Information on how to become a Police Officer

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Individuals considering career choices today have many options. Choosing policing opens the door to a challenging and fulfilling future.

Our police services are always looking for highly qualified and motivated people from different backgrounds to join them as policing professionals. As Ontario’s police leaders, we believe that the citizens we serve deserve police professionals who are among the best and brightest from all of our communities. Whether you’re a young person just starting to look at your career options, an individual considering a career change, or someone who wants to make a positive impact in your community, policing could be an excellent choice for you. To help you discover policing, we’ve put together this informational booklet.

Because of the varied nature of police work, individuals who work in law enforcement can apply the skills and experiences they’ve developed from their previous training, education, professional, and personal life in a variety of areas. Policing offers opportunities for personal growth, continuous learning, a high level of job satisfaction, opportunities for specialization, opportunities for promotion as well as excellent salary, benefits, and pension.

Today’s police recruits must bring with them a high degree of comfort with modern technology, a willingness to engage members of our diverse communities, and a dedication to serving in a professional and accountable manner. A police officer must bring understanding and empathy to dealing with tough circumstances, yet always be committed to seeing justice done. This takes dedication and courage, honesty and personal integrity.

Our national, provincial, municipal, and First Nations police services are looking for individuals who bring exceptional talents and a commitment to life-long learning. We are looking for people who will build on the experiences and knowledge of those that came before us as policing professionals.

Please consider a career in policing. I invite you to visit www.discoverpolicing.ca and contact any Ontario police service for more information.

Chief Charles Bordeleau
Ottawa Police Service
President, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police
A career in policing is primarily about one thing...

“Working with People to Ensure Public Safety through Crime Prevention & Law Enforcement.”

Police work requires that a constable be able to build relationships in the community, showing sensitivity to and concern for the needs of people from all races, cultures and backgrounds.

The Police Services Act describes **FOUR KEY AREAS** of responsibility for a police constable:
- Preserving the peace
- Preventing crimes and providing assistance to others in their prevention
- Assisting victims of crime
- Apprehending and charging offenders and executing warrants

Police work is also demanding. A police constable must work shifts, including evenings, nights and weekends, at all times of the year. **This is not a job that everyone will like, or can do well.**

Deciding to become a police officer means that you have chosen a career not just a job – a career that has lots of potential and variety. There are plenty of opportunities for training, specialization, movement, and advancement.

**Your career adventure can include working in:**
- Airport Services
- Canine Units
- Commercial Crime
- Community & School Resources
- Counterfeiting Investigation
- Crime Scene Analysis
- Criminal Investigation
- EMS
- Gang Crime
- Helicopter & Air Services Units
- Homicide
- Marine Services
- Mountain Bike or Bicycle Patrol Units
- Mounted Units
- Narcotics Enforcement
- Traffic Law Enforcement
- Vice
Do YOU Have What it Takes?

BASIC MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR MOST POLICE SERVICES

To be considered for a career in policing, you must meet certain minimum requirements as outlined in the Police Services Act.

Specifically, you MUST:

1. Be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada.
2. Be at least 18 years of age.
3. Be physically and mentally able to perform the duties of the position, having regard to your own safety and the safety of members of the public.

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A GREAT CAREER STARTS HERE

When you are ready, ATS is ready.

Applicant Testing Services Inc. is the private firm that has been licensed by the OACP to perform pre-screening testing on behalf of Police Services throughout the Province. ATS hosts test sites throughout Ontario making it easy for you to find a testing location near you. Many details on the tests that are conducted, as well as information on tests dates and locations, are available on our website.

For more information please contact us at:
1-800-429-7728
www.applicanttesting.com

Please scan the QR code with your smart phone to visit our website.
4. Have successfully completed at least four years of secondary school education or its equivalent. (Note: official transcripts and diplomas will be required.) Where education has been completed outside Ontario, official proof of equivalency must be obtained by contacting the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training.

5. Be of good moral character and habits, meaning that you are an individual other people would look upon as being trustworthy and having integrity.

In addition, you MUST:

1. Possess a valid driver's licence with no more than six accumulated demerit-points, permitting you to drive an automobile in Ontario with full driving privileges.

2. Have current certification in CPR and first aid by the time the offer of employment is given.

3. Be able to pass a security clearance as well as background investigation, credit and reference checks.

   If you have any criminal convictions under a federal statute, you must obtain a pardon. If you have ‘Findings of Guilt’ which have resulted in absolute or conditional discharges, the records must be ‘sealed’ by the RCMP.

