

DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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I. Policy

It is the policy of the Dalton Police Department to develop and maintain an efficient, effective, and fair selection process that results in the appointment of individuals who best possess the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary for an effective, respected law enforcement agency.

II. Definitions

- A. *Adverse impact* – A substantially different rate of selection, generally less than eighty (80) percent, that works to the disadvantage of members of any race, gender, or ethnic group; an unfavorable effect.
- B. *Candidates* – Persons seeking employment who have completed a formal application.
- C. *Cut-Off score / Passing point* – The numerical result of a valid and useful test or examination used to determine eligibility.
- D. *Emotional stability / Psychological fitness examination* – Professional screening designed to identify candidate behavior patterns and / or personality traits that may prove either detrimental or advantageous to successful job performance.
- E. *Entry level* – The stage at which a person is first employed in a position.
- F. *Fairness* – Resulting in a minimum adverse impact.
- G. *Formal application* – A written form used to express interest in employment.
- H. *Job-related* – A procedure, test, or requirement, either predictive of job performance or indicative of the work behavior expected or necessary in the position.
- I. *Job task* – A description of what an employee does, for what purpose, on instructions from whom, when, and where, and with what materials and equipment.

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- J. *Lateral entry* – A personnel practice that permits employees from within or outside the Department to be selected for a position and be exempted from all or part of the Department’s selection process for that position; if the employee or candidate meets the minimum qualifications of the employing agency, he / she is not necessarily subjected to the total selection process.
- K. *Minimum adverse impact* – The use of selection components or procedures among all those available that reduce any unfavorable effect, to the greatest extent possible, consistent with validity.
- L. *Nondiscriminatory procedures* – Components of the selection or appointment process that have no demonstrable adverse impact (or a minimum adverse impact) upon the selection or appointment rate of any race, gender, or ethnic group.
- M. *On-file* – On hand; catalogued or recorded in an official written record (including electronic format) that is available for visual inspection in the Department.
- N. *Permanent status* – The period of unconditional employment in a position following the completion of a probationary period.
- O. *Polygraph examination* – The use of a mechanical apparatus designed for the detection of deception by measuring and recording activity in a person’s respiration and heart activity.
- P. *Probationary period / status* – A latter phase of the selection process represented by some form of conditional employment.
- Q. *Selection criteria* – Rules, standards, procedures, or directives upon which a judgment or decision concerning employment can be based.
- R. *Selection manual* – A written document that describes and defines all methods and components of the selection process.
- S. *Selection materials* – All written tests, test scores, answer sheets, study materials, evaluations, ratings, questionnaires, reports, and forms used in the selection process that have a bearing upon the employment decision.
- T. *Selection procedure* – Any established method or combination of methods used in any way as the basis for an employment decision.
- U. *Selection process* – The combined effect of components and procedures leading to the final employment decision, including minimum qualifications (e.g., education, experience, physical attributes, citizenship, residency), written tests, performance tests, oral exams, interviews, background investigations, medical exams, polygraph tests, police academy ratings, probationary period ratings, personality inventories, interest inventories, psychiatric evaluations, veteran’s preference, cut-off scores, and ranking procedures.
- V. *Skill* – A present, observable competence acquired or developed through experience and / or training.

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- W. *Skills, knowledge, and abilities (SKA)* – Skills are the proficiency with which an individual performs. Knowledge is a body of information or understanding gained through learning, education, experience, or associations. Abilities are processes required to perform the various job responsibilities.

III. **Procedures**

- A. The Support Services Division is responsible for the recruiting and selecting of personnel through an efficient, effective, and fair selection process, as governed by state and federal laws and Department policy, which includes the following:
1. Develop, distribute, and coordinate advertising for openings through various media, including but not limited to newspaper, internet, radio, social media, and career fairs.
 2. Schedule and conduct the testing of all applicants.
 3. For sworn candidates, conduct pre-academy and pre-field training program orientation for new employees in preparation for attendance of the police academy and the Field Training Officer Program.
 4. For non-sworn candidates, conduct orientation for new employees in preparation for position training.
 5. Secure all selection materials.
- B. All elements of the selection process for all personnel shall be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner. The selection process used by the Department shall use only those rating criteria or minimum qualifications which are job-related and non-discriminatory. All evaluative aspects of the selection process shall be designed to measure only those behaviors, traits, and characteristics that are a significant part of the job and relevant to the position to be filled.

