

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety

Recruitment, Selection, Hiring, and Retention

Effective Date:

January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2022

A. **Recruitment, Selection, Hiring, and Retention:**

This policy provides a framework for employee recruiting, selection, hiring, and retention efforts by identifying job-related standards for the selection process. With the ever-changing demands in the career of law enforcement, a well-established workforce that strives to serve the community they work within is imperative to an effective police department.

Each section will be reviewed independently, yet comparatively since all four issues relate to how this police agency will employ potential candidates, as well as retain those who have a fair and impartial attitude while engaging with their community.

In accordance with applicable Federal, State and local law, the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will provide equal opportunity for applicants and employees regardless of race, gender, expression, age, pregnancy, religion, creed, color, national origin, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, or any other protected class or status. The Department does not show partiality or grant any special status to any applicant, employee, or group of employees unless otherwise required by law. A study on recruiting for diversity in law enforcement (as documented in the Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice) concluded, “This study analyzes several law enforcement agencies to (a) determine levels of representation of racial minorities in the law enforcement profession and (b) identify the marketing strategies being used during recruitment campaigns to locate, attract, and hire racial minorities to sworn positions” (Wilson 2013).

An understanding of recruitment and selection is vital if improvements are to be made. Monitoring the selection process of every applicant, at each step, is necessary. This recruitment process will

begin at the point of initial interest of each candidate, and will continue until the applicant completes the entire hiring process and later satisfies the requirements set forth in the field training program. Each process within the probationary phase must be successfully completed in order to be confirmed as a career status officer. This Department will recognize that recruitment and selection does not close until the newly hired officer completes his or her probationary employment period satisfactorily. The Department will recruit and hire only those individuals who demonstrate a commitment to service, and, who possess the traits and characteristics that reflect personal integrity and high ethical standards.

B. Recruitment:

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will employ a comprehensive recruitment and selection strategy to recruit and select employees from a qualified and diverse pool of candidates.

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will continue to seek out culturally and racially diverse markets and deploy strategies to target those applicants that represent the community they serve. The strategies should include the following:

1. Identification of diverse (racially & culturally) markets
2. Use of marketing strategies to target a variety of applicant pools
3. Expanded use of technology and maintenance of a strong internet presence. This may include an interactive Department website in the use of department managed social networking sites, if resources permit
4. Expanded outreach through partnerships with media, community groups, citizen academies, local colleges, universities and the military
5. Employee referral and recruitment incentive programs
6. Consideration of shared or collaborative regional testing processes
7. Allow for ride-alongs for interested candidates as time permits

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will also avoid advertising, recruiting and screening practices that tend to stereotype or focus on standardized applicant pools or screening applicants in a discriminatory manner. According to study conducted by ProQuest, it concluded, “The law

enforcement profession is experiencing far fewer applicants than a decade ago.” (Williamson 2018). The employment selection process will also actively strive to identify outstanding prospects by employing a comprehensive screening and background investigation by utilizing a selection process that assesses cognitive and physical abilities. The COK’s Department of Human Resources will also be utilized to facilitate and expedite the screening and testing process, and will periodically inform each candidate of his/her status in the recruiting process. A comprehensive employment process will also include at a minimum: previous employment, personal references, education, military record, criminal background check, and driving record.

C. Selection Process:

The employment eligibility, at minimum, shall provide a description of the duties, responsibilities, requisite skills, education level, and physical requirements needs for the job. All job vacancies shall be advertised electronically and will be advertised as an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Department will conduct a background investigation and will include the review and verification of the following:

1. A comprehensive application for employment (including previous employment), references, current and prior addresses, education, and military record
2. Driving record
3. Reference checks
4. Employment eligibility, including US citizenship and immigration services, employment eligibility verification form, and acceptable identity and employment authorization documents. This required documentation should not be requested until a candidate is hired. This does not prohibit obtaining documents required for other purposes.
5. Information obtained from public internet sites
6. Financial history consistent with the Fair Credit Reporting System
7. Local, state and Federal criminal history record checks
8. Medical and psychological examinations, which would be given after a conditional offer of employment
9. Review board or selection committee assessment

D. Desirable Attributes in Potential Applicants:

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will promote the following attributes in all applicants to include:

1. The officer will become fully trained, equipped and assigned to a patrol unit. The Department recognizes that the successful applicant may be oftentimes operating alone and will need to be able to work under minimal supervision.
2. The successful applicant must need to understand that they will be responding to very diverse situations throughout their shift. The daily activities can span from taking minor calls, all the way to officer-involved shootings. Each successful candidate will be expected to perform in a courteous and professional manner regardless of the type of call they are on.
3. The successful applicant must also understand that they will need to be able to make quick decisions without the consultation of a shift supervisor and that decisions made in some cases can be life or death decisions.
4. The successful applicant's education level must be significant enough to allow them to learn, retain and apply information in their everyday duties.
5. The successful applicant must understand that they will endure potential verbal and physical abuse by citizens and/or offenders and that they will need to respond appropriately and apply reasonable force when necessary.
6. While respecting the value of diversity, the successful applicant will utilize their diversity in thought, life experience, culture, philosophy, perspective, background, job skills and personal attributes to deliver high customer service on a daily basis.
7. The successful applicant will understand and seek to employ a community policing model in their daily interactions to build community relationships and increase police legitimacy.

E. Integrity:

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety understands that each successful applicant must have a strong moral character and integrity, including but not limited to the following:

1. Refusing to give into the temptations of bribes, gratuities, payoffs, gifts, etc.
2. The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will not tolerate unethical and/or illegal conduct performed by other law enforcement personnel and that the successful applicant must show good moral behavior.
3. The successful applicant must show strong moral character and integrity when dealing with the general public. The applicant must show professionalism and respect during all interactions within our diverse community which includes, but is not limited to, diversity of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and ethnicity.
4. The successful applicant must be honest when dealing with the general public.
5. The successful applicant must understand that integrity is at its utmost as a witness in Court.

F. **Dependability:**

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will only hire personnel that demonstrate a pattern of showing up on time for work, and performing their assigned duties during each and every shift.

The qualities can include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Living within 45 minutes of the Department, and be able to respond to duty when called.
2. Having a record of submitting reports on time and clearing calls in a timely manner at previous jobs.
3. A record of recommendation stating that the potential candidate is motivated and performed their previous employment duties admirably.
4. A record of recommendation stating that the potential candidate can be depended on to complete tasks and assignments and all follow-up tasks required to complete their job in a timely manner.
5. The successful candidate must have a history of taking extra effort required to complete accuracy in their related work.
6. A successful candidate must show a willingness to work within their mandated hours in addition to mandated overtime possibly needed to complete a required task.

G. **Learning Ability:**

Each successful candidate must be able to learn and retain required information taught to them and be able to apply it in their everyday public service work, to include the following:

1. The ability to comprehend and retain information.
2. The ability to learn laws, statutes, codes, etc. and be able to apply them in their lawful duties.
3. The ability to learn and apply material, tactics, and procedures that are required of law enforcement officers.

H. **Judgment Under Pressure:**

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will identify and hire employees that are able to make split-second decisions that could possibly mean life or death for themselves, their partners or the public.

These decisions could include:

1. The ability to apply common sense during stressful situations.
2. The ability to make sound decisions under pressure.
3. The ability to make decisions with potentially volatile situations.
4. The ability to make effective and logical decisions under pressure.
5. The ability to de-escalate a stressful situation quickly and effectively.

I. Veteran Preference:

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will identify military veterans who meet qualifications for appointment and employment.

J. Lateral transfer (Year 2020 only):

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety has implemented a “Lateral Transfer” incentive for personnel already working as a law enforcement officer at a different department or have completed an MCOLES police academy. This process is limited to those individuals who:

1. Are currently licensed and working full-time as a police officer in the State of Michigan;
2. Are currently certified/licensed and working full-time out-of-state as a police officer and eligible for reciprocal licensure within the State of Michigan as defined by MCOLES;
3. Have recently separated employment (in good standing) within the last year after being employed full-time as a police officer at a department within the State of Michigan.
4. Will be eligible to be licensed by Michigan Commission of Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) prior to the date of hire.

Police officers currently employed full-time and in good standing with another police agency would have the opportunity to laterally transfer up to three (3) years of police experience in regards to the current wage scale. This lateral transfer would significantly increase starting wages for eligible new hires under the current bargaining agreement.

K. **Examiner Qualifications:**

Medical and psychological examinations will be administered by appropriately licensed professionals. Examination results should be securely maintained in accordance with State and Federal laws per the established records retention schedule.