**COMPETENCIES**

In addition to the minimum requirements, you must possess certain competencies. A competency is defined as any skill, knowledge, ability, motive, behaviour or attitude essential to successful performance on the job. Two sets of competencies have been identified for the job of policing: Essential Competencies and Developmental Competencies.

**Essential Competencies**

These are knowledge, skills and abilities which a candidate must demonstrate before becoming a police officer. They are:

1. **Analytical Thinking** The ability to analyze situations and events in a logical way, and to organize the parts of a problem in a systematic way.

2. **Self-confidence** A belief in your own abilities and judgment, and a recognition of personal limitations and development needs.

3. **Communication** The ability to demonstrate effective listening, verbal and written communication skills.

4. **Flexibility/Valuing Diversity** the ability to adapt your approach in a variety of situations, and to work effectively with a wide cross-section of the community representing diverse backgrounds, cultures and socioeconomic circumstances.
5. **Self-control** The ability to keep your own emotions under control and to restrain negative actions when provoked or when working under stressful conditions.

6. **Relationship Building** The ability to develop and maintain a network of contacts, both inside and outside the police service.

7. **Achievement Orientation** The desire for continuous improvement in service or accomplishments.

8. **Medical/Physical Skills & Abilities** Job-related medical/physical skills and abilities, including vision, hearing, motor skills, cardiovascular endurance and upper-body strength.

**Developmental Competencies**

As the name implies, these competencies can be acquired through training after a person has been hired as a police officer. However, some police services may have immediate need for specific skills and abilities which are developmental and may choose to include these in the hiring process.

The following 11 competencies have been identified as developmental:

1. **Information Seeking** The ability to seek out information from various sources before making decisions.

2. **Concern for Safety** The ability to exercise caution in hazardous situations in order to ensure safety to self and others.

3. **Assertiveness** The ability to use authority confidently and to set and enforce rules appropriately.

4. **Initiative** Demonstrated ability to be self-motivated and self-directed in identifying and addressing important issues.

5. **Cooperation** The ability to collaborate with others by seeking their input, encouraging their participation and sharing information.

6. **Negotiation/Facilitation** The ability to influence or persuade others by anticipating and addressing their interests and perspectives.
7. **Work Organization** The ability to develop and maintain systems for organizing information and activities.

8. **Community-service Orientation** Proven commitment to helping or serving others.

9. **Commitment to Learning** Demonstrated pattern of activities, which contribute to personal and professional growth.

10. **Organizational Awareness** Understanding of the dynamics of organizations, including the formal and informal cultures and decision-making processes.

11. **Developing Others** Commitment to helping others to improve their skills.

**LOCAL NEEDS OF POLICE SERVICES**
Apart from the competencies, police services may also require certain special skills and abilities in order to address urgent issues pertaining to the service or the community. A LOCAL NEED may be a second language, a special type or level of computer skills, prior experience in working with abused women and troubled youth, ability to relocate, etc.

**NOTES:**
Our facilities in the School of Justice & Wellness in Hamilton feature living labs such as the mock trial court room, surveillance simulation and more.

**Programs offered:**
- Police Foundations
- Protection, Security and Investigation
- Community and Justice Services
- Advanced Police Studies
- Advanced Security Management

Mohawk College is one of few Canadian community colleges that employ simulated judgmental training systems – both tactical and virtual – in their scenario-based training.

Learn more at mohawkcollege.ca/programs
The following questionnaire is designed to help you decide if a career in policing is for you. Consider these questions.

YES  NO
☐  ☐ I am an emotionally stable and responsible person.
☐  ☐ I am respectful of the law.
☐  ☐ My lifestyle is one that exhibits high moral character.
☐  ☐ I always act respectfully and sensitively with others.
☐  ☐ I am able to work with all kinds of people in a variety of situations.
☐  ☐ I am sincerely interested in helping people.
☐  ☐ I am comfortable working with people from other backgrounds.
☐  ☐ I have self-confidence to be assertive when the situation demands it.
☐  ☐ In the face of uncertainty, I can make necessary decisions.
☐  ☐ I have demonstrated leadership qualities.
☐  ☐ I am committed to achieving goals.
☐  ☐ I am able to work with others to identify their needs.
☐  ☐ I am able to take the initiative and enthusiastically strive to do an outstanding job.
☐  ☐ I enjoy working as part of a team.
☐  ☐ I can adjust my behaviour through periods of ambiguity, stress and uncertainty.
☐  ☐ I am the type of person who seeks out challenge.
If you answered **YES** or believe you could ultimately answer **yes** to all of the above questions, you should consider a career in policing.