IV. **Authority**

- A. The authority and responsibility for administering personnel selection for the Dalton Police Department is vested in the Chief of Police. Initial appointments shall be made in accordance with the Dalton City Charter.
- B. The Support Services Division shall manage all aspects of the selection process that are under the authority and control of the Chief of Police and the Department.
- C. The Support Services Division shall coordinate with the City of Dalton Human Resources Department those matters relating to applicant selection and recommendations for hiring procedures.
- D. The Department shall retain authority and responsibility in the selection process for the following:
1. Background investigations

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2. Elimination of applicants
3. All written, oral, and other testing measures to determine applicants' eligibility and qualifications
4. Evaluation of all testing and testing procedures
5. Recommendation of selected sworn applicants to the Public Safety Commission for acceptance as employees of the City of Dalton

V. **Legal Requirements**

- A. A comprehensive manual that describes all components of the selection process shall be maintained by the Support Services Division.
- B. The selection process shall use only those components that have been documented as having validity, utility, and a minimum adverse impact.
 1. Validity shall require proof that a given element of the selection process either will predict job performance or detect important aspects of candidates' work behavior related to the position for which they are applying.
 - a. In the final analysis, the selection process should be strictly accountable to the following checklist:
 - (1) Professionally and legally accepted data collection techniques are used to identify job tasks.
 - (2) Measurable candidate characteristics, related to predicting job performance, are identified.
 - (3) Selection components, whose measures are job-related, have been used.
 - (4) Conclusions and inferences about candidates are logical and persuasive.
 - b. One or more of the following validation strategies shall be used, as appropriate, to support individual components of the selection process or the selection process as a whole:
 - (1) Criterion-related Validation: Criteria are identified that reflect successful performance of the job, and test scores are then correlated with the performance ratings for the predetermined criteria; a high correlation demonstrates that the test is a useful prediction of the candidate's job performance.
 - (2) Construct Validation: Involves the identification of the characteristics or traits (e.g., honesty) believed to be

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important to successful job performance. A test is then given that shall measure the degree to which the candidate possesses the required characteristics.

- (3) Content Validation: A component of the selection process is justified by showing that it measures a significant part of the job (e.g., a typing test for a Records Technician).
2. Utility shall be an assessment of the practical value of an element of the selection process, based upon consideration of validity, selection ratio, the number of candidates to be selected, and the nature of the job.
3. Adverse impact shall be minimal in the selection process. Adverse impact shall be measured by comparing the selection ratio of each race, gender, and ethnic group with the group having the highest selection rate. This process can be accomplished by:
 - a. Dividing the number of persons selected from each group by the number of applicants from that group.
 - (1) An applicant is any person who has indicated an interest in being considered for employment by completing an application form.
 - (2) A person who voluntarily withdraws, either formally or informally, at any stage of the selection process is no longer an applicant for purposes of computing adverse impact.
 - b. Note which group has the highest selection rate.
 - c. Divide the selection rate for each group by the rate for the highest group.
 - d. If the selection rate for any group is less than eighty (80) percent of the selection rate for the highest group, then adverse impact may be indicated.
 - (1) There may be an explanation for this difference that stems from valid, nondiscriminatory reasons. The analysis should explore this possibility.
 - (2) The calculation should be based on a significantly large number of cases to be statistically significant.
 - (3) If adverse impact is indicated, an analysis of possible causes should be performed and remedies suggested. Steps shall be taken to alter whatever practices contribute to the adverse impact.
 - (4) All records and data used to monitor adverse impact shall be maintained in the Administration Division.

