

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.
- Be legally authorized to work in the United States under federal law.
- At least 21 years of age except provided by Government Code 1031.4;
- 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 (11 CCR 1953).
- Has a high school diploma, passed the General Education Development/High School Equivalency test, or has attained a two-year or four-year degree from an accredited institution.
- Found to be free from any physical, emotional, or mental condition, including bias against or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, which might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer (11 CCR 1954;11 CCR 1955).

Candidates can apply at age 20. Officers must be 21 years old at the time of their swearing-in.

The following is an outline of the Police Officer selection process:

Phase I – Screening and Testing

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

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

Entry-level police officer candidates are invited to take the POST written exam, administered by Human Resources Staff. Those who have received a T-score of 42 or higher on this test within California in the previous 12 months may move on to the next step in the process based on their 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 42 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 which candidates should move forward.

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

Stage 1: Obstacle Course: 4.5-foot wall climb, Cone Maze, Run, & Ditch & Dummy:

- This will test your ability to climb onto a platform from track level. The wall is 4.5 feet high. The starting position will begin at the start line, behind the small cones. On the “Ready Go” command, you will run, jump, and climb the wall. You may use your feet to scale the wall, but **you must not touch the side supports**. If you do touch the supports, you will fail the test. If you are unsuccessful in your first attempt to get over the wall, continue trying until you succeed.

After successfully scaling the wall, you will run over to the Cone Maze. This test simulates a short-distance foot pursuit that may occur in a BART station parking lot or on a crowded platform. The test requires you to make frequent changes in direction while running as fast as possible.

You will enter the Maze on the left side, running a weaving pattern through the cones. You will run around the last cone, exiting the maze, and run towards the

marked concrete pillar. If you knock over any cones or enter the maze on the right side, you will fail the test.

After successfully completing the Cone Maze and running to the marked pillar, you will run a straightaway. This test simulates a clear platform and/or roadway.

You must pass all five concrete pillars. At the fifth and last pillar, you will turn around and run towards the ditch and dummy drag. Cutting through the course will result in a fail.

This test simulates jumping over a ditch and moving someone who is physically incapacitated. The ditch is 4 feet wide and is marked by small cones. You must successfully clear the ditch. If you do not clear the ditch, you will fail the test. After clearing the ditch, you will lift and drag a lifelike dummy that is lying face up on the ground while you move or shuffle backwards. The dummy must be lifted and dragged around the cone. If you knock the cone over, you will fail the test. When lifting and dragging the dummy, do not grab or pull the dummy by the arms. Do not grab the dummy by the head, as this may damage the dummy. You cannot lift the dummy over your shoulder. Once the dummy's feet clear the last cone, the proctor will say "drop!", drop the dummy down, and run back toward the dummy drag start cones. That is when time will end for the entire obstacle course. You will have **1 minute and 20 seconds** to complete the course. You will get two chances to successfully complete this course.

Stage 2: 500-Yard Run

- This test simulates a long-distance foot pursuit and requires that you run 500 yards. Applicants will start at the corner of 8th and Oak Street. On the "Ready GO!" command, applicants will run the block 1.5 times in a counterclockwise direction, ending at the corner of 7th and Madison. Do not cut through the parking lot. Applicants will have **2 minutes and 25 seconds** to complete.

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 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 Department's needs.

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 examined using specific behavioral indicators identified in the POST Background Investigation Manual Guidelines. Once completed, background investigations are then reviewed by the 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.

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, the Police Department requests that the Human Resources Department extend an offer. 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 Concentra Occupational Medicine for all pre-employment medical exams. Human Resources staff provides Concentra with a Police Officer job description and an authorization form specifying testing under POST standards. Concentra Physicians conduct exams based on the POST Medical Screening Manual.

The Psychological exam is conducted by a POST-certified Psychological Evaluator in accordance with 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 and 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.