (P.A.T.). The recruiting staff will provide further instructions to the applicant. The Initial Interview usually takes fifteen to thirty minutes.

3. Candidate Orientation and Processing (C.O.P. Day)

After the applicant completes the initial interview, the candidate will be scheduled for Candidate Orientation and Processing Day. C.O.P. day is designed to make it easier for applicants to complete multiple steps in the hiring process in one day instead of multiple days. Candidates participating in C.O.P. day will complete an orientation session, a building tour, the Physical Agility Test (P.A.T.), and the State Entrance Exam. During this time, candidates will also complete and submit all required forms, such as the "Authority to Release Information" form and "Physical Fitness Waiver." All applicants must complete all aspects of C.O.P. day to advance to the next step in the hiring process, the background investigation phase.

4. Physical Agility Test (P.A.T.)

The date and time for the P.A.T. test will be given to the applicant during the Initial Interview. P.A.T. tests are administered weekly via a process called C.O.P. day. The scheduled date and time for C.O.P. day are at the staff's discretion and can vary depending on seasonal changes. The applicant will also receive instructions electronically through policeapp.com. The Recruiting office recommends that all applicants check their policeapp.com account regularly for updates.

To complete this phase of the hiring process, the applicant must complete the P.A.T. test in 2:00 or less. Applicants who do not meet this standard will not be allowed to proceed to the next phase of the hiring process. Applicants shall be allowed three attempts to pass the test per each application process. If an applicant fails their first attempt, they will be allowed to reschedule for the next test date. If an applicant fails a second attempt, they must wait a month to reschedule their last and final attempt. This allows the applicant extra time to prepare for their final attempt. Should an applicant fail their third attempt, they will be removed from further consideration and have to wait six months before reapplying. Should an applicant be a no-call or no-show for the test two times, the applicant will be removed from the process and must wait six months before reapplying. Should an applicant be late for the test, they will be deemed a no-call or no-show and have to reschedule their test for the next available date.

If an applicant fails the P.A.T. or fails to show up for a scheduled P.A.T. test without prior notification, the applicant must reschedule for a future P.A.T. test within five days of the failed test date or the no-show date.

Re-scheduling requires (1) contacting the recruiting and background unit and (2) agreement on a date for the re-scheduled Physical Agility Test. Once the P.A.T. test is passed, the applicant will move to the next phase, the State Exam Phase.

4. State Entrance Exam

The official State Entrance Exam is the **ACCUPLACER NEXT GENERATION** test, which is required for admission into the state police academy. The State Entrance Exam is given through the C.O.P. day process. The Columbus Police Department administers and proctors the exam on-site.

This test will cost the applicant \$35.00. Applicants will need a valid debit or credit card to pay the required fee. The minimum scores for Accuplacer Next Generation are **Writing- 236 and Reading- 224**. Only the reading and writing portion will be administered.

Other standardized tests, such as the ACCUPLACER (traditional), COMPASS, SAT, ACT, ASSET, etc., can be accepted in place of the Accuplacer Next Generation exam. Please contact a recruiter for more information on what specific test scores qualify for

exemption. If an applicant has an associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree from an accredited college or university, the applicant will be exempt from this requirement.

Once an applicant passes the Physical Agility Test and the State Entrance Exam, the applicant will be assigned to the background investigation phase. All candidates will be sent a notification via Policeapp.com informing them of this change. The notification will include the background investigator's name and contact information.

5. Background Investigation

A thorough background investigation will be completed for all police officer applicants. All candidates must complete an electronic personal history statement via the eSOPH platform. The applicant's assigned background investigator will brief the candidate on how to complete and submit their eSOPH packet. To ensure a thorough vetting process for all police applicants, all employment histories and personal references will be verified. The applicants' credit profiles will also be checked via Experian. Any additional information discovered during the background investigation process will be investigated. Criminal history checks will be performed to check the applicants' background. The applicant will be notified if any infractions are found or clarification is needed. Applications may be delayed based on the response of references or incomplete information.

An applicant's Background Investigation is usually completed within 20 days, depending on the timely return of background information; however, this process can take longer if delays occur due to the applicant or documents not being received in a timely manner. In general, the duration of the hiring process is between twenty (20) to thirty (30) days.

6. Deception Examination

The Columbus Police Department requires all applicants to take a polygraph or similar exam during the hiring process to detect deception. This exam will be given during or after the Background Investigation phase. All exams are administered at police headquarters. The deception examination is not the sole reason for hiring or disqualifying an applicant. All applicants must sign the deception examination agreement in eSOPH.