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4. Exceptions
 - a. If the applicant fails to meet the passing point on the written test, ~~the application is returned to the Human Resources Department~~ the applicant is eliminated from the selection process.
 - b. If the applicant's score is unacceptable on the psychological examination, ~~the application is returned to the Human Resources Department~~ the applicant is eliminated from the selection process.
 - c. If the applicant makes false statements at any time during the hiring process, ~~the application is returned to the Human Resources Department~~ the applicant is eliminated from the selection process.
- C. Written tests shall be documented as having validity, utility, and a minimum adverse impact.
 1. Any test used or relied upon by the Department, including those that are commercially developed, must be valid and nondiscriminatory.
 2. All cut-off scores, passing points, and / or numerical ratings used shall be documented as having validity, utility, and a minimum adverse impact.
- D. Outside organizations, such as commercial testing services, polygraph examiners, employment agencies, industrial psychologists, and personnel consultants and their products, services, and methods shall meet the professional and legal requirements of validity, utility, and minimum adverse impact.
- E. All test results, or any other means utilized to evaluate, rate, or score applicants for employment, shall be tabulated in a uniform manner.
- F. Operational elements of the selection process – time limits, oral instructions, practice problems, answer sheets, and scoring formulas – shall be clearly set forth and carried out identically for all candidates.
- G. Whenever Department personnel are used for oral interview or evaluation boards, practical exercises, or assessment labs in evaluating applicants for employment, a representative cross section of the Department's racial, gender, and ethnic makeup shall be used.
- H. Personnel selection staff shall meet the basic qualifications for the job being filled and be thoroughly trained in the content and use of selection procedures.
- I. Selection materials shall be stored under lock and key with only limited access of Department personnel.
- J. Selection materials, if disposed of, shall be shredded under monitored conditions.

VI. Administrative Practices and Procedures

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- A. The Department does not accept applications for positions other than entry-level positions for sworn and non-sworn personnel. The Department uses the same selection process for part-time non-sworn positions as it does for full-time non-sworn positions.
- B. At the time of their formal application, candidates shall be informed, through email, of the following:
 - 1. All elements of the selection process.
 - 2. The expected duration of the selection process.
 - 3. The Department's policy on reapplication.
- C. Contact shall be maintained with applicants for all positions from initial application to final employment disposition.
- D. Applications for all positions shall not be rejected because of minor omissions or deficiencies that can be corrected prior to the testing or interview process.
- E. Applicants who fail a portion or portions of the selection process shall not necessarily be excluded from further consideration since:
 - 1. No selection component is perfectly reliable.
 - 2. The applicant may have gained new skills, knowledge, or abilities.
 - 3. Adverse impact can be reduced through retesting.
 - 4. The threat of lawsuits can be minimized through retesting.
- F. Applicants who are not disqualified for cogent reasons, i.e., permanent physical disability or extensive unfavorable characteristic traits, may be retested after review by the Chief of Police and upon written request of the affected applicant.
- G. Applicants may be re-evaluated in those areas in which they were disqualified previously providing a vacancy exists or is projected and at least twelve (12) months have elapsed since the applicant's last testing date. Applicants shall be informed through email of the date, time, and place for re-evaluation.
- H. Applicants failing to report for the first scheduled test, without a justifiable reason or without notifying the Department of their intended absence, shall not be notified of subsequent tests and shall not be deemed a candidate for employment.
- I. All applicants not selected for employment shall be informed through letter or email of such a decision by the Support Services Division.
- J. Copies of all applications for employment shall be kept by the Human Resources Department for a period of one (1) year. The Support Services Division shall maintain a secured electronic copy of all applicant records, including, but not

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limited to, background information, results from medical examinations, and emotional stability and psychological fitness examinations.

- K. All records of applicants selected for employment shall be maintained in their personnel file. The personnel files are kept in a locked filing cabinet at the Police Services Center or in secured electronic format and may include, but are not limited to, background information, results from medical examinations, and emotional stability and psychological fitness examinations.
- L. All selection materials shall be stored in a secure area when not being used. Whenever selection materials are disposed of, they shall be shredded under monitored conditions so as to prevent disclosure of the information therein.

VII. **Application**

When the Department has an opening, a job announcement may be made. The job announcement shall provide a description of the duties, responsibilities, requisite skills, educational level, and physical requirements for the position. Applications can be obtained from the City of Dalton website. All applications should be submitted to the Human Resources Department through the City of Dalton website.

VIII. **Application Review**

All applications shall be reviewed for eligibility requirements of the specific vacant position. All applicants that meet the requirements shall proceed in the selection process.

