

BART POLICE OFFICER SELECTION AND TRAINING PROCESS

The selection and training of BART police officers are conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), by the Police Department with support from the Human Resources Department.

POST standards require that officers must be:

- Free of any felony convictions;
- A citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien who is eligible for and has applied for citizenship (all officers must be US citizens at time of appointment);
- At least 18 years of age; fingerprinted for purposes of search of local, state, and national fingerprint files to disclose any criminal record;
- Of good moral character, as determined by a thorough background investigation;
- A high school graduate, pass the General Education Development test or have attained a two-year or four-year degree from an accredited institution,
- Found to be free from any physical, emotional, or mental condition which might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer.

BART Police Officer minimum qualifications require at least 30 semester (45 quarter) hours of college course work, at least half of which must be in analytical subjects requiring written reports or examinations. Officers must be 21 years old at the time of their swearing-in.

The following is an outline of Police Officer selection process:

Phase I – Screening and Testing

Entry-level and lateral police officer jobs are open continuously.

The applications of candidates who are serving as police officers at other California law enforcement agencies are screened for minimum qualifications by Human Resources and sent to the Police Department for further processing.

Entry-level police officer candidates are invited to the POST written exam, administered by Human Resources Staff. Those who have received a T-score of 47 or higher on this test within California in preceding 12 months may proceed to the next phase of the process on the strength of the prior test score

BART uses the *POST Entry-Level Law Enforcement Test Battery* (PELLETB) exam. This test battery consists of two components: one evaluates writing ability and the other reading ability. The writing component of the test measures clarity, vocabulary, and spelling. The reading component measures reading comprehension. The following is a brief summary of each section.

Writing Ability -- Each of three writing sub-tests contains 15 items. A *clarity sub-test* is intended to measure the test-taker's ability to identify examples of clear writing. The *spelling* and *vocabulary sub-tests* use a standard multiple-choice format .

Reading Ability -- The two sub-tests are *reading comprehension*, in which the test-taker reads passages and answers multiple-choice questions about the information contained in the passage; and the *CLOZE sub-test*, in which the test-taker must use contextual clues to make logical choices for missing words.

Candidates who complete the POST written exam with a weighted score of no less than 47 are then screened based on the minimum qualifications and forwarded to the Police Department for the next phase of the selection process.

Phase II -Physical Agility Test and Oral Interview

The Police Department administers these portions of the process, and notifies the Human Resources Department of the candidates who should move forward in the process.

The **Physical Agility Test** is a timed test consisting of the following five exercises:

- Chain-Link Fence: Run 25 yards to a 6-foot chain-linked fence, climb over fence and continue running another 5 yards.
- Solid-Fence Climb: Run 25 yards to a 6-foot solid fence, climb over fence and continue running another 5 yards.
- Obstacle Course: Run a 99-yard obstacle course consisting of several sharp turns, a number of curb-height obstacles and a 34-inch high obstacle that must be vaulted.
- Body Drag: Lift and drag a 165-pound human shaped dummy 32 feet.
- 500-Yard Run

Candidates who pass the physical agility test are invited to interview.

The **Oral Interview** follows the POST Peace Officer Candidate Hiring Interview Guidelines, based on questions from the POST Oral Interview Question Bank. The questions themselves are protected by BART's security agreement with POST, but the subjects from which the questions are selected include experience, interest/motivation, interpersonal skills, problem-solving, integrity, community involvement/awareness, and background. Interviews are conducted by a panel of three sworn members of the Department who have been trained in POST hiring practices based on *Interviewing Peace*

Officer Candidates: Hiring Interview Guidelines. Each section of the interview is scored 1 - 7, with 3 as the minimum passing score; candidates must receive a passing score in each category. Candidates placed at the top of the eligible candidates list are those who best meet the needs of the Department.

Upon successful completion of the interview, candidates are asked to complete a background investigation packet, and must pass a polygraph examination.

Phase III - Background Investigation

BART utilizes POST-certified background investigators to conduct all employment background checks. The dimensions listed below are investigated based on specific behavioral indicators as identified in the POST Background Investigation Manual Guidelines. Once completed, background investigations are then reviewed by command staff and the Chief of Police.

The POST dimensions include:

Moral Character -- integrity, impulse control/attention to safety, risk-taking behavior, including substance abuse;

Handling Stress and Adversity -- ability to confront and overcome problems, obstacles, and adversity;

Work Habits -- conscientiousness;

Interactions with Others -- interpersonal skills; and

Intellectually Based Abilities -- decision making and judgment, learning ability and communication skills.

Phase IV- Offer and Pre-employment Processes

Once the candidate successfully completes the background investigation process, the Police Department requests that an offer be made to the candidate by The Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Department extends the job offer with a tentative start date contingent upon successful completion of a drug screen, psychological exam and medical exam.

When the Human Resources Department receives the candidate's acceptance of the job offer, it notifies the Police Department, which then schedules the psychological exam. The Human Resources Department schedules the medical exam and drug screen.

BART utilizes Kaiser Permanente Occupational Medicine for all pre-employment medical exams. Human Resources staff provides Kaiser with a Police Officer job description and authorization form that specifies testing under POST standards. Kaiser Physicians conduct exams based on the POST Medical Screening Manual.

The Psychological exam is performed by *Law Enforcement Psychological Services, Inc.* based on the POST psychological screening requirements.

Phase V- Job Offer Confirmation

Candidates who successfully complete the pre-employment exam sections receive a confirmation letter from the Human Resources Department. All newly hired police officers attend a three-day new employee orientation.

Training Process

The Police Department adheres to POST Standards for training as well as selection processes. Entry level police officers must attend a POST academy for six-months, have up to 22 weeks of field training, and then serve a one-year probationary period. Lateral police officers require 12-16 weeks of field training and a one-year probationary period.