


# FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL POLICY MANUAL

	<b>SUBJECT</b> SELECTION PROCESS	<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> 25.02
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**25.02.01      PURPOSE**

To establish the process used for selecting members of the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP).

**25.02.02      POLICY**

It is the Policy of the Florida Highway Patrol to maintain an efficient and effective work force by selecting capable, qualified applicants through a fair, nondiscriminatory selection process. All elements of the selection process will be administered, scored, evaluated and interpreted in a uniform manner.

**25.02.03      OBJECTIVES**

To identify qualification and evaluation factors for employment of members, and to outline the procedures in the selection process.

**25.02.04      RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Background, Recruitment and Selection section is responsible for reviewing the state of Florida application and ensuring that the applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the position of law enforcement officer with the Florida Highway Patrol.
  
- B. The FHP Executive Officer is responsible for:
  - 1. Maintaining an automated system that documents each application throughout the selection process. This automated system shall identify those stages each applicant has successfully completed in the selection process. It shall also identify those applicants that have been disqualified from the selection process and those applicants that have been requested to be reconsidered. The source of the request will be identified as well as the outcome of this reconsideration.
  
  - 2. Ensuring that a file is created on each applicant and that the completed application and supporting documents are forwarded to a trained FHP Background Investigator.
  
  - 3. Maintaining a pool of candidates that have completed the application process.

## **25.02.05 PROCEDURES**

### **A. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION FACTORS - LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER APPLICANTS.**

Applicants for the position of law enforcement officer with the Florida Highway Patrol must meet the following minimum standards:

1. Be at least 19 years of age.
2. Be a citizen of the United States.
3. Be a high school graduate or its equivalent.
4. Have one of the following:
  - a. One year of sworn or non-sworn law enforcement experience working for a law enforcement agency, or
  - b. Two years of active and continuous military service, or
  - c. Two years of public contact experience and full-time work experience of 40 hours a week, or the equivalent, or
  - d. Successful completion of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours at an accredited college or university.

### **B. STEPS IN THE SELECTION PROCESS**

1. The standard state of Florida application may be obtained from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Neil Kirkman Building, Bureau of Personnel Services, Tallahassee, Florida. Applications are also available from each FHP office throughout the state, and on-line at the FHP web site.
2. All completed state of Florida applications for the position of State Trooper are to be forwarded to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, FHP Background, Recruitment and Selection section, Tallahassee, Florida for initial screening.
  - a. If the application is incomplete, the applicant will be notified and informed that additional information is needed. The application will be considered inactive until the additional information is received.
  - b. Applicants that do not meet the minimum qualifications will be notified in writing.
  - c. The Background Recruitment and Selection (BRS) section will log receipt of those applicants that have met the minimum qualifications into the database tracking system.

3. Applicants meeting the minimum qualifications will be issued a conditional letter of employment and provided with the following:
  - a. Florida Highway Patrol Supplemental Application.
  - b. Information on the Physical Abilities Test (PAT).
  - c. A waiver of liability for the PAT.
  - d. Options for a PAT testing location.
  - e. A checklist of required documentation.
  - f. Information on how to schedule and take the required Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (CJSTC) Criminal Justice Basic Abilities Test. The CJSTC pre-employment test will not be administered by FHP. Any and all costs associated with the CJSTC pre-employment test shall be borne by the applicant.

4. Applicants are required to bring the completed FHP Supplemental Application to the PAT testing location. The application will be screened, and the applicant will be informed if anything is missing or incomplete.

5. The PAT will be administered.

Applicants who do not pass the PAT or whose application indicates the presence of a disqualification factor will be issued a disqualification letter and will be removed from the application process.

6. Applicants who have successfully progressed through the CJSTC pre-employment test, PAT and have submitted a complete supplemental application will be invited to participate in the following:

- a. Credit Check.
- b. Polygraph Examination.
- c. Psychological Screening.
- d. Comprehensive Background Investigation.
- e. Eye Examination.
- f. Physical Examination.
- g. Fingerprinting.
- h. Urinalysis.

