

## RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge this department's, governmental entity's and/or any of this department's employees' civil or criminal liability in any way. It is not to be construed as the creation of a particular standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to any complaint, demand for settlement, or any other form of grievance or litigation. Violations of this directive, if substantiated, can only form the basis for intra-departmental administrative sanctions.

Chief of Police: Jerry Hoover /s/		
Legal Advisor: Karen Fraley /s/		
Approving Deputy Chief:		
General Order No: E-250-04	Issued: June 8, 2004	Supersedes: 4/776.000
General Order Title: <b>PRE-EMPLOYMENT EXAMS AND BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS</b>		

### POLICY

The Reno Police Department, in conjunction with the Civil Service Commission, is actively involved in the examination and selection of personnel for most entry-level civilian and sworn positions within the department. The department also conducts background investigations on entry-level applicants.

The background/pre-employment investigation is a two-step process. A preliminary background investigation results in submission of the applicant's investigation report to a Deputy Chief's Board. If the Deputy Chief's board approves an application and makes a conditional offer of employment to the applicant, medical and psychological testing, as well as a polygraph examination, may take place.

### PROCEDURES

#### Pre-Employment Examinations

The Training Division Commander or his designee is responsible, upon agreement of the Office of the Chief of Police and the Civil Service Commission, for assisting the Civil Service Commission in the preparation and administration of an entry-level applicant examination or examination portion. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to:

- Conducting a job analysis;
- Preparing examination announcements;
- Screening applicants;
- Reviewing and/or preparing testing materials;
- Preparing standardized oral interview rating sheets and questionnaires;
- Maintaining a secure file of prepared testing materials administered by the Training Division;
- Providing input to the Civil Service Commission on the preparation of useful, valid tests

- that have minimal adverse impact; and
- Administering written, oral, and practical examinations as required.

## **Background Investigations**

### **Responsibilities**

The Training Division Commander or his designee is responsible for conducting background investigations. Background investigations will be conducted on entry-level and lateral-hire applicants. The purpose of the background investigation is to examine the personal history, behavior patterns and conduct of entry level applicants for police service in order to determine if patterns exist that would effect:

- The applicant's fitness to perform duties of the position;
- The public trust;
- The confidentiality of sensitive information; or
- The applicant's ability to meet legal requirements mandated by Nevada POST regulations.

### **Scope of Investigations**

The background investigation will explore an applicant's personal history, behavior patterns and conduct. The background investigation may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Employment history;
- Driving history, including accidents;
- Criminal history checks;
- Military history;
- A minimum of three personal references;
- Use of drugs/narcotics;
- Credit check;
- Residence check;
- Rental history;
- Neighborhood checks;
- Check of present or former spouse, to include finances, roommates, etc.

Information for the background investigation will be taken from, but not be limited to, the City of Reno employment application and the Reno Police Department Personal History Statement.

### **Background Interviews**

After all background information has been received, the background investigator will meet with the applicant to discuss the contents of the investigation file and any disparities or differences between information on the applicant's Personal History Statement and the employment application.

### **Medical Examination**

Applicants for specified positions who have received conditional offers of hire will be required to take and pass medical examinations. The medical examination will determine the applicant's medical fitness to perform the duties of the position sought. All medical information will be kept confidential. Only information concerning a potentially disqualifying condition will be shared with the Deputy Chief's Board.

### **Psychological Evaluation**

Applicants for specified positions who have received conditional offers of hire will be required to undergo and pass psychological evaluations. The psychological evaluation will determine the applicant's psychological fitness to perform the duties of the position sought. The psychologist's report will be reviewed by the members of the Deputy Chief's Board but will otherwise be kept confidential.

### **Polygraph Examination**

Any individual seeking a salaried position with the Reno Police Department is required to take and pass a polygraph test. The polygraph test will verify that all of the information provided to the background investigators was truthful and accurate and that there was no deliberate attempt to falsify any of the information requested of the applicant prior to employment.

1. Only areas of an applicant's background which are demonstratively related to employment in law enforcement, and as approved by department staff, will be covered during the polygraph interview. Care will be exercised to ensure that all applicants are interviewed with equal focus on the same specific areas of their backgrounds. The format and matters covered during the interview will be consistent with the "Personnel Screening Worksheet."
2. Care will be taken to ensure that questions concerning the areas of sex, religion, political activity, and union or labor activity relate solely to criminal or wrongful acts, or matters in those areas that possess a potential for blackmail or other pressure on the applicant.
3. Should charts indicate ambiguous or questionable results, and if the applicant has not been otherwise disqualified from further consideration, the applicant will automatically be scheduled for further examination in an effort to resolve the ambiguities.
4. Except as it relates to involvement in prosecutable criminal acts, only persons directly involved in the selection process will be advised as to the information obtained from the applicant or the outcome of the applicant's examination. Such reports shall be verbal only, and will not be discussed with any individual who will directly supervise the applicant should he/she be hired.

### **Background Investigations Manual**

Basic techniques for conducting background investigations will comply with the following procedures:

- Nevada POST regulations establishing minimum standards for recruitment selection and training for peace officers; and
- The California Background Investigators Manual as revised by the Reno Police

Department.

### **Background Report Dissemination and Maintenance**

The Training Division Commander is responsible for ensuring that complete reports of an employment examination and/or background investigation are prepared and submitted to the Deputy Chief's Board with the Office of the Chief of Police having ultimate authority to accept or reject the applicant.

Maintenance of background investigation files is the responsibility of the Training Division Commander. Such investigations are highly confidential and not available to the public, or to members of the Department, without approval of the Chief of Police or designee. Background investigation records will be securely maintained in files as follows:

- Successful applicants – Permanently maintained.
- Unsuccessful applicants – The original background investigation file will be maintained for one year and will then be microfilmed and destroyed.
- The Department's Risk Manager will maintain the medical records' portion of the pre-employment background investigation permanently and separately from the original pre-employment background investigation file. The retention of these records will include successful and unsuccessful applicants.