



MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

LAW ENFORCEMENT HIRING BEST PRACTICES

ANNUAL MEETING, JULY 2023  
KEVIN W. STURM

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THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING GOOD DECISIONS IN HIRING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS CAN NOT BE OVERSTATED

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HOW SHOULD IT BE DONE?

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**THE CHALLENGES:**

- Applicant Pool has declined
- Low wages
- Tarnished Public Image
- Advancement Opportunities are Limited
  - Need to think outside of the box and consider nontraditional applicants from nontraditional sources

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**RECRUITING PROCESS**

- Write a good job description
- Advertise the job broadly
- Utilize a good comprehensive application
  - Resumes are acceptable but should not substitute for a fully completed application
  - Get the complete details of training and experience from every application
  - Be consistent and thorough

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**RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)**

- Check for certification or if they attended SCCJA
- Check SCCJA Training File/Disciplinary Record
- Contact SCCJA Certification Unit
- Same for out of state certifications/training

Do these things before an applicant is interviewed.

Do they meet minimum qualifications?

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RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)

Take all of the information gathered and select an applicant pool to be interviewed

\* Not every applicant should be interviewed

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RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)  
THE INTERVIEW

Who is going to conduct interview?  
Grading?  
Uniformity and Consistency  
Gaps in employment history?

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RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)

- S.C. Criminal Justice Academy Physical Agility Test
- Aptitude Test

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RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)

- Written Conditional Offer
- Outline process and what comes next

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RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)

- Drug Testing
- Consent Form
- Criminal/Drug Records – Standards set by SCCJA
- Credit Checks
- Background Checks
  - References
  - Prior Employers
  - Neighbors
  - Schools
  - Professional Organizations

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RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)

- Polygraph Test
  - What is their record regarding honesty
- Psychological Test
  - All candidates registering for Class I Basic Law Enforcement certification after January 1, 2018 must have a valid psychological evaluation before registering. The same requirement applies to all uncertified candidates hired by a law enforcement agency after October 1, 2017.
- Medical Questionnaire/Examination

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### RECRUITING PROCESS (CONT.)

- Final written offer
- Notify SCCJA within 72 hours of hire and complete applicable SCCJA Forms
- Candidate completes pre-academy training/Field Training Officer
  - Beginning in 2019 – New Curriculum
- Officer should prepare to pass the physical abilities test
- Train new officer on departmental policies and procedures
- Officer completes S.C. Criminal Justice Academy
- Officer completes New Employee Orientation with HR prior to beginning work
- Officers must qualify on the range within 3 days of employment and confirmation sent to the SCCJA
- Officer Completes Probationary Period
- Supervisor recognizes in writing new officer's completion of or extension of Probationary Period
  - This includes an evaluation of performance

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### REPORTING MISCONDUCT

§ 23-23-130. Adjudication of allegations of misconduct

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"Misconduct" means:

- A conviction, plea of guilty, plea of no contest or admission of guilt to a felony, a crime punishable by a sentence of more than one year, regardless of the sentence actually imposed, or a crime of moral turpitude, any of which were committed in this State or any other jurisdiction;
- The unlawful use of a controlled substance;
- The repeated use of excessive force in dealing with the public or prisoners;
- Dangerous or unsafe practices involving firearms, weapons, or vehicles which indicate either a willful wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property;
- The physical or psychological abuse of members of the public or prisoners;
- The willful failure to intervene when observing another officer physically abusing a person, whether or not the person is in custody, while in the performance of his official duties. (If the officers knew the person's rights were being violated, the officer had an opportunity to intervene, and the officer chose not to do so);
- The willful and knowing failure to promptly report another officer, while in the performance of his official duties, abusing a person whether or not the person is in custody;
- The misrepresentation of employment-related information:
  - Willfully making false, misleading, incomplete, deceitful, or incorrect statements to a law enforcement officer, a law enforcement agency, or a representative of the agency, except when required by department policy or by the laws of this State;
  - Willfully making false, misleading, incomplete, deceitful, or incorrect statements to any court of competent jurisdiction, or their staff or members, whether under oath or not;
  - Willfully providing false, misleading, incomplete, deceitful, or incorrect information on a document, record, report, or form, except when required by department policy or by the laws of this State;
  - The falsification of any application for certification and training based upon which the officer was admitted for training; or
  - Willfully providing false information to the Criminal Justice Academy or the Law Enforcement Training Council.

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