

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Volume 9, Issue 3
Third Quarter, 2011

Serve & Protect

Accepting Entry Level Police Officer Applications: October 7th - 28th



Calling all candidates interested in becoming a City of Columbus Police Officer!

If you:
- have a high school diploma or G.E.D.

- have a valid and current driver's license
- are a current United States citizen and
- are at least 20 years of age

If you are ready for a rewarding career that will provide life-long skills and will continue to be a challenge, don't miss out on this opportunity! You can submit your application to the Civil Service Commission between October 7 and October 28, 2011, on-line at www.csc.columbus.gov, or in person at 750 Piedmont Road, Columbus, Ohio, 43224. Please be sure to submit your application no later than October 28, 2011!

The examination has four phases: multiple choice, writing sample, oral board, and physical test. Our website contains a great deal of information regarding the testing process, including a physical test instruction video. Additionally, a study guide is provided to help you prepare for the examination. Prior police experience is NOT required.

The Division of Police provides 28 paid weeks in the training academy, field training with a seasoned officer, and continuing education and training. This combination of training and experience will prepare you to ensure the safety of citizens, uphold the law, and ensure the rights of citizens are preserved. The rewards for this profession are immeasurable!!!

For more information about the:
-selection process, call 645-0800
-position, visit www.columbuspolice.org

The "Fine Print" (in regular-sized, legible lettering):

To be hired by the City of Columbus in a public safety profession, a candidate must meet the background standards for each position. Thus, the *Abbreviated Background Questionnaire* (ABQ) is part of the application process to take the Firefighter, Police Officer, and Police Communications Technician exams. The ABQ is a series of nine "yes or no" background questions regarding: convictions, drug use, employment, and traffic/license suspensions.

If the ABQ reveals that a candidate does not meet the standards, we do not approve them to take the test-- because no matter how well they might score, they would not be employable. Some standards, such as marijuana use within one year of applying or a license suspension within three years of the exam, are automatic disqualifiers for these positions. After waiting until the specified time frame has passed, individuals rejected at the background screening may apply again and be approved for testing.

A full listing of the Background Standards can be found on our website under "Public Forms."

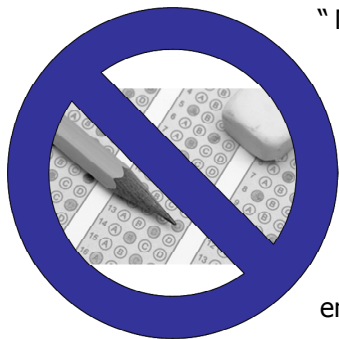
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"My heroes are those who risk their lives every day to protect our world and make it a better place-- police, firefighters and members of our armed forces."

- Sidney Sheldon

The Non-Competitive Hiring Process: No Test Required



"Non-competitive" City jobs do not include a test; however, applicants must meet special job requirements. Generally, these jobs are either unskilled, or require special licensing/specialized education. To be considered, applicants can apply online or directly with the department doing the hiring.

At the close of the application filing period, the hiring department is able to review all online applications for interview consideration. In addition to online applications, departments can consider resumes and paper applications submitted directly to their offices. Since no testing is required for non-competitive job classes, applicants are encouraged to submit a resume in addition to the application.

The department initially screens the applications and considers those whose qualifications best meets the needs of their agency. When the department completes their review of the applications, they invite the desired candidates to be interviewed by their staff. Once the final candidate (or candidates) has been determined, a final application review is made by the Civil Service Commission to ensure the applicants meet the established minimum qualifications for the job. Throughout the process, applicants may contact the department directly with any questions regarding the status of the position.

We Have A Form For That!

Once you are approved to take a Civil Service Exam, our test center sends you a letter assigning you a reserved timeslot. But what if you know you cannot appear at the time we scheduled for you? This form is designed for candidates to request a change in the time or date of the exam.

The Testing Accommodation (Not ADA) form requires you to answer two questions: 1) *What type of accommodation are you requesting during the testing process?* and 2) *Why do you believe this accommodation is necessary?*

When answering these questions, it is important that you are specific; we need to know what is happening at the time/date of the test that causes you to be elsewhere. Once you submit the form to our office, you can expect a response within 10 days, via U.S. mail. Many times, once your request has been approved, a test center employee will also call you to arrange a new time slot for your exam. If there are a significant number of people requiring accommodation, we will schedule a make up day and add you to that group.