L. **Background Investigation:**

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will ensure that each candidate undergoes a thorough background investigation to verify his/her personal integrity and high ethical standards. Furthermore, this investigation would be used to identify any past behavior that may be indicative of the candidates' unsuitability to perform duties relevant to the operation of the Department. Background investigators will conduct a review of all social media sites of the potential applicant. A background investigator may consider utilizing the services of an appropriately trained and experienced third party to conduct open resource, internet-based searches and/or review information from social media sites to ensure that 1) the legal rights of the candidate are protected; 2) material and information to be considered are verified, accurate and validated; and 3) the Department will fully comply with privacy protections and local, State and Federal law.

Regardless of whether a third party is used, the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety should ensure that potentially impermissible information is not available to any person involved in the candidate selection process. All background reports, to include all supporting documentation, shall be maintained in accordance with the established records retention schedule.

Each background investigation shall summarize the results of the background investigation in a report that includes significant information to allow the reviewing authority to decide whether to extend a conditional offer of employment. This report shall not include any information that is prohibited from use including that from social media sites. The background report and all supporting documentation shall be included in the potential candidate's background investigation file.

M. **Disqualification Guidelines:**

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will ensure that disqualification guidelines are defined, and when used as a general rule, performance indicators and candidate information shall be evaluated by considering the candidate as a whole and taking into account the following:

1. Age at the time that the behavior occurred;
2. Passage of time;
3. Patterns of past behavior;
4. Severity of behavior;
5. Probable consequences, if past behavior is repeated or made public;
6. Likelihood of reoccurrence;
7. Relevance of past behavior to the public safety employment;
8. Aggravating and mitigating factors;
9. Other relevant considerations.

Each candidate's qualifications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, using a totality of circumstances framework.

N. **Employment Standards:**

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will ensure that each candidate meets the minimum standards required by State law. Candidates will be evaluated based on merit, ability, competence,

and experience in accordance with the high standards of integrity and ethics valued by this Department and the community.

Validated job performance and non-discriminatory employment standards shall be established for each job classification and shall minimally identify the training, abilities, knowledge and skills required to perform the position's essential duties in a satisfactory manner. Each employment standard shall include performance indicators for candidate evaluation. The COK's Human Resources Department will maintain validated standards for all positions. Each potential candidate will meet the following minimum standards as established by Michigan law, including those provided in the Michigan Administration code, R 28.14205, A. - K., to wit:

1. Free of any felony convictions or felony expungements and set asides;
2. Citizens of the United States;
3. Fingerprinted for local, State and national fingerprint check;
4. Good moral character as determined by a thorough background investigation;
5. High school graduate, passed the GED or obtained a 2 year, 4 year or advanced degree from an accredited or approved institution;
6. Free from any physical, emotional or mental conditions that might adversely affect the exercise of police powers;
7. Pass a drug screen;
8. Have completed a Law Enforcement Academy;
9. Pass a medical examination.

O. **Probationary Periods:**

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety designee should coordinate with the City of Kalamazoo's Human Resources Department to identify positions subject to probationary periods and procedures for:

1. Appraising performance during probation;
2. Assessing the level of performance required to complete probation;
3. Extending probation;

4. Documenting successful or unsuccessful completion of probation;

Upon successful employment, the new employee will be listed as probationary for a period of one (1) year as they undergo examination for integrity, dependability, learning ability, and judgment under pressure.

P. Employment Retention:

On an annual basis, each successful hire will be evaluated on an annual basis based on their job performance. A supervisor will be assigned to complete a thorough evaluation on each officer that serves under their command. During this evaluation, the supervisor will discuss with the officer their goals and career aspirations. Each officer should be given information on how to obtain their goals in this Department and fill out a brief survey regarding their past performance and their goals to give their supervisors a general understanding on how they would ultimately like to proceed with their career.

In the event an officer decides to leave the Department, an exit interview shall be completed. This exit interview will allow the police department the ability to identify what ultimately caused the officer to leave and seek other employment.

Q. Conclusion:

In police agencies in the United States, resources committed to recruiting and hiring traditionally have been minimal. Most agencies that are smaller in size cannot afford a full-time recruitment staff. This Department has recognized that recruiting and hiring will continue throughout the year and will continue to seek out qualified applicants as defined in this report. “Consequently,

neighboring agencies are competing for individuals from the same hiring pool of potential candidates” (U.S. Department of Justice, 2019). This Department also has identified that with the ever-changing demands in regard to modern law enforcement, it is vital that a well-established workforce be maintained that strives to relate and serve the community in order to build relationships and the trust needed for an effective police department.

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