IX. **Physical Readiness Testing for Sworn Positions**

- A. All physical and age qualifications for entry-level positions shall meet the requirements of validity, utility, and minimum adverse impact.
- B. An examination of the physical readiness of each candidate for a sworn position shall be conducted, prior to appointment to probationary status, using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures.
 - 1. Physical readiness is the state of having sufficient energy to efficiently and effectively carry out job functions on a daily basis, including the ability to respond effectively to emergency situations.
 - 2. The purpose of physical readiness testing at the entry level is to determine a candidate's aerobic capacity, agility, anaerobic power, and explosive leg power.
 - 3. All tests or examinations used in the selection process shall be representative of the degree of physical agility that sworn personnel are expected to maintain throughout their careers.

X. **Written Examination**

- A. All elements of the written examinations shall be standardized in order to be effective and impartial.

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- B. For sworn positions, the written examination shall include the *Law Enforcement Officer National Basic Abilities Test*.
- C. Written examinations for non-sworn positions shall be used when applicable to the position being filled. The examination may include, but not be limited to, typing rate and accuracy, proofreading or analyzing documents for data, grammar, and / or math calculations.
- D. An emotional stability and psychological fitness examination of each sworn candidate shall be conducted, prior to appointment to probationary status, using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures. The test shall be assessed by a qualified professional, such as a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist.

XI. **Oral Board Interview**

- A. The selection process for both sworn and non-sworn candidates shall include an oral board interview.
- B. All elements of the oral interview process shall be standardized in order to be effective and impartial.
- C. Uniform questions and a uniform rating scale shall be used.
- D. Clarification of answers, if needed, may be sought by the interviewer(s).
- E. Rating scales or procedures shall be standardized in order to permit valid and useful distinctions among candidates and their expected job performance.
- F. Oral interview results shall be recorded on a standardized form.

XII. **Background Investigation**

- A. A background investigation shall be conducted on each candidate, sworn and non-sworn, prior to appointment to probationary status. The background investigator shall notify the candidate that the background investigation has begun. The candidate should be told that it may be necessary for him / her to assist the investigator to obtain some documentation.
- B. Verification of the candidate's qualifying credentials shall include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Educational achievement
 - a. A copy of the candidate's transcripts from all high schools, trade schools, colleges, and universities shall be obtained, if not already in the application package.
 - b. Interviews shall be conducted of the candidate's teachers, guidance counselors, and, if appropriate, athletic coaches from high school and other educational institutions.

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2. Employment

- a. All prior employers shall be contacted, and any performance evaluations should be obtained, if possible.
- b. Interviews shall be conducted with the candidate's former fellow employees and supervisors.
- c. If the candidate is a former police officer, a request should be made for a complete copy of the candidate's personnel / training files and any record of complaints or disciplinary action, including internal affairs investigative reports, from the prior law enforcement agency / agencies and the Georgia Peace Officers Training and Standards Council. Records from the police academy that the candidate attended should also be obtained.

3. Age

Candidates shall submit a certified copy of their birth certificate, and all sworn candidates shall be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.

4. Residence (Sworn Applicants Only)

An interview with the candidate and candidate's family shall be conducted at his / her residence, if possible.

5. References

Interviews shall be conducted with at least three (3) personal references provided by the candidate. This may include the candidate's neighbors, within the past five (5) years, and residence manager(s), if an apartment dwelling. In addition, the investigator should seek additional references to interview, including those provided by any listed personal references. Verification shall be made by personal interview, whenever possible, and shall be backed up by written notations.

6. Criminal Record Check

- a. A check for the candidate's criminal record through the National Crime Information Center shall be made.
- b. A check with local agencies where the candidate lives and works or has lived or worked shall be made.
- c. A check of driver's history information through DMV databases shall be made.
- d. A check of the candidate through the Georgia Information Sharing Analysis Center (GISAC) shall be made.

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- e. A check of the National Decertification Index shall be made for all sworn candidates.

7. Social Media

For all candidates, the background investigator shall conduct or have conducted a check of all popular social media platforms to ensure any profile belonging to the candidate or reference to the candidate does not contain any material that would bring discredit or adversely affect efficiency or integrity of the Department.