**APPLY NOW**

Different Police Services offer different opportunities regarding the places you want to work and travel, and specialized service options.

Review the websites of the various Police Services to decide which is right for you. Some Services even offer information sessions in order to answer any questions that you may have. The dates and times of those sessions will be posted online. Learn about the selection process and the pre-screening testing battery that you will be required to perform. Information regarding testing dates in your area is also posted online.
Pursue a career in Policing, Security or Fitness.

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The selection process consists of three assessment stages and is open to all applicants who meet the minimum requirements (see page 5). You will advance through the process upon successfully completing each stage and will be notified of your progress throughout.

THE THREE ASSESSMENT STAGES

STAGE ONE  Pre-Interview Assessment
The pre-interview assessment stage includes six tests (written, physical and medical) used to identify those individuals that possess the essential competencies required to become a Police Officer in the Province of Ontario.

This pre-screening testing is performed by a private firm, Applicant Testing Services Inc. (ATS), which has been licensed by the OACP on behalf of Police Services throughout the Province. There is an initial testing fee of approximately $330 which is payable to the testing agency. ATS hosts test sites throughout Ontario making it easy for you to find a testing location near you. Many details on the tests that will be conducted, as well as information on tests dates and locations, are available on the website:
www.applicanttesting.com

Candidates will be required to successfully complete each of the following pre-interview tests in order to advance through the Constable Selection System:

1. The Police Analytical Thinking Inventory (PATI) The PATI is a pencil and paper aptitude test designed to measure deductive, inductive and quantitative reasoning. You will be given 90 minutes to answer 90 questions in a multiple choice format. A French version of the PATI is also available.
2. **The Written Communication Test (WCT)** You will be presented with a scenario in which factual details are jumbled or represented in a non-chronological manner. You are tested on your ability to organize information in a clear, coherent and comprehensive manner. Knowledge of Police procedure, report writing or the criminal code is not required to be successful on this test.

3. **Physical Readiness Evaluation for Police (PREP)** To be successful, you must pass all components of the Physical Readiness Evaluation for Police (PREP) test, which includes:

   **Pursuit/Restraint Circuit** is made up of four 25 meter rotations. In the pursuit phase of the test, you will run four laps around a 25 metre (82 ft) circuit as quickly as possible for a total distance of 100 metres (328 ft), while wearing a 4kg (9 lb) soft weight belt around your waist and a 4kg (9 lb) vest to simulate the weight of standard police equipment. During the first and third rotations you will pull yourself up to look over a 1.9 metre (6.5 ft) fence with a toe hold, climb up and down a set of stairs, drop to the floor and crawl under a barrier of 61 cm (24 in). During the second and fourth rotations of the circuit; you will scale a 1.2 metre (4 ft) fence (with no toe-holds), climb up and down a set of stairs and then drop to the floor and crawl under a barrier of 61 cm (24 in), then go first to the Body Control Simulator and then to the Arm Restraint Simulator. Lastly, you will grasp a 77 kg (170 lb) mannequin by the handle behind the neck, and drag the mannequin a distance of 15 metres (50 ft) over a resistive mat and around pylons. The Pursuit/Restraint Circuit is scored as the total time from the start of the 100 metre (328 ft) circuit to the completion of the victim drag.

   **For successful completion of the Pursuit/Restraint Circuit the time taken must be 157 seconds or less.**

   **Aerobic Shuttle Run**, evaluated by running back and forth over a 20-metre course in time with tape recorded signals. The time to cover the 20-metre course is shortened progressively until the participant is unable to maintain the pace or the standard is met. To successfully complete the minimum requirement of the aerobic fitness test you must achieve **STAGE 7.0** in the 20 metre Shuttle Run.

   To watch a video of the PREP, please refer to the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWBPodHpieQ

4. **Vision Screening.** Your uncorrected visual acuity should be at least 6/12 (20/40) binocularly (both eyes open). Your corrected visual acuity should be at least 6/6 (20/20) binocularly. There are additional minimum requirements regarding refractive surgery, farsightedness (hyperopia), colour vision and peripheral vision.

5. **Hearing Screening.** For each ear, pure-tone thresholds measured under audiometric earphones shall not exceed a four-frequency average (500, 1000, 2000, 3000 Hz) of 25 dB HL, thresholds at none of these single frequencies shall exceed 35 dB HL and thresholds at 4000 Hz shall not exceed 45 dB HL.
6. **Behavioural Personnel Assessment Device (BPAD).** You are required to view on a video screen, scenarios representing what Police Constables experience on the job, and respond as if you are speaking to the people in the scene.