Any applicant who fails any portion of the process will be informed of the disqualification and removed from the application process. The applicant will be informed whether he/she is permanently disqualified or can reapply within a specific time frame.

7. Once the Background Investigation is completed, the findings will be forwarded to the FHP Executive Officer for review and approval. If the applicant has been disqualified, he/she will be notified in writing by the BRS Commander.
8. Any applicant who has been disqualified due to the initial screening of their supplemental application, the results or findings of the polygraph screening or the background investigation, may appeal their disqualification. An appeal of the decision of the staff review will be accepted in writing by the BRS Commander. The request along with the application and all reports identifying the reason for disqualification will be compiled by the BRS Commander who will schedule a Command Staff Review (CSR) meeting with the Chief of Special Services and the FHP Executive Officer, or designees. Applicants that do not pass this review will be notified within 30 days of such decision by the BRS Commander.
9. The applicant may appeal this decision to the Executive Staff Review (ESR) Committee for review and reconsideration. The request along with the application and all previous reports identifying the reason for the disqualification will be forwarded to the Executive Staff Review Committee for review. The Executive Staff Review Committee will be comprised of a Chief of Patrol Operations, the Chief of Special Services and the Deputy Director. The Executive Staff Review Committee will render a decision in writing and this decision shall be final. Applicants that do not pass Executive Staff Review will be notified within 30 days of such decision by the BRS Commander.

#### C. CJSTC PRE-EMPLOYMENT TESTING

A pre-employment examination will be required of all applicants who have been offered a conditional offer of employment and would be entering a Basic Recruit Class. This pre-employment examination will be satisfied if the applicant has already taken and passed an approved CJSTC's Criminal Justice Basic Abilities Test within the last four years from the start date of the Basic Recruit Class for which the applicant is processing for. The applicant is responsible for providing written documentation of the test and a passing score if they completed and passed the test prior to August 15, 2019. Written documentation provided by an applicant for testing completed on or after August 15, 2019, will not be considered valid and must be verified via the Automated Training Management System (ATMS). This examination is designed to assess the minimum skills and abilities necessary for the position of a law enforcement officer. Applicants will be required to pass this exam before proceeding to the next phase of the selection process. This exam is not used to rank eligible applicants for the academy class.

#### D. PHYSICAL ABILITIES TEST (PAT)

The PAT will be administered by Division members or its designees. The PAT measures the physical wellness and physical performance capabilities of the applicant. The PAT will be scheduled by the BRS Commander. Applicants will

be required to pass this test before proceeding to the next phase of the selection process.

If the applicant fails the PAT, he/she is eligible to retake this exam a second time during the same testing or at the next administration.

#### E. POLYGRAPH EXAMINATIONS

A polygraph examination administered by a Division Polygraph Examiner will be used to verify that the information contained in the application is complete, true and accurate. Applicants will be provided a list of areas to be covered by the polygraph examination prior to the examination. Polygraph examiners will ensure that pre-employment screening questionnaires are kept in a secure location when not being used and are disposed of in a manner that prevents disclosure of the information therein.

1. All FHP polygraph examiners will be trained in the use of polygraph instruments as well as evaluating the results of polygraph examinations prior to conducting any examinations.
2. Prior to administering the polygraph, the polygraph examiner will review the applicant's application and supplemental application to ensure that the applicant has provided complete and thorough information in the application documents. A pre-polygraph interview shall be conducted with the applicant prior to the administration of the polygraph. At this time the applicant shall be given an opportunity to add or amend information. This will reduce the possibility of disqualification solely on the basis of applicants omitting relevant information. If an applicant has an unintentional omission or discrepancy on the supplemental application and subsequently divulges additional information during the polygraph stage, the additional information may not be considered an immediate disqualification based on the type of discrepancy or falsification and will be subject to further review.
3. At the conclusion of each polygraph examination, the Examiner will carefully analyze the polygraph charts to determine if there are any significant responses indicative of deception. The Examiner will then complete the Pre-Employment Polygraph Report. The Polygraph Report will include discrepancies, omissions or misrepresentations on the applicant's application as well as all significant pre-test or post-test admissions of a derogatory nature such as undetected crimes or the use of illegal drugs. The Polygraph Report will be forwarded for staff review.
4. The BRS Commander and a designee will review the polygraph reports and determine if the applicant will proceed further in the hiring process. If the two members are not in agreement, the polygraph report will be forwarded to a third member to render a decision.
5. The results of polygraph examinations will not be used as the single determinant of employment status.
6. Applicants who do not pass staff review are notified within 30 days of such decision by the BRS Commander.

