

# Police Applicant Screening Service

[www.policestandards.org](http://www.policestandards.org)

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Monday through Friday

File #

Office Use Only

## APPLICANT INFORMATION PACKAGE

**Please read all this material carefully so you will understand the standards you must meet to successfully complete the PASS process and be eligible for employment as a law enforcement officer in the participating agencies of Pinellas County, Florida.**

The Police Applicant Screening Service (PASS) is operated by the law enforcement agencies of Pinellas County, Florida to provide candidate evaluation and background investigations for participating employers. After successful completion of the process, applicants join a pool of eligible candidates for one year, during which time they may be called for job interviews by these agencies. PASS is not an employer and participation does not guarantee that an applicant will receive a job interview or job offer. Individual agencies will conduct additional screening steps (such as medical examinations) to establish eligibility under their own employment requirements. Successful completion of the PASS process is also required for entry into the Police Academy at St. Petersburg College. **Applicants are not removed from consideration because of age, race, sex, religion, national origin or non-merit factors.**

## FEES

Applicants must pay a non-refundable fee that represents a small portion of actual processing costs.

**Amount:** One hundred twenty five dollars (\$125). This fee includes the cost of the CJ-BAT test.

**Due:** At time of registration for the screening process.

**Payment by:** No cash please. Make check or money order payable to:

**Pinellas Police Standards Council.**

Fees may be deferred or waived in cases of hardship. Ask a staff member if you need help.

## TIME IS IMPORTANT

Because it includes a thorough background investigation, the PASS Process takes time. We will make every effort to expedite your case, but your cooperation is essential. For instance, submitting an incomplete Personal History Form will substantially slow your progress. To help us use resources efficiently, inactive files will be closed and may require an administrative fee to re-open. This will include cases where the applicant fails to attend an appointment without calling in advance to cancel or re-schedule, or other cases where there is an unexplained lack of response on the part of the applicant.

## SCREENING PROCEDURES

Successful applicants must complete all of the following steps:

1. **Registration and payment of the required fee.** Applicants must register in person by presenting a government issued identification bearing a photograph (such as a driver license or passport), paying the registration fee by check or money order, acknowledging that they have read this Applicant Information Package, and completing a brief questionnaire to determine eligibility for processing. (Please see the next page to learn about PASS processing eligibility categories.)
2. **Fingerprints.** PASS provides a fingerprint card that must be completed at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Department, Technical Service Building, 4801-145th Avenue North, Largo, FL.
3. **Testing: Criminal Justice Basic Abilities Test (CJ-BAT)** This is a state required multiple-choice test measuring abilities needed for essential tasks performed by law enforcement officers. The test does not require or measure previous law enforcement experience or knowledge. A passing grade is required to continue in the PASS process. The results of this test are entered in a Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) database, available to all training centers and law enforcement agencies in Florida. **Writing Ability:** This is a multiple-choice test measuring the ability to identify grammar and spelling errors in writing samples. **Writing Sample:** Applicants must write a brief un-graded essay on an assigned topic. Regular testing is conducted every Tuesday (other days by special appointment) and requires most of the morning to complete. You must be registered before you can be scheduled for testing. Applicants who fail to appear for their test appointment without providing at least 24 hours advance notice to PASS will be charged an additional testing fee.
4. **Personal History Form (PHF).** The Applicant must complete this extensive questionnaire and provide PASS with written permission to conduct a background investigation. Do not sign or notarize the PHF until instructed to do so at your Administrative Interview. As potential employers will see this form, you should consider it an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to produce complete, accurate and legible written work.
5. **Administrative Interview.** Applicants must present required documents (see list on Page 5) and be interviewed by a PASS Investigator regarding the all information provided to or obtained by PASS. Because applicants are photographed at this interview, a professional appearance is encouraged.
6. **Background Investigation.** The background of eligible applicants is investigated in detail. This is the most time consuming part of the process and usually takes several weeks.
7. **Polygraph or Other Examination.** A Polygraph or other examination will be conducted as requested by a participating law enforcement agency.
8. **Entry into Candidate Pool.** Applicants who successfully complete all steps of the process will be notified by mail and placed in the Candidate Pool for one year. Participating agencies may call on them for interviews, medical or other screening procedures. Candidates in the pool are also eligible to enter the St. Petersburg College Police Academy.. After expiration from the pool, files may be re-opened or updated at the request of a participating law enforcement agency and payment of any additional required fee.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR PASS PROCESSING