Some tips:

- You don't always have to fill out a form. Call the test center and ask for other dates/times that the same test will be offered. You can appear at any of the sessions and add your name to the waiting list. We will seat you providing there is space available in the testing room.

- Turn in the form BEFORE the test, as soon as you know of the conflict. Once all test sessions are over, we can no longer grant an accommodation. If you are granted a testing accommodation, we make every effort to give you the exam before the originally scheduled test date, as not to delay the other candidates' results.



- In an emergency, notify us right away. We understand that some things are beyond your control. If you have an emergency on the way to the test, call us so we know you are trying to get to the exam. If you keep us informed, we can advise you on the most effective way to reschedule. Remember, we will need receipts and/or documentation of what happened.

- We ♥ the military. If military orders will have you out of town (or the country!) on your test day, contact Civil Service immediately after filing your application or upon receipt of new orders. We need a copy of your orders and an indication of when you will be available. We will work with you to match up your leave with our testing window.

- Attach documentation. The better the documentation, the more likely your request will be approved. If you have already bought the plane tickets for your dream vacation, don't cancel the trip—give us a copy of the plane ticket. If you get a flat tire on the way to the test, attach the tow receipt.

- There are some exams we cannot reschedule. Some exams have constraints that only allow us to test for a certain window of time. It is possible that your accommodation will be rejected because of the nature of the test.

Remember that we WANT to test you! Our test centers exist to serve people like you. However, we must show that we grant accommodations fairly, so help us help you by attaching documentation and being as specific as possible in any request you make.

Our forms can be found on our website by clicking on "Public Forms" on the left side of your screen. Completed forms and documentation may be faxed, emailed or mailed to the appropriate test center. Full contact information can be found on Page 4 of this issue. Police and Fire positions are handled by the Piedmont location, and all others are covered by the downtown (Gay Street) location.

Serving You Better: Civil Service Teams

The Civil Service Commission staff is divided into five teams to accomplish the Commission's objectives.

The **Applicant & Employee Services** unit (Team A&ES) is responsible for posting vacancies, accepting applications for vacancies and exams, hiring paperwork, and certifying non-safety eligible lists.

The **Non-Uniformed Testing** unit (Team A) is responsible for conducting job analyses and developing & administering exams for all job classes other than police and fire positions. This team oversees the Beacon Building Test Center where numerous tests are given each year.

The **Uniformed Testing** unit (Team D) is responsible for conducting job analyses and developing & administering exams for the "uniformed" job classes, or those job classes in the City's Safety Forces. This includes entry level police officer, firefighter, and promotions in the Divisions of Police and Fire. This unit oversees the testing center located at 750 Piedmont, a location that allows for

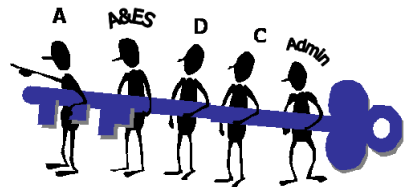


testing large groups of applicants.

The **Classification** unit (Team C) is responsible for the certification of the city payroll, maintaining employee personnel files, and creating and modifying classification specifications so that they accurately reflect the responsibilities associated with the job. In addition, staff assigned to this unit conducts position audits to ensure that individuals are performing duties appropriate to their classification.

The **Administrative**

unit (Admin) is responsible for preparing & administering the budget and ensuring that the Commission staff has the necessary resources to function effectively. This unit's staff is also responsible for conducting disciplinary, investigative, and residency hearings. They also oversee the background process and certification for police and fire candidates.



??? Ask Eyestein ???

Dear Eyestein:

I applied to take an upcoming Civil Service exam. Is there a study guide available, and if not, how do you recommend I prepare for the test?

Signed, Always Prepared

Dear Always Prepared:

The first place to look is at the letter we sent advising you of the date/time of your exam; it will tell you if there is a study guide available for your specific test. Currently, study guides are only available for entry-level police officer, firefighter, uniformed promotional, and supervisory examinations. They can be found online at www.csc.columbus.gov or hard copies may be requested by phone (see Page 4).