## F. LAW ENFORCEMENT PSYCHOLOGICAL SCREENING

As part of the Selection Process, each applicant must pass a law enforcement psychological screening test performed by a Department approved psychologist. Applicants will be scheduled for a psychological screening by the BRS section when appropriate.

1. The psychological examination shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Intelligence evaluation.
  - b. Personality evaluation.
  - c. Social evaluation.
  - d. Psychopathology.
  - e. Motivation.
  - f. Maturity.
  - g. Crisis and conflict handling.
  - h. Attitude.
  - i. Work relations.
  - j. Approach to police functions.
2. The psychologist shall provide the Department with the findings of the psychological examination which will be one of the following:
  - a. Acceptable,
  - b. Marginal, or
  - c. Unacceptable.
3. The BRS Commander will review the psychological examination report and determine if the applicant will proceed further in the hiring process.
4. Applicants who do not pass the psychological examination are notified within 30 days of such decision by the BRS Commander.

All records pertaining to psychological screening shall be securely retained in the Background, Recruitment and Selection section and exempt from public record in accordance with section 119.071 F.S.

## G. BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

1. Applicants who pass the psychological examination will be assigned to the appropriate background investigator to begin the background investigation process. The background investigation shall include the following, pursuant to Section 943.133, Florida Statutes:

- a. Neighborhood check.
  - b. Previous employment check.
  - c. Criminal history data checks (N.C.I.C. / F.C.I.C. and local agency networks).
  - d. Military service.
  - e. Applicant questionnaire.
  - f. Driver's license check.
  - g. Personal references (verification of at least three).
  - h. Credit bureau check.
  - i. Educational background.
  - j. Discrepancy interview.
  - k. Alcohol/Controlled substance testing.
2. Database checks as listed on the FHP Database Checklist shall also be included in the background investigation.
  3. Additional background investigation processes may be implemented as determined by the BRS Commander.
  4. Applicants must have their fingerprints on file with the Background Recruitment and Selection section.
  5. Applicants who do not pass the background investigation shall be notified within 30 days of such decision by the BRS Commander.
  6. Once completed, the background investigation will be forwarded to the FHP Executive Officer, or designee, for review and approval. If the applicant has been disqualified, he/she will be notified in writing by the BRS Commander.
  7. Within ninety (90) days prior to the beginning of the Academy class, a follow-up investigation will be conducted to ensure an up-to-date applicable criminal background/history records check has been completed and documented for each applicant being invited to attend the Academy, if the investigation was completed prior to this time-period.

#### H. SPECIFIC PHYSICAL STANDARDS

1. Vision - Applicants must have minimum corrected vision of 20/30 in each eye, with normal color distinguishing capabilities. Minimum field of vision is 140 degrees. Any visual disability which prevents the performance of the essential functions of a member of which no reasonable accommodation is possible shall disqualify applicants.

2. Height and Weight - Weight shall be in proportion to height in accordance with Rule 15B-7.003, Florida Administrative Code (see Addendum 5.11-1).
3. Applicants must pass a medical examination performed by a Department approved physician. Applicants will also be required to pass the PAT.
4. Physical disabilities which prevent the performance of the essential functions of an FHP law enforcement officer are disqualifying if no reasonable accommodation is possible.
5. An applicant will be evaluated based on physical condition or ability to perform the essential functions of the position, not on the basis of past illness or injury.

I. APPLICATIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER POSITIONS

1. All records pertaining to completed background investigations that have satisfactorily completed all phases of the selection process shall be retained in a secure manner in the Background, Recruitment and Selection section, or other secure location within General Headquarters, when not being used.
2. All records pertaining to employment applications that have failed to meet the minimum qualifications and evaluation factors shall be retained in a secure manner in the Background, Recruitment and Selection section, or other secure location within General Headquarters, for a minimum of four years.

