

Londonderry Police Department

Hiring Process

Purpose:

The purpose of the LPD hiring process is to solicit and ultimately hire highly qualified, motivated, physically capable, Officers to serve on one of the most progressive and successful departments in the State. The residents of Londonderry have historically been given and expect a high quality of service from the Police Department. We at Londonderry PD hold ourselves to a high standard that demands professionalism and a quality work product that begins with hiring qualified people. The five phases of our extensive hiring process are detailed below.

Recruitment:

The Londonderry Police Department has been very active in attempting to recruit Officers from all walks of life. The recruiting process has successfully targeted candidates at the collegiate level as well as all levels of previous employment. Once a written application and processing fee is received, the candidate is given a date to attend the first phase of the hiring process. It is not uncommon to have almost two hundred people scheduled for the first phase of the hiring process

Phase I:

Written Exam/ Physical Agility Test

The written exam and physical agility test are held on the same day. The testing location utilized is Londonderry High School cafeteria, gym facility, and running track. The Londonderry High School campus is located directly across the street from the Londonderry Police Department. Candidates will need to have a medical waiver completed and signed ensuring they are physically able to participate in the process.

Written Test

The written exam is a timed standardized test, designed to discover the suitability of a candidate for the law enforcement profession. All testing supplies are provided, to include pencils and scrap paper. The candidate need only bring a valid form of identification that will be maintained until all testing materials are returned at the conclusion of the exam. The test is conducted in the high school cafeteria under the supervision of testing proctors and observers.

Upon completion of the written exam, candidates bring their test answer sheet, test booklet, scrap paper, and pencils to a scoring station located on the side of the room. The test will be graded immediately to determine if the candidate can continue on with the process. A minimum passing grade of 70 is needed to be invited to take the physical agility test. If a passing score is obtained, candidates are given the physical agility form with their age written on the top of the form. Candidates are then directed to the gym to complete the physical agility test.

Note: Prior full-time NH certified officers are not required to take the written and may proceed directly to the physical agility testing station.

Physical Agility Test

The first station in the physical agility test is the weigh in. Candidates are weighed on a scale to obtain their body weight. Once their body weight is known, calculations are completed to determine the next evolution.

The next station in the testing is a bench press station. The bench press is conducted on a “Free Weight” bench set up. That simply means there is a bench and an unconnected Olympic barbell on which weight will be placed to be lifted.

Candidates will be given three lifts to obtain the one repetition max weight needed to pass. The weight needed to lift is determined by a formula taking into consideration age, gender, and weight. An acceptable repetition needs to have the following:

1. Candidate must hold weight unassisted momentarily before lowering into the press position.
2. The bar must touch the chest area with out bouncing.
3. The bar must then be pressed up to full extension.
4. Any assistance from spotters at any point in the repetition will be considered a fail.

The next station is the push-up station. Candidates will be required to perform a standard push-up as directed and demonstrated by the proctors/ observers. The minimum number of push ups each candidate needs to complete is determined by age and gender. This station is encouraged to be a maximum effort station, in that each candidate is encouraged to perform to maximum effort and not simply perform the number of push-ups needed and stop. The number of push-ups completed is counted by the proctor; no challenge of the number scored is allowed during the process.

The next station is the sit-up station. Candidates will be required to perform a standard sit-up as directed and demonstrated by the proctors/observers. The number of sit-ups each candidate needs to complete is determined by age and gender and the candidate has one minute to complete them. This station is also encouraged to be a maximum effort station, in that each candidate is encouraged to perform to maximum effort and not simply perform the number of sit-ups needed and stop. The number of sit-ups is counted by the proctor; no challenge of the number scored is allowed during the process.

The next station is the one and one half mile run. After completing the other stations, the candidates are directed out to the running track. Once there, candidates will be arranged into groups having a maximum of six runners. Candidates will be assigned a proctor for the run and will report to this specific proctor during the run. Candidates will be required to complete the run in a time determined by age and gender. This station is also encouraged to be a maximum effort station, in that each candidate is encouraged to perform to maximum effort and not simply finish the run in the time allowed.

During the run, each candidate will shout his/her last name and the number lap they are on. (Example – “Jones...two”) This information is needed to make sure the proctor and the runner have counted the same number of laps. The number of laps is counted by the proctor; no challenge of the number of laps run is allowed during the process. After completing the last lap, each candidate is required to walk one entire lap around the track as a cool off lap.

Note: If any station is failed, the candidate is not allowed to continue on to the next station for experience. A failure results in an immediate disqualification and the candidate will be directed to leave the testing station/ campus.

Phase II:

Oral Board

The next phase in the hiring process is an Oral Board interview. An Oral Board is a structured interview, in which a candidate is asked a set of questions determined by the board. The Oral Board is made up of three to five members of the Londonderry Police Department. The questions are chosen by the board and each participating candidate is asked the same questions in the same order. Board members are permitted to ask follow up questions of the candidate based on answers provided.

Oral Boards are offered to top scoring candidates from Phase I, as well as all certified members who passed the physical agility test. The number of candidates offered an oral board will vary depending on the scores of the candidates. (Example: All candidates who have scored X and above). The candidates will be contacted and a date scheduled through the administrative secretary.

