



# HIGHLAND PARK DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

## APPLICANT FACT SHEET RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

### **PURPOSE**

The Highland Park Department of Public Safety is an Equal Opportunity Employer under the Federal Civil rights Act of 1964, as amended. The recruitment and selection process described herein outlines the steps taken by the Department to insure fair and equitable hiring practices.

### **APPLICANT INTEREST LIST**

The Department's Personnel Officer maintains an active list of individuals who have expressed an interest in becoming a Department employee and who meet the Department's minimum qualifications. This list includes, at minimum, the potential applicant's:

1. Name;
2. Home address and telephone number;
3. Business address and telephone number;
4. Desired position.
5. Email address

This list is maintained so that applicants may be contacted in the event a position becomes open at a future date for which they are qualified.

The Personnel Officer keeps an updated list of requirements for any given position in the Department. This is so that he/she may be able to answer questions about the various employment opportunities the Department offers.

Any applicant interested in being considered for a position must file their application prior to the posted deadline. The application process requires approximately six to twelve weeks (depending on the position) from time of application until time of hiring decision. The process is standardized and uniformly administered for all positions. At any point in the process, an applicant may be eliminated due to waning interest on the applicant's part or the discovery of an applicant's unsuitability for employment.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Minimum standards for employment are published so that all interested applicants may know at the outset what qualifications are necessary to be considered. Standards for the position of Public Safety Officer include:

- **U.S. Citizen**
- **21 years of age (applicants otherwise qualified may apply within 30 days of their twenty-first birthday but may not be appointed until their twenty-first birthday has passed);**
- **Bachelor's Degree from a regionally accredited college or university. Applicants possessing at least 60 college hours from a regionally accredited college or university and either 1) 4 years of paid experience in police, fire, or EMS or 2) 4 years of active duty military may apply with the understanding that not possessing a bachelor's degree will affect their final testing score. (See Phase 3 for summary explanation of how points may be added to and/or deducted from raw test score totals.)**
- **Visual acuity of at least 20/100, correctable to 20/20**
- **Normal color vision and normal hearing in each ear**
- **Height and weight in proportion to size**
- **No felony convictions**
- **No Misdemeanor convictions involving domestic violence or moral turpitude (any applicant under current charge or indictment for any criminal offense, other than a traffic violation, is not acceptable);**
- **No recent use of narcotics, drugs, or controlled substances**
- **No DWI or DUID convictions within past 10 years**
- **Current Texas Vehicle Operator's License**

## SELECTION PROCESS

A. Applicants for positions are selected as outlined in this document and are invited to participate in the process open to all qualified individuals regardless of race, gender, religious preference, or national origin. The selection process for vacant positions is conducted in phases, and applicants who qualify for the initial phase may continue to progressive phases, each of which must be successfully completed.

B. Each phase must be completed successfully before advancement to the next successive phase.

C. Employable candidates (those NOT eliminated due to an unsuccessful background investigation) may re-apply for future eligibility lists.

## PHASE I – APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- A. An on-line application for testing must be submitted to the Town of Highland Park by the published date to be considered for eligibility testing. These forms will be reviewed by the Personnel Officer to insure the applicant meets the current posted job requirements and for completeness. (Applications are not rejected solely because of omissions or deficiencies on the application that can be corrected prior to the testing or interview process.)
- B. Applications not meeting the requirements for the vacant position will not be considered for advancement in the application process, and the applicant will be so informed to include explanation for the reasons rejected.

## PHASE 2 – FITNESS TESTING

### **Department Physical Fitness**

The Highland Park Department of Public Safety recognizes the importance of physical fitness and it's relation to job performance. The physical fitness test is given to all candidates with an accepted application. This requirement helps to ensure each candidate can perform the rigorous duties and obligations that public safety officers are called upon to perform.

### **Physical Agility/Fitness Test**

The test consists of four components:

- 1.5 mile run (maximum time limit: 16 minutes 31 seconds)
- 300 meter dash (maximum time limit: 77 seconds)
- 1 minute timed sit-ups (minimum standard: 33 sit ups)
- 1 minute timed push-ups (minimum standard: 26 push ups)

Each component of the physical fitness test must be completed at the required minimum for the applicant to continue in the application process. If the applicant fails to meet the minimum standard for any one component of the test, he or she will be disqualified from the testing process.

