



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 ensure fair and equitable hiring practices.

APPLICANT INTEREST LIST

The Department's Administrative Sergeant 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. Desired position
4. 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 Administrative Sergeant 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);**
- **Current Driver's License;**
- **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, and able to pass color vision test;**
- **Normal hearing in each ear;**
- **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.**

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.

D. All events and interactions during the hiring process are subject to evaluation by HPDPS personnel.

PHASE I – APPLICATION SUBMISSION

A. An online 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 Administrative Sergeant and/or Human Resources to ensure 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 an 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 its 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 Fitness Test

The test consists of three components:

- 1.5 mile run
- 500 meter row sprint
- 1 minute timed plank

Each component of the physical fitness test must be completed at the required minimum for the applicant to continue in the application process. Scoring for the run and row portions of the test are based on the prescribed Texas DPS pass rate of 60% based on the applicant's gender and age. The plank component is a pass/fail test based on completion. 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.

The scoring matrix for the run and row can be found at <https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/training-operations-tod/fitness-requirements-trooper-trainees-and-recruits>.

PHASE 3 – PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST

In this phase, the applicants will have the opportunity to demonstrate their physical readiness and agility to perform job-related tasks. Participants will perform a timed 2-stage test to include: (1) Stair Climb and (2) Fireground Evolution. In each of these events, appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided.

PHASE 4 – WRITTEN EXAMINATION & CERTIFICATION/PENALTY POINTS

- A. Each applicant must present themselves at the date, time and place set by the Administrative Sergeant, and complete the National Police Officer Selection Test designed to test the applicant's math and reading comprehension, vocabulary, reasoning, observation, and situational judgment. Information regarding the test can be found on the following website: <https://www.stanard.com/public-safety/police-test/the-national-police-officer-selection-test>.
- B. Applicants must receive a passing grade in each section of the written examination. Applicants will be advised of their score by the next business day. An unadjusted score of 70% is required to pass the examination. "Unadjusted" means the applicant must score 70% or greater before additional points are awarded for licenses/certifications (see below).
- C. Each applicant who has progressed to Phase 4 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 Bachelor's Degree, will have five (5) penalty points subtracted from their written exam score. Applicants possessing the minimum education standard, a Bachelor's 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 or;
Current NREMT Paramedic Certification and four (4) years of full-time paid experience,
 - 4. Honorable United States Military service for four (4) full time years in the following branches:

- Air Force
 - Army
 - Coast Guard
 - Marines
 - Navy
5. Current Highland Park DPS civilian employees with a minimum of two (2) years of employment

***All applicants who have successfully completed the physical agility test and scored a minimum of 70% on the written examination shall be eligible to progress to Phase 5. 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. Applicants will then be ranked according to their adjusted score. At a minimum, the top 7 applicants per vacant position or potential vacancy will advance to Phase 5.

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 interaction with the board.
- C. The Board will rank the applicants by giving each a numerical score, and refer them to the Administrative Sergeant. A minimum average score of 60 out of 75 possible points is required for applicants to progress to Phase 6.
- D. The Administrative Sergeant will tally the applicant's final ranking as follows:
- (a) The average for the Written Test, which makes up 25% of the final ranking score, and
 - (b) The Interview Board score will count as 75%.
- E. The final score will determine the final ranking of the applicants progressing in this Phase.

- F. 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 Administrative Sergeant for completion of the Background Investigation.

C. The time frame of eligibility of applicants not hired will be set by the Director at his discretion.

PHASE 7 – 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, ensure 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 8 – 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 the Administrative Sergeant.
- (a) Admissions concerning moral attitudes and illegal activities made during the examination shall be reviewed by the Director and Administrative Sergeant.
- (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 their ability to meet current job requirements.

- B. **Psychological Examination**, as required by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement 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 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 9 – 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 Administrative Sergeant 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 (2024 Fiscal Year)

***Actual salary depends on qualifications**

Non-certified personnel obtaining sworn status:	\$74,441.25 - \$82,855.50 annually*
Police or Fire certified personnel:	\$77,993.25 - \$103,074.66 annually*
Fully certified (police and fire) personnel:	\$93,577.00 - \$134,987.58 annually*

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. The Town offers tuition reimbursement, and uniforms and accessories are furnished.

For further information, contact Highland Park DPS Recruiting via phone call, text, or email.

Call or text: (469) 865-6407

Email: sferguson@hpdps.org or zsitton@hpdps.org

The Town of Highland Park is an Equal Opportunity Employer.