To be eligible for PASS processing, you must meet at least **ONE** of the following qualifying education or life experiences. (All college degrees or credits must be earned at a school that is regionally accredited, or approved for Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission [CJSTC] Salary Incentives.):

1. You have earned at least an Associates Degree; OR
2. You have earned at least **60** semester hours of college credits. (You must have been in good standing during your last attendance, with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4-point scale.) ; OR
3. You have received an Honorable Discharge for active duty in one of the armed services, having successfully completed a regular enlistment without early separation, or having completed at least 12 months of active duty within an 18 month period during a reserve enlistment without early separation; OR
4. You are currently certified as a Florida Law Enforcement or Corrections Officer, having successfully completed a one-year probation - not counting academy attendance; OR
5. You are currently certified as Law Enforcement Officer in another state, the military or a federal law enforcement agency - meeting all requirements of a CJSTC Equivalency Of Training (EOT) review, including having successfully completed at least one year of employment as a full time law enforcement officer - not counting academy attendance.
6. **“Academy Only” Exception.** If you do not meet any of the preceding five qualifying life experiences, but you do have at least **30** college credits with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, OR you have earned a “Criminal Justice Practitioner Designation” from the Criminal Justice Academy at Pinellas Park High School, you may request **“Academy Only”** processing. Upon successful completion of this processing (you meet all other standards), you may then attend the Police Academy at St. Petersburg College to earn additional college credits. Because St. Petersburg College Police Academy attendance earns cadets at least an additional 30 credits, upon academy graduation you will then be eligible to enter the candidate pool

### ALL APPLICANTS MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING SELECTION STANDARDS

To be employed as a law enforcement officer, the State of Florida requires that you:

- Be at least 19 years of age.
- Be a citizen of the United States.
- Be a high school graduate or its equivalent.
- Not have been convicted of any felony, or of a misdemeanor involving perjury or false statement. Any person who, after July 1, 1981, pleads guilty or nolo contendere to, or is found guilty of a felony, or of a misdemeanor involving perjury or a false statement, shall not be eligible for employment or appointment as an officer, notwithstanding suspension of sentence or withholding of adjudication.
- Never have received a dishonorable discharge from any of the Armed Forces of the United States.
- Have been fingerprinted by the employing agency.
- Have passed a physical examination by a licensed physician.
- Have good moral character.
- Successfully complete a background investigation.
- Complete basic recruit training.
- Pass the Florida State Officer Certification Examination (SOCE).
- Comply with continuing training or education requirements.

(Selection Standards Continued On Next Page)

## SELECTION STANDARDS - Continued

### **Further Grounds for Disqualification from the PASS Process:**

- Deliberate omission or falsification of information provided to PASS that would materially affect screening or employment decisions, including, but not limited to, the Pre-Intake Questionnaire, Registration, Personal History Form, Administrative Interview, or supporting documentation.
- Any detected or undetected felony crime committed while an adult. (Detected or undetected crimes committed while a juvenile may be grounds for disqualification.)
- Gambling that results in an arrest or conviction.
- Use, sale or possession of any felony drugs as listed by Florida State Statute.
- Unlawful use of marijuana, hashish or other derivatives on ten or more occasions during a lifetime is considered affecting moral character or demonstrating a substantial history of poor judgment.
- Use of alcohol that resulted in three or more alcohol related arrests or other alcohol related illegal conduct that affects moral character or demonstrates a substantial history of poor judgment.
- Having two or more driver's license revocations and/or suspensions during the applicant's lifetime for driving violations, point accumulation, or failure to appear or pay a fine. (This does not include suspensions for insurance or other administrative concerns.)
- Failure to achieve a passing score on required written examinations.
- Failure to successfully complete the administrative reviews conducted by PASS.
- Ineligibility to legally possess firearms or ammunition due to a prior criminal conviction, including any conviction for a qualifying offense related to domestic violence.