## PHASE 3 – WRITTEN EXAMINATION & CERTIFICATION/PENALTY POINTS

- A. Each applicant must present themselves at the date, time and place set by the Personnel Officer, and complete written examinations designed to test the applicant's reading comprehension, vocabulary, reasoning, observation, and situational judgment.
- B. Applicants will be advised of their score by the next business day. An unadjusted score of 80% for the reading comprehension/vocabulary test, and 70% for the reasoning, observation, and situational judgment test is required for the applicant to progress to Phase 4.

C. Each applicant who has progressed to Phase 3 will be evaluated for the minimum education standard. If the applicant possesses 60 to 89 college hours, they will have ten (10) penalty points subtracted from their written exam score. An applicant who possesses 90 college hours or more, but less than a Bachelors Degree will have five (5) penalty points subtracted from their written exam score. Applicants possessing the minimum education standard, a Bachelors Degree, receive neither award nor penalty.

D. Applicants will have five (5) points awarded for fulfilling each of the following requirements:

1. Current Texas Peace Officer Certification and four (4) years of full-time paid experience,
2. Current Texas Structural Fire Fighter Certification and four (4) years of full-time paid experience,
3. Current Texas Paramedic Certification/License and four (4) years of full-time paid experience,
4. Current NREMT Paramedic Certification and four (4) years of full-time paid experience,
5. Honorable United States Military service for four (4) years in the following branches:
  - Air Force
  - Army
  - Coast Guard
  - Marines
  - Navy
6. Current Highland Park DPS civilian employees with a minimum of two (2) years employment

\*\*\*All applicants who have successfully completed the physical agility test and scored a minimum of 80% on the reading/vocabulary test and 70% on the reasoning, observation, and situational judgment test shall be placed on an eligibility list. Then, points for certifications or military service will be added and points for lacking a Bachelor's degree shall be subtracted from the written test scores. Candidates will then be ranked on the eligibility list in order based on the adjusted test score. The eligibility list shall be valid for six months from the written test date.

#### PHASE 4 – PERSONAL HISTORY STATEMENT

The comprehensive personal history statement must be completed prior to the oral interview board. Complete and truthful information provided on this statement is the foundation for subsequent phases, including the oral interview, director's interview, background investigation, and polygraph examination.

### PHASE 5 – ORAL INTERVIEW BOARD

- A. Applicants who have successfully achieved this phase will be given a score from the written test. This score will provide a numerical ranking to progress the top seven (7) applicants for each vacant position to the Oral Interview Board. Depending upon the position being applied for, this board is comprised of either sworn, non-sworn, or a combination of employees of the Department.
- B. In this Phase, the applicant will be interviewed by the board members to assess the applicant's compatibility for the vacancy being applied for. Applicants will be scored on their answers, demeanor, and inter-action with the board.
- C. The Board will rank the applicants by giving each a numerical score, and refer them to the Personnel Officer. A minimum average score of 60% is required for applicants to progress to Phase 6.
- D. The Personnel Officer will tally the applicant's final ranking as follows:
- (a) The average for the Written Test, which make up 25% of the final ranking score, and
  - (b) The Interview Board score will count as 75%.
  - (c) The final score will determine the final ranking of the applicants progressing in this Phase.
- E. Applicants with the three (3) highest combined ranking scores for each vacant position will qualify them to be considered as "Candidate(s)" and be referred to Phase 6.

### PHASE 6 – DIRECTOR'S INTERVIEW

- A. The Director or his designee will conduct a final interview with the three (3) top candidates for each vacant position. During this interview, the Director will make his selection based on the following (not limited to, and in no specific order) criteria:
- (a) Needs of the Department.
  - (b) Needs of the Community.
  - (c) Individual candidate's suitability for the position.
  - (d) Results of the application process.
- B. After selection by the Director, the candidate(s) will be referred to the Personnel Officer for administration of the paramedic school pre-test and completion of the Background Investigation.
- C. The candidates not selected by the Director will remain eligible for consideration for six (6) months.

## PHASE 7 – PARAMEDIC SCHOOL PRE-TEST (ACCUPLACER)

Paramedic Training Pre-Admission Screening Tests are required by UT Southwestern Medical School, and are administered by the Dallas County Community College District. These tests are used to determine the candidate's eligibility for paramedic training.