J. FINAL SELECTION PROCESS

1. All applicants who have successfully completed all stages of the application process will be placed into one of two groups; those possessing at least one of the following preferences and those who do not possess any of the preferences.
  - a. College education of at least 60 semester or 90 quarter hours at an accredited college or university.
  - b. At least 24 months of active military service.
  - c. Current Florida law enforcement certification.
  - d. Other qualifications determined by the Director.
2. Possible candidates for the next FHP Recruit Academy may be offered employment.
3. Selection for inclusion in the next FHP Recruit Academy will be made from the list of candidates that have successfully completed all phases of the selection process.



K. QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION FACTORS - FORMER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS - FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL

Applicants for the position of an FHP Law Enforcement Officer who have previously been employed with the FHP in the capacity of a Law Enforcement Officer or higher rank, shall meet all the qualifications outlined in Section 25.02.05(A) above, including those specified in this section:

1. Applicants who have less than a one-year break in service with the Department as a sworn officer must pass all phases of the Department employment selection process including, but not limited to the Physical Abilities Test, Polygraph Examination, an examination administered by a licensed physician authorized by the Division of Florida Highway Patrol, and an in-depth updated background investigation. These applicants are exempt from completing a Psychological Screening or from having to attend an FHP Academy class.
2. Applicants who have a one or more year break, but less than 4 year break in service with the Department as a sworn officer must pass all phases of the Department employment selection process including, but not limited to, the Physical Abilities Test, Polygraph Examination, Psychological Screening, an examination administered by a licensed physician authorized by the Division of Florida Highway Patrol, and in-depth updated background investigation. These applicants are exempt from having to attend an FHP Academy class.
3. Applicants who have a four or more year break in service with the Department as a sworn officer must pass all phases of the Department employment selection process including, but not limited to, the Physical Abilities Test, Polygraph Examination, Psychological Screening, an examination administered by a licensed physician authorized by the Division of Florida highway Patrol, and an in-depth updated background investigation. These applicants must also complete a Transitional or Lateral FHP Academy class.

**NOTE:**

Applicants that retire as a Florida Retirement System participating employee and apply to become a full-time law enforcement officer shall be familiar with and abide by section 122.16, Florida Statutes. These applicants need to be aware that if section 122.16, Florida Statutes applies to him/her that any pay from a Florida Retirement System employer during the time frames listed in section 122.16, Florida Statutes will void his/her retirement and he/she must repay all benefits received, including a DROP payout. Any pay may include the member's salary, Other Personal Services (OPS), Hireback, travel, per diem, classroom instruction etc. The Background Investigation Coordinator shall verify that the applicant will not violate section 122.16, Florida Statutes and forward his/her findings through the chain of command to the Director.

4. Applicants must be approved by the Director for re-employment consideration. The applicant must submit a letter to the Director, via the

BRS Commander, requesting re-employment consideration. The BRS Commander will review the application for re-employment prior to the background investigation and submit a recommendation to the Director. The review will include the applicant's work history, disciplinary history and other job-related issues during the employment period with the FHP.

5. Applicants re-employed as a Law Enforcement Officer after a break in service of less than four years shall be re-employed at a minimum of the same salary received when the member resigned. Those members who resigned with a rank higher than Law Enforcement Officer will receive the salary commensurate with the number of years of service at the time of their resignation.
6. Applicants re-employed after a break in service of four or more years shall be re-employed at the starting base salary of a Law Enforcement Officer. The member may be required to attend and successfully complete an FHP recruit training school upon reemployment. The following criteria will be used to make that determination:
  - a. Work history since last employment with the Division as a Law Enforcement Officer.
  - b. Length of previous law enforcement service.
  - c. Performance evaluations for the period the applicant served with the Division.
7. Members who have retired from the FHP will be re-employed as a Law Enforcement Officer at the starting salary for Law Enforcement Officer.