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Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PERSONNEL POLICY

Promotional Process

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1. Purpose

To provide members of the Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) with guidelines regarding the procedures for promotion within the Agency.

2. Policy

The Harford County Sheriff's Office provides an equal opportunity for all of its members to compete and be considered for promotion. The components of its promotional process are non-discriminatory, are job-related and based upon business necessity. However, the process does not guarantee or create entitlement to promotion for any individual candidate

3. Procedures

A. Human Resources (HR) Director or designee, is responsible for all operational aspects of the promotional process including, but not limited to, preparation of announcements, administration of the written examination and oral interview boards, calculation of probationary periods and the final compilation of the promotion eligibility lists.

B. Process Phases

1. The process for promotion to the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant, and Lieutenant will consist of a qualification phase and a competition phase. The ranks of Major and Captain are appointed by the Sheriff.
2. Each candidate will be responsible for meeting all established procedures including, but not limited to, deadlines and punctual appearance at the written examination and oral interview board.
3. Falsification or misrepresentation of any information or documentation furnished by the candidate will automatically disqualify the candidate from the process and may result in disciplinary action.
4. Any member on probation is not eligible to compete for promotion.
5. Any member reduced in rank is not eligible to compete in the promotional process for two (2) years from the date of demotion.

C. Probationary Status

1. Promotion to deputy first class will be automatic upon satisfactory completion of probationary period and satisfactory performance evaluations.
2. Promotion to senior deputy will be automatic upon satisfactory completion of ten (10) years of service in the classification (law enforcement or corrections).
3. Probationary period is twenty-four (24) months for recruits.
4. Probationary period is eighteen (18) months for laterals.

D. Application Process

1. Interested candidates for promotion will apply per the procedures set by the HR Director by the closing date for application as stated in the Personnel Order (Form SO-220).
2. Interested candidates will complete an Application for Promotion (Form SO-067) and submit to the HR Director by the given deadline.
3. The HR Director will ensure all candidates meet the minimum qualifications before allowing the candidates to participate in the process.
 - a. any candidate not meeting the minimum qualification requirement will be notified by Agency email by the HR Director within fifteen (15) days of completion of the application phase with the reason(s) the candidate did not meet the minimum qualifications.
 - b. any candidate may appeal eligibility by submitting a Memorandum (Form SO-212) to the Chief Deputy or his designee and request the decision to be reconsidered.
 - c. the appeal must state the reason(s) the candidate believes that he is eligible and must be submitted within seventy-two (72) hours of the candidate's notification of ineligibility.
 - d. the Chief Deputy or his designee will meet with the appealing candidate within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday and holidays) of receipt of the appeal.
 - e. the decision of the Chief Deputy or his designee, after consultation with the Sheriff, is final.

E. Qualification Phase

1. To qualify for promotion to the ranks of corporal, sergeant and lieutenant, a member must receive a rating of "Satisfactory" in all factors as documented on the most recent Performance Appraisal Report (PAR).
2. To be eligible to participate in the promotional process, a member will meet the following time in grade criteria:
 - a. DFC to corporal: 1095 days in grade in the classification being sought (Law enforcement or Corrections) as of November 1st. Time as a probationary deputy does not count towards time in grade.

- b. corporal to sergeant: 730 days in grade in the classification being sought (Law Enforcement or Corrections) and six (6) years of service in the Harford County Sheriff's Office as of November 1st.
 - c. sergeant to lieutenant: 730 days in grade in the classification being sought (Law Enforcement or Corrections) and ten (10) years of service in the Harford County Sheriff's Office as of November 1st.
 - d. eligible participants in the promotional process can only compete for the next higher rank.
3. If a complaint is active on the candidate, the candidate will be allowed to compete for promotion (unless the member is suspended without pay).
- a. if the case results in disciplinary action, the candidate may face demotion from the newly appointed rank or expulsion from the entire process.

4. Competition Phase

a. competition for corporal and sergeant:

- (i) seniority – one (1) point per year of service (in classification being sought) up to ten (10) maximum.
- (ii) education – five (5) points maximum.
- (iii) written examination – one hundred (100) points maximum (must get a minimum of seventy (70) points to continue in the process).
- (iv) oral interview board – one hundred (100) points maximum.

b. competition for lieutenant:

- (i) education – five (5) points maximum.
- (ii) written examination – one hundred (100) points maximum (must get a minimum of seventy (70) points to continue in the process).
- (iii) oral interview board – one hundred (100) points maximum.

5. Education Points

- a. The assessed points for qualifying degrees/college credits from an Accredited College/University are as follows:

30 Credits.....	One (1) point
60 Credits.....	Two (2) points
61+ Credits (no degree).....	Three (3) points
AA Degree.....	Three (3) points
Bachelor's Degree.....	Four (4) points
Master's Degree.....	Five (5) points

- b. credit is not given for multiple degrees.
- c. additional documentation may be requested by the HR Director to confirm credits/degree.