The Oral Board is designed to evaluate all facets of the candidate possible through verbal discussion and presentation. The candidates who choose to participate will be rated in one of three categories: Highly Recommended, Recommended, and Not Recommended. The totality of the interview is taken into account from punctuality and dress, to verbal skills and articulated logic and decision making.

Phase III:

Interview with Chief of Police

The candidates scoring in the Highly Recommended and Recommended categories are invited to an interview with the Chief of Police. In addition to the Chief of Police, the three other top ranking administrators may take part in the interview. This interview provides the Chief of Police with the opportunity to meet the candidates and ask questions of him/her. It is after this meeting, the Chief of Police makes a decision on which candidate will be given a conditional offer of employment to work at the Londonderry Police Department.

Phase IV:

Background Investigation

The top performing candidate will be given a conditional offer of employment. Acceptance of this offer then begins the most extensive phase of the hiring process. All candidates go through an extensive background check that includes every area of concern as well as a polygraph exam. The following areas are some of the topics that will be reviewed:

1. Medical history
2. Military history (If applicable)
3. Criminal history
4. Driving history
5. Personality traits/ behaviors
6. Any unlawful sexual activity.
7. Employment history
8. References
9. Financial history
10. Prior drug use or other criminal acts
11. Any other area of concern

Psychological Exam

All candidates will also be required to complete a psychological questionnaire and meet with a certified Psychologist. The psychological questionnaire is approximately 1000 questions designed to assist the police psychologist in determining if the candidate is fit for duty mentally. The psychologist will be chosen at the discretion of the Londonderry Police Department.

Polygraph Exam

All candidates will be required to complete and pass a pre-polygraph interview and polygraph. The Londonderry Police Department has two certified polygraph examiners. The polygraph, sometimes referred to as a "lie detector", is another structured interview where a computerized scientific instrument is utilized to assist the examiner in determining if a candidate has been truthful throughout the entire process thus far. This psycho-physiological detection of deception is the last step in Phase IV.

Phase V: Police Academy and Field Training

Police Academy

Once a candidate passes all steps in the prior phases, the candidate will be sworn in as a Police Officer with the Town of Londonderry. The Sworn Officer will then attend the New Hampshire Police Academy located in Concord NH. The following excerpt is taken directly from the NH Police Academy Standards and Training website:

Each Police Academy graduate has completed intensive on-site training intended to give them the core knowledge necessary to work as a police officer. The police academy is 14 weeks long and requires the recruits to

live on-site, except for weekends. The Academy is paramilitary in nature, and requires military discipline (marching, saluting, etc.) They day begins at 5:30 am, with an exercise program to strengthen the body and improve endurance, in the multi-functional Tactical Center. Recruits may also run indoors on the 1/10-mile track on-site. After breakfast and lunch, they receive classroom training in laws, ethics, report writing, human relations, first aid, and many other topics. The recruit's day ends with "lights out" at 9:30 pm, after a short study period.

Recruits receive both classroom and practical firearms training in the Academy's state-of-the-art indoor firing range. They also receive practical and scenario-based training on everything from traffic stops and defensive tactics to building searches. Motor vehicle stops can even be simulated inside the facility, in the Tactical Center, which contains a realistic street scene, and can hold several vehicles, while removing all of the exhaust fumes with a state-of-the-art ventilation system. The grounds also include a self-contained "track" for the practical driving exercises. The Academy also has two "skid cars" which can simulate less-than-ideal driving conditions, including glare ice, on ordinary pavement.

The Officer will be trained in all areas of Law Enforcement to form the minimum basis of knowledge needed to work as a certified Officer. This knowledge is just the beginning of what is needed to perform in a solo beat officer capacity; the knowledge will be put to work in the Londonderry Police Department Field Training Program.

Field Training Officer Program (FTO)

Once an Officer graduates from the Police Academy, the task of putting all the knowledge gained while at the Academy into practice is started. The Officer is now a "trainee" in the FTO program and is assigned to the first of three, seasoned Officers that will work with and train the new Officer. This program is an intense 12 week training cycle that will get the trainee ready to work safely and effectively on their own (Solo Beat Officer).

The seasoned Officers that serve in the role of Field Training Officer (FTO) have been certified in field training and will be the immediate supervisor of the trainee. Once assigned to a FTO, the trainee reports for duty on the same shift and same location of the FTO. The FTO will then work with and show the trainee how to perform the functions of a solo beat officer with Londonderry PD. The training team of FTO and Trainee will respond to calls for service and perform all duties together for the duration of the training cycle.

As the training progresses, the trainee will be expected to take on more responsibilities and perform at a higher level. The trainee will be transferred to a total of three (3) FTO's and three different shifts (Days, Afternoons, and Midnights) during the training and be evaluated daily. A detailed evaluation of the trainee's performance is needed to determine if the trainee can perform solo beat officer work.

At the end of the training program, the trainee will be tested for knowledge and decision making with an oral board. This oral board is made up of a combination of Field Training Officers, Field Training Supervisor, and the Uniform Operation Division Captain or his designee. If the trainee passes this last evolution in the last phase of the hiring process, the trainee is no longer a trainee, but a fully certified and trained Londonderry Police Officer. The Officer will then be assigned to work in the same capacity as the other highly trained Officers that make up the Londonderry Police Department.