In the absence of a study guide, you should review the exam announcement and your admission letter for additional information about the format and content of the examination you are scheduled to take. Familiarizing yourself with that information can help you identify areas in which you may need to focus your studies. You also may want to consult the Employment Information Guide (found on the Commission's website under the "Employment Center" link), which includes a wealth of information like test-taking strategies and the different types of exams the Commission now offers.

Finally, obtaining practice exams from the library, internet, and other resources prior to the test can also be beneficial because those exams may include similar questions to those contained on the test. Plus, they are generally designed to help combat test anxiety and poor

time management, two factors that often prevent individuals from scoring well. The ARCO Civil Service Series is an excellent resource for prospective applicants and test takers, with selections covering everything from basic vocabulary and mathematics to preparing for specific examinations like those for clerical staff and public safety personnel.

We suggest you complete any practice exams under conditions similar to those on test day. Specifically, try to take the test in a quiet place with few interruptions; do not use other study aids or reference materials; and adhere to time limits. By doing this you can more closely simulate how you will react to actual testing conditions.

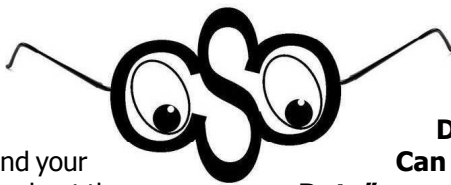
Dear Eyestein:

Can you tell me exactly what the "Close Date" means next to a job listed under the Current Job Openings? When is the last time I can put the application in? Is it at 5 p.m. that day, midnight that morning, or midnight that evening?

Signed, Sometimes I Wait Until the Last Minute

Dear Sometimes I Wait:

The closing date refers to the last day of the application filing period or the day on which a job announcement will expire. Applicants can submit their applications either online, in-person, or by mail (see Page 4). Applications submitted electronically or by fax must be submitted no later than midnight on the closing date. Those submitted via U.S. mail must be postmarked by the last day of the filing period and received by the Commission within five (5) business days of the closing date in order to be considered for examination.



Civil Service Commission

CivilService@columbus.gov

www.csc.columbus.gov

50 West Gay Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-9038

Phone: 614-645-8300

Test Center Phone: 614-645-7439

Fax: 614-645-8379/8334

Piedmont Testing Center

750 Piedmont Road, Columbus, Ohio 43224-3266

PoliceFireTesting@columbus.gov

Phone: 614-645-0800

Fax: 614-645-0866

Commission Comments brought to you courtesy of:

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Meet Commission Employee Suzy Ulry

Suzy Ulry is a master of the art of observation. As a Personnel Analyst II in the Civil Service Commission's Classification Unit, some of Suzy's main job duties are classification revisions, job audits, and compliance reviews. Each of these functions requires her to observe city workers to ensure that the City's Class Plan is up to date and that job descriptions match the work that is done.

Suzy began her career with the City of Columbus with the Department of Development and worked in several positions including Research Analyst before joining the Civil Service Commission in 1994. While meetings and reports can be a significant portion of her job, Suzy's favorite part of work is that she gets to meet a variety of employees from different departments and talk about what they do. She says she is "always impressed with how City workers take so much pride in what they do."



Originally from Louisville, Kentucky, Suzy attended The Ohio State University and graduated with a B.A. in Business Administration, majoring in Human Resources. She has been married to her husband, Tom, for 18 years. In her free time, Suzy enjoys quilting, cooking, reading, and chauffeuring their 15 year old daughter back and forth from the barn to ride and show horses.

September is National Preparedness Month!

*Celebrate by making
your family a basic
emergency kit.*

Check out

www.ready.gov

*for a list of household
items to get you started.*

Job Interest Update!

Did you know? Job Interest Cards are now good for a full year! We have updated our system so you no longer have to renew your interest cards every six months.

Never submitted a card before? If we are not currently accepting applications for a job you are interested in, click on "Job Interest" and be added to our email list for a specific job!

Note-able CSC Staff Notes



Please join us in welcoming our newest staff members:

Kristi Hagans, Executive Secretary I (U) and
Merrari McKinney, Office Assistant I.