6. Written Examination

- a. a candidate taking any written examination is required to attain a minimum score as established for the rank being sought in order to continue in the competition phase of the promotion process.
- b. the written examination for promotion will be held on the second (2nd) Saturday of October.
- c. candidates competing for the ranks of corporal and sergeant will take a one hundred (100) question multiple choice examination that will consist of an open book and a closed book section with questions being directly related to the rank being sought.
- d. candidates competing for the rank of lieutenant will take a one hundred (100) question multiple choice examination that will consist of a closed book section only with questions being directly related to the rank being sought.
- e. ninety (90) days prior to the date of the written examination, the HR Director will post an updated list of study material used as the source of test questions.
- f. only policies in effect prior to the distribution of the study guide will be utilized for question purposes.

7. Resume Submission

- a. candidates for promotion will be required to submit a resume.
- b. the resume must be in the standard format provided and will be no more than two (2) pages (single sided printing only) and font "Times New Roman" twelve (12).
- c. the resume will be factual; any deliberate discrepancies found within the resume will eliminate the candidate from the promotion process and may result in disciplinary action.
- d. the resume will be presented to the oral interview board and used to assist them in scoring the motivation and/or specialized training sections of the Interview Grading Sheet.
- e. the resume will not be used to score written communication skills.

8. Oral Interview Board Procedures

- a. at the conclusion of the written examination segment, and for the good of the Agency, the Sheriff may authorize a modification of the oral interview boards; this modification would only be made in situations where there is a single candidate competing for the rank or when external board members are not available to fill the positions.

- b. the HR Director will make arrangements for the oral board interviews and will make available an Oral Interview Board Information Sheet notifying candidates of the date and time of the interview a minimum of seven (7) calendar days in advance of the scheduled oral interview.
- c. candidates for all ranks will be scheduled for the oral interview board in four (4) parts.
 - (i) part I – written exercise: the candidate will be given fifteen (15) minutes to prepare a written response, using a provided computer, to a given question. This written response will be reviewed by the board and scored as Written Communication Skills on the Interview Grading Sheet.
 - (ii) part II – scenario preparation: the candidate will be presented with scenario-based question(s). Corporal and sergeant candidates will be given twenty (20) minutes to formulate hand-written responses to one (1) question. Lieutenant candidates will be given forty (40) minutes to formulate hand-written responses to two (2) questions.
 - (iii) part III – oral interview board: the candidate will be allotted no more than five (5) minutes to introduce themselves to the Oral Interview Board. This introduction will be given prior to any scenario questions and cannot be deferred to the end of the interview. Time not used for the introduction cannot be used for, or added to, the scenario portion of the process. Responses given during this time may be considered during the Motivation and/or Specialized Training sections of the Interview Grading Sheet.
 - (iv) part IV – the candidate will be presented with an additional scenario-based question. The candidate will showcase their job knowledge and problem solving skills by verbally answering the question. The candidate will then present their prepared responses to the scenario question(s). Specific benchmarks will be identified for each scenario question and these benchmarks will assist the board members with scoring. If time permits, prior to the end of the interview, the candidate will be given an opportunity to address any missed benchmarks on any of the questions. The candidate will have no more than thirty (30) minutes for corporal and sergeant, and forty (40) minutes for lieutenant, to complete the scenario portion of the interview.
- d. during the interview, the board may ask additional questions of the candidate. These questions will not be subjective in nature. Any additional questions from the board must have a specific goal to clarify information presented during the interview or on the resume submitted.
- e. candidates, at their discretion, will wear their uniform of the day or professional business attire to the oral interview board.
- f. if electing to wear the uniform, candidates will only be permitted to wear their name tag, badge and rank insignia. No medals, awards or commendations will be worn.
- g. the completed Oral Interview Rating Packets will be given to the HR Director for scoring.
- h. board members must come to a consensus about each candidate. The grand total on the Interview Grading Sheet may differ by no more than five (5) total points among the board members.

9. Oral Interview Board Structure

- a. the Harford County Sheriff's Office strives to ensure that all candidates competing for promotion are provided with a fair opportunity when competing before the Oral Interview Board. Therefore, the Agency will strive to ensure that all interview boards are diverse in their composition.
- b. at a minimum, oral board members will be of the rank being sought, and may be no more than one rank higher than the rank being sought.
- c. generally, outside agencies will be used for the board members. Only members of a full-service law enforcement agency can participate on a law enforcement board and only members working in a correctional capacity can sit on a correctional board.
- d. there will be three (3) board members and one (1) alternate. The alternate will be present during the entire process, but may only contribute if one of the primary board members is excused.
- e. primary board members must excuse themselves if they have, or have had, a personal or professional relationship with any applicant.
- f. a Human Resources Representative of the Harford County Sheriff's Office must be present at all of the Oral Interview Boards to ensure the integrity of the process. This person will be seated in the room in such a way as to ensure that the board cannot infer any information from non-verbal clues given by the representative.
- g. all board members will meet prior to the beginning of the board process for training. This will consist of responsibilities and expectations of board members and familiarization with the oral board rating process and rank structure.