7. Psychological Exam

A licensed clinical psychologist will administer this test. This test is performed to assure the department of an applicant's ability to perform under stressful and difficult situations that often occur during the performance of law enforcement duties. The psychological exam consists of a written examination and a phone interview. The applicant's assigned background investigator will schedule this exam based on the applicant's availability.

8. Final Interview

If an applicant has completed the above steps, the applicant will be scheduled for a final interview. A panel of select members from the Columbus Police Department will conduct the interview. All interview questions will be drawn from a standardized interview form; however, some panel members may ask additional questions based on the candidate's responses.

9. Re-Application Process

Disqualified applicants may re-apply after one, three, or five years. Some candidates may be deemed permanently ineligible. The Deputy Chief of Administrative Services or his designee shall decide how long an applicant will remain ineligible to re-apply. The re-application date will be based on the date listed on the denial letter.

10. Doctor's Appointment / Payroll Appointment

Once hired, applicants selected for employment must undergo an examination by a licensed physician. The applicant will receive further instructions during this phase. Before completing the physical examination, the applicant will complete the required paperwork for placement on the police department's payroll. The applicant must bring a valid social security card, driver's license, and a voided check for direct deposit.

11. Police Academy

The applicant will be given a date and time to attend the Regional Police Academy. Before the Regional Police Academy begins, all employees must pass the Physical Agility Test administered by the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in two minutes and six seconds or less. All employees must pass this requirement to be accepted into the next academy class. Failure to pass the Physical Agility Test could result in the employee being dismissed from employment or held over until the next academy begins. The applicant must meet all requirements to complete the police academy successfully. Once the twelve-week police academy is completed, the applicant will be a Certified Peace Officer in the State of Georgia.

The applicant will then return to the police department to complete a Recruit Academy, which will last several weeks. Finally, the Field/Patrol Training Officer program will be completed. Once the officer completes field training, the officer will be released as a solo officer assigned to the Bureau of Patrol Services.

PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

All applicants for the position of Police Officer will be required to participate in a Physical Agility Test (P.A.T.). As a prerequisite to taking the test, all applicants must sign, witness, and notarize the PT Waiver, assuming all risk for any injuries sustained during the physical qualifications Test. The Physical Agility Test (P.A.T.) is designed to assess a candidate's suitability for employment related to physical fitness. All obstacles within the Physical Agility Test have been vetted and tested to ensure they reflect the physical demands expected of a police officer while performing their duties. The P.A.T. test administered by the Columbus Police Department is a modified course. Below, you will find general information about the course and its obstacles.

- The course measures approximately 870 feet.
- There is a time limit of two minutes and sixteen seconds.
- The course consists of nine interspersed individual tasks arranged in a continuous format that may be viewed as essential (physical) job tasks for law enforcement training: running, jumping (low hurdle), climbing stairs, low crawling, jumping (broad-type), climbing chain-linked fence (four feet), climbing through a window, moving/dragging weight (150 lbs.), and changing direction on the run.

RUNNING THE COURSE

- The candidate starts the course at a point indicated on the course map,
- The candidate runs one and 3/4 laps around the perimeter of the course and enters the interior of the course at the point indicated on the course map,
- The first obstacle encountered in the interior consists of two low hurdles, one and a half feet high and four feet long, placed 13 feet apart,
- After clearing the hurdles, the stairs (five steps up to a 32-inch-wide landing, 45 inches above the floor, and five steps down) must be negotiated twice (note that each step has a 7.5-inch rise and tread that is 11 inches wide). The candidate may skip steps going up but must touch each stair coming down.
- Once the stair event is completed, another low hurdle must be cleared; the candidate must then successfully negotiate a low crawl under an obstacle set at two and a half feet above the floor,
- Make a turn and clear a ditch simulation that is six feet in width,
- After another turn, a chain-link fence (four feet in height) must be climbed,
- Two additional turns must be made, and a four feet high window must be successfully entered,
- The candidate must then drag a 150-pound dead weight a distance of 20 feet,
- Finishing with one more running lap around the perimeter of the course.

PENALTIES ASSESSED

Failure to navigate specific obstacles within the course will result in the following penalties being assessed.

- +2 seconds for knocked-down hurdles,
- +2 seconds for foot faults on “ditch simulation,”
- three physical attempts “through the window” and “over the fence” before the evaluator can offer a run-around.
- If a candidate skips stairs going down, they will be returned to the stair landing and repeat.