### **Additional grounds for disqualification for acts committed while a law enforcement or corrections officer:**

- Any theft from a crime scene, victim, offender or employing agency.
- Any illegal use of a controlled substance.
- On-duty consumption of alcoholic beverage, unless such consumption was permitted by the employing agency.
- Any falsification of an official report, record or document.
- Acceptance of any bribe, or accepting a gratuity in violation of the employing agency's regulations

### **Grounds for Deferment (processing cannot continue if any of the conditions are present):**

- You do not possess a current driver's license.
- You have possessed or used marijuana, hashish or its derivatives within the past six [6] months.
- You have been convicted of a criminal traffic offense (DUI, Reckless Driving, etc.) within the last five years.
- Your driver license has been suspended or revoked for point accumulation within the last three years, as measured from the date on which that penalty was imposed.
- You have been convicted of three or more moving traffic violations within the last two years. (In such cases, processing will be deferred until a year has elapsed from the date of the last conviction.) Violations cleared by attendance at driver's education courses must be listed and will be counted in the number of violations and the dates of any resulting deferment.

(Grounds for Deferment Continued on Next page)

## SELECTION STANDARDS CONTINUED

### Grounds for Deferment (continued):

- Your driver license has been suspended for financial responsibility (uninsured motorist violations) within the last year, as measured from the date the suspension was imposed. You must also show proof of being an insured/insurable driver prior to resumption of processing.
- Any outstanding warrant, pending criminal court case, unpaid fine or unresolved Failure To Appear in answer to a summons will cause deferment until cleared by the court in which the matter is pending.
- Failure to satisfy financial obligations will defer processing until all debts are resolved and you can show a good credit history for at least six months following the date of resolution. (Any account showing a delinquency of 120 days or more, or having an unsatisfied collection demand, must be resolved in order to resume processing.)

### Other Qualifications:

- You must be able to meet the vision, hearing and medical requirements of the hiring agency and possess a valid Florida Driver License at the time of employment.
- Failure to keep PASS notified of your current address and telephone number will result in deferment of processing, inactivation of your file, or removal from the Candidate Pool.

### APPEAL OF DISQUALIFICATION OR DEFERMENT OF PROCESSING

**Any applicant disqualified or deferred from PASS processing may submit a written appeal to the Pinellas Police Standards Council, requesting reconsideration and reinstatement. PASS will provide the required forms upon request. All decisions of the council are final. If a polygraph examination is required in support of an appeal, the council shall select the examiner and the applicant shall pay the cost.**

### DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FROM APPLICANTS

**Be prepared to present the original or an acceptable copy of the following documents at the time of your Administrative Interview with the PASS Investigator conducting your background investigation. If you do not already have these documents on hand - begin gathering them immediately to avoid a delay in your processing.**

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card
- Driver's License
- High School Diploma or G.E.D.
- College Diploma and Transcripts
- Naturalization Papers
- Marriage Certificate(s)
- Divorce Decrees or legal name changes
- Police or Corrections Officer Certifications
- Military Record - DD 214 and Discharge Certificate(s) for each completed service.
- Law Enforcement or Corrections Officers must submit copies of their certification documents and the last two regular evaluations they received from their most recent Law Enforcement or Corrections employer.

**IF YOU GET HIRED AS AN OFFICER IN FLORIDA**

If you complete the PASS Process, please notify PASS if you accept employment as a Law Enforcement, Corrections or Probation Officer anywhere within the State of Florida. This will allow us to see that you are afforded certain protections provided to officers by law, such as removing your photograph or address from public record. It is important for you to inform us when you take such employment, even if you expect the employer to contact us.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS FROM OTHER STATES OR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

**Equivalency of Training (EOT):** If you are a law enforcement officer in another state, the military, or a federal agency and want to determine if you are eligible to obtain Florida certification through an accelerated program, PASS can provide an EOT review. Once completed, an EOT review is valid statewide. Please visit [www.policestandards.org](http://www.policestandards.org) or ask a staff member for details.

**Advice to All Applicants**

Please remember that potential employers will review your file to see if you:

- Read and follow instructions.
- Complete forms legibly and neatly.
- Are on time for appointments.
- Complete tasks without delay.
- Present a clean, neat and appropriately dressed appearance (particularly at the time of interviews or photographs.)

Good Luck!

Law enforcement can be a very rewarding career. The PASS staff wishes you good luck with your application and job search. Please do not hesitate to ask us for any information or assistance you might need, such as scheduling to avoid conflicts with your present job or accommodate travel needs. Helping applicants understand and do well in the PASS Process is an important part of our mission. We like to help people succeed.

**Acknowledgement**

**I have received a copy of this entire document and agree to the conditions set herein:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of witnessing staff member