- C. Personnel used to conduct applicant background investigations shall be sworn personnel and trained in collecting the required information. At the discretion of the Chief of Police, qualified third-party entities may be used to conduct portions of background investigations.
- D. Background investigations contain sensitive and confidential information. The collected information must be kept in strict confidence. When the investigation is complete, it shall be forwarded to the Support Services Division Commander and then to the Chief of Police.

XIII. **Polygraph Examinations**

- A. Examinations and the evaluations of results for sworn and non-sworn candidates are conducted by examiners who possess professional training and credentials in the use and interpretation of polygraph results.
- B. In connection with pre-employment or applicant-type examinations, only areas of an applicant's background, which are demonstratively related to the applicant's suitability for employment with the inquiring agency, shall be covered during the interview and examination. Prior to the examination, the applicant shall be provided with a list of the areas from which the polygraph questions will be drawn. These areas include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Falsification of application
 - 2. Past work history
 - 3. Past and / or present illegal drug usage or sales
 - 4. Criminal convictions
 - 5. Past and / or present thefts of money or merchandise
 - 6. Past and / or present involvement in criminal activity
 - 7. Driving history
- C. It is the responsibility of the examiner to ensure that all questions are answered on the background information booklets, that the examinee's signature is affixed to the question sheet, that every question to be asked has been reviewed, word for

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word, and that the examinee consents to each and every question to be asked.

- D. At the end of the examination, the examinee shall be asked to sign the chart for the purpose of identification of the charts.
- E. At the completion of the examination, the examiner shall forward a copy of the results and the applicant background information booklet to the Chief of Police or his / her designee.
- F. The acceptance or denial of employment status shall in no way be based solely upon the results of a polygraph examination. The totality of the circumstances, which include both pretest and post-test interviews, may be utilized in making and supporting employment decisions.

XIV. **Chief's Interview**

The Chief of Police shall interview all sworn and non-sworn applicants that have been approved for interviews by the Support Services Division Commander or his / her designee. The interview shall allow for pertinent information to be discussed in person that will assist in making a hiring decision. At that time, the Chief of Police may offer the applicant a conditional job offer, dependent on satisfactory completion of other requirements.

XV. **Medical Examination for Sworn Positions**

A medical examination of each sworn candidate shall be conducted after a conditional job offer has been given but prior to appointment to probationary status, using valid, useful, and nondiscriminatory procedures by a board-certified licensed physician.

XVI. **Drug Screens**

A drug screen of each sworn and non-sworn candidate shall be conducted after a conditional job offer has been given but prior to appointment to probationary status.

XVII. **Academy Requirements**

Sworn candidates that are not already certified in Georgia are required to meet the following for acceptance into a Basic Law Enforcement Training Course:

- A. In accordance with Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council rules, all non-certified sworn candidates are required to pass the Physical Agility Test prior to being accepted into a Basic Law Enforcement Training Course. Successful completion of this test is deemed a condition of the job offer made by the Chief of Police. This test is in addition to the physical readiness requirement of the selection process.
- B. In accordance with O.C.G.A. 35-8-8, each candidate for peace officer certification shall successfully complete a job-related academy entrance examination that is approved by the P.O.S.T. Council. If a candidate has attained a degree from an accredited college or university or has achieved a sufficient score on the Scholastic

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Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Testing (ACT), he / she shall be deemed to have met this requirement.

XVIII. **Public Safety Commission**

All sworn applicants, which have been appointed to probationary status, shall be presented to the City of Dalton Public Safety Commission for final approval.

XIX. **Probationary Periods**

- A. All sworn applicants shall complete a twelve (12) month probationary period before being granted full-time status, pending the completion of a Basic Law Enforcement Training Course from a P.O.S.T. certified regional academy, unless the applicant is already a certified officer. The Chief of Police shall have the authority to lengthen the probationary period in special situations.
- B. All non-sworn applicants shall complete a twelve (12) month probationary period before being granted full-time status. The Chief of Police shall have the authority to lengthen the probationary period in special situations.
- C. The appointment rate of candidates from probationary to full-time status shall meet the requirements of minimum adverse impact.

This policy supersedes any policies previously issued.

BY ORDER OF

CHIEF OF POLICE

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