## PHASE 8 – BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

- A. The Director shall assign designated employees trained in investigative techniques and in specialized personnel methods and practices to conduct background investigations into the history and activities of all applicants reaching this phase.
- B. The background investigation shall include verification of statements and admissions made during the application process.
- C. The background investigator shall secure sufficient copies of waivers with original signatures authorizing the release of information by references named by the applicant. Sources of information may include, but may not be limited to, the following:
  - (a) Driving records;
  - (b) Credit records;
  - (c) Civil and Criminal records;
  - (d) Medical records;
  - (e) Military records;
  - (f) Financial institutions;
  - (g) Employment documents;
  - (h) Business associates;
  - (i) Family members;
  - (j) School officials;
  - (k) Neighbors and friends, and
  - (l) Three (3) personal references.
- D. The Director shall review the background report, determine the relevancy of the information in conjunction with the duties of the job in question, examine the reliability of sources and decide whether to reject or progress the applicant in the application process.
- E. Derogatory information that could result in unsuitability for employment includes criminal history, substance abuse, unstable work history, unsatisfactory driving record or other conditions that might reasonably lead the Director to conclude potential unreliable job performance.
- F. The background investigator shall make every effort to contact necessary information sources. Some sources may require telephone and/or confidential questionnaires due to geographic

proximity to Highland Park. Sources may include previous employers, personal references, educational institutions, and physicians.

- G. Under no circumstance will the background investigator make any inquiries relating to the religious or political opinions of any person, other than those that indicate a belief in denial of civil rights to any group.
- H. The background investigator shall conduct the investigation in such a manner so as to protect the applicant's right to privacy, insure that inquiries are solely job-related, and that the applicant has an opportunity to rebut any negative information so long as confidential sources are protected.

#### PHASE 9 – POST INVESTIGATIVE TESTING/PROCESS

A. **Polygraph Examination.** The candidate(s) will be given a date, time and place to report for a polygraph examination by an examiner of the Department's choosing, and at the Department's expense. The Polygraph Examiner is not permitted to divulge the results of the examination to the candidate. Any questions regarding examination results shall be referred to the Director or his designated Personnel Officer.

(a) Admissions concerning moral attitudes and illegal activities made during the examination shall be reviewed by the Director and Personnel Officer.

(b) Although the results of the polygraph examination shall not be used as a single determinant for a hiring decision, deceptive responses corroborated by other investigative means may eliminate the candidate from further consideration.

Upon satisfactory completion of the polygraph examination, candidates will receive a conditional offer of employment.

\*NOTE: Psychological Testing and Medical Examination shall be conducted after a conditional offer of employment has been made; however, applicants must pass these examinations to determine ability to meet current job requirements.

B. **Psychological Examination**, as required by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Education shall be conducted by qualified professionals, with the expense for testing borne by the Department.

C. **Medical Examination & Drug Screen** as required by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Education shall be conducted by qualified professionals, with the expense for testing borne by the Department.

Failure to satisfactorily complete any portion of testing in this phase will disqualify the candidate from further consideration.

All test results shall be secured in files separate and apart from other personnel files. Access to such files shall be limited to the Director or his designee.

**PHASE 10 – APPOINTMENT**

- A. Upon satisfactory completion of all required testing, background investigation and interviews, the candidate will be offered a position with the Department.
  
- B. Once the candidate has accepted the position, the Personnel Officer will inform the employee when to report for duty, and any other necessary information, including:
  - (a) A review of employment conditions;
  - (b) A review of compensation, benefits, job description, environmental conditions, etc.

**STARTING SALARY AND BENEFITS (2015-2016 Fiscal Year)**

Non-certified personnel obtaining sworn status:	\$58,203 annually
Fully certified (police and fire) personnel:	\$73,169 annually*

\*8% Paramedic Incentive added after completion of Paramedic School.

Benefits include a quarterly pay for performance, paid life and health insurance for employee (dependent coverage available at employee expense), paid vacation and holidays, participation in Texas Municipal Retirement System. A credit union is available. The Town offers tuition reimbursement, and uniforms and accessories are furnished.

For further information, contact: **[jgarber@hpdps.org](mailto:jgarber@hpdps.org)**