10. Promotional Eligibility List

- a. the HR Director will create a promotional eligibility list of candidates in descending order from the total score derived from the competitive process by issuing a Personnel Order (Form SO-220) within ten (10) calendar days of the completion of the competitive process.
- b. a promotional eligibility list becomes effective upon posting and supersedes the previous list. A promotional eligibility list may be extended at the discretion of the Sheriff.
- c. a tie for the ranks of corporal, sergeant and lieutenant will be decided by:
 - (i) Seniority in the Agency; then
 - (ii) Written Examination Score; then
 - (iii) Oral Interview Board Score.
- d. the Sheriff will select members for promotion in order from the promotional eligibility list for each vacancy. The Sheriff reserves the right to skip a member on the list due to an open internal affairs case, poor performance, or for the good of the Agency.
- e. specific assignments will be at the discretion of the Sheriff.

- f. a candidate who refuses a promotion is no longer eligible for promotion from the current promotional eligibility list.
- g. a candidate may review his overall score and ranking after the promotional eligibility list has been posted by requesting a meeting with the HR Director. A member may review his promotion file until June 30th.

11. Written Examination Process Review and Appeal

- a. all written examination questions will be reviewed by the HR Director for validity.
- b. a statistical analysis will be conducted on each test question. A question that was missed by two-thirds (2/3) of the test takers will automatically be reviewed by the Chief Deputy or his designee and the HR Director.
- c. the Chief Deputy will assign, from the Command Staff, an Appeals Officer to be present during the written examination.
- d. candidates will be permitted to appeal a test question immediately at the testing site once the examination for all candidates is complete.
- e. no challenges will be permitted once the candidate has left the testing site.
- f. a candidate may withdraw an appeal at any time during the process.
- g. appeals will be presented to the Appeals Officer by use of the Written Examination Appeals Form (SO-181). The candidate will be required to complete a form for each question that he wants to appeal. Each appeal should specify exactly why the validity of the question is in doubt.
- h. the Appeals Officer will review each of the Written Examination Appeals Forms with the candidate. The question will be researched in the cited reference material. The Appeals Officer will determine if the appeal is valid. If the appeal is validated the Appeals Officer will meet with the Chief Deputy within five (5) business days of the test date for final disposition of credit to be given.
- i. after review, the Chief Deputy or his designee will decide the final outcome of the appeal. If the appeal is validated the appropriate candidates will receive credit for the test question. The appealing candidate will receive notification of the final outcome of the appeal from the HR Director.
- j. the Chief Deputy or his designee will determine the validity of examination questions that are in doubt due to statistical analysis. If the suspect question is determined to be invalid, the applicable candidates will receive credit for the question.

12. Promotional Process Appeal & Nullification

- a. an appeal of any portion of the promotional process will be made to the Chief Deputy by submitting a Memorandum (Form SO-212).

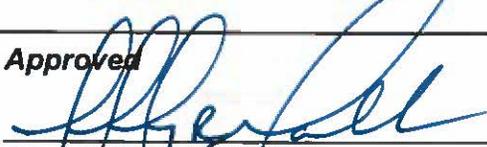
- b. the appeal stating the reason must be received by the Chief Deputy or his designee within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday and holidays) of the posting of the promotional eligibility list.
- c. the Chief Deputy or his designee will meet with the appealing member and forward a recommendation to the Sheriff within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday and holidays) of receipt of the appeal.
- d. the Sheriff will render a final decision within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday and holidays) of receipt of the recommendation.
- e. any modification in a member's standing on the promotional eligibility list resulting from an appeal will be made known to all affected members by Memorandum (Form SO-212) prior to the posting of a revised promotional eligibility list.
- f. the Sheriff may nullify any promotional process in total or in part and reinstate the promotional process for any reason.

13. Military Leave

- a. the HCSO will not conduct a modified or special promotional process to accommodate deputies who are unable to fulfill all requirements of the promotional process due being on approved military leave.
- b. a deputy, who is activated and placed on approved military leave, and whose position on a promotional list would have resulted in a promotion had he not been activated or placed on approved military leave, will be promoted within 14 days of their return to the Agency.
- c. the deputy's promotion and pay grade will be retroactive to the date he should have been promoted had he not been on military leave.

14. Training Upon Promotion

- a. unless a valid waiver is received from the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC), all deputies who are promoted to the rank of corporal must attend First Line Supervisor training within one year of promotion.
- b. unless a valid waiver is received from the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC), all deputies who are promoted to the rank of lieutenant must attend First Line Administrator training within one year of promotion.
- c. Any deputy who believes he is eligible for a waiver due to previous education, training or experience should contact the Training Academy for information on how to apply for a waiver.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 7/10/17