Knowledge of police procedures is not required to be successful on this test. Candidates that successfully complete all six pre-interview screening tests will be awarded an OACP Certificate of Results (OACP COR). A valid OACP Certificate of Results must be presented to the Police Service(s) that you are applying to at the Competency Interview and Pre-Background Questionnaire Stage. Successful test results are valid for three years from the date of the test, except for the PREP test which is valid for six months from the date of the test. For those who do not meet standard on either the PATI, WCT or BPAD test there is a mandatory waiting period of three months after the first attempt and then six months after each subsequent attempt. **For those not meeting standard on the PREP, there is a mandatory waiting period of two months after the first two unsuccessful attempts.**

**STAGE TWO**

**Competency Interview and Pre-Background Questionnaire**

Should you be called for an interview (with one or more Police Services), you will be required to complete a Pre-Background Questionnaire while waiting to be interviewed. You may also be required to complete and submit an Applicant Registration Form and other documents either prior to or after the interview. A valid Certificate of Results (COR) must be presented at this stage.

**STAGE THREE**

**Post-Interview Assessment**

A thorough background investigation, credit and reference check will be conducted if you are selected to progress beyond the interview stage. You will be required to complete a psychological assessment, and may be invited to an interview with a psychologist.

The Police Service will then conduct an in-depth review of all the information gathered to reach a decision about your application. A job offer may then be made to you, conditional upon your obtaining a medical clearance. At that time, a medical evaluation will be conducted to determine your medical suitability for being hired as a Police Constable. This consists of a medical questionnaire and a comprehensive physical examination.

If an offer of employment is confirmed, you will be required to undergo a probationary period.
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Policing Ontario’s diverse communities requires that a Police Officer seek to understand and appreciate different cultures and customs so that he or she can respectfully enforce the law, resolve problems and instill mutual respect. All of our communities must believe that they are truly part of the policing effort, equally contributing to making our communities safe. Having Police personnel reflect the people they serve advances that sense of inclusion. People of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds, whether of Aboriginal descent or part of the most recent immigrant Asian communities, can make an important contribution to our society by becoming a Police Officer.

Consider the career.....it’s more than you think.
In order to be effective, a strong police service must reflect its community. The face of policing has changed over the years. Today’s police services need to reflect the diversity of their respective communities and work very hard in their recruiting efforts to accomplish this. As part of that out-reach effort, we continue to encourage women, persons of varying ethnic and cultural backgrounds to pursue policing as a career. Police service recruiters are particularly aware that lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (LGBT) people are under-represented in policing. It is estimated that up to 10% of the population is LGBT and are no different than the rest of the population with respect to their abilities and their willingness to make significant, positive contributions to communities. As an LGBT police officer you would have a unique understanding of the numerous issues that LGBT people face. Make a difference by joining the police service.

www.pflagcanada.ca | www.pixelsforpride.com

Inspire Change... pour le mieux

STEPHEN HARTLEY, National President PFLAG Canada
For further information on a career in policing, we suggest that you visit the appropriate COMMUNITY or PROVINCIAL POLICE SERVICE website listed here:

AKWESASNE MOHAWK POLICE SERVICE  |  www.akwesasne.ca/Police.html
AMHERSTBURG POLICE SERVICE  |  www.amherstburg.ca/police
ANISHINABEK POLICE SERVICE  |  www.apscops.org
AYLMER POLICE SERVICE  |  www.aylmerpolice.com
BARRIE POLICE SERVICE  |  www.police.barrie.on.ca
BELLEVILLE POLICE SERVICE  |  www.police.belleville.on.ca
BRANTFORD POLICE SERVICE  |  www.police.brantford.on.ca
BROCKVILLE POLICE SERVICE  |  www.brockvillepolice.com
CHATHAM-KENT POLICE SERVICE  |  www.ckpolice.com
CITY OF KAWARTHA LAKES POLICE SERVICE  |  www.kawarthalakespolice.com
COBOURG POLICE SERVICE  |  www.cobourgpolice.com
CORNWALL COMMUNITY POLICE SERVICE  |  www.cornwallpolice.com
DEEP RIVER POLICE SERVICE  |  www.deepriver.ca/town-hall/emergency-services/police-department
DRYDEN POLICE SERVICE  |  www.dryden.ca/city_services/dryden_police_service
DURHAM REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE  |  www.drps.ca
ESPANOLA POLICE SERVICE  |  www.espanola.ca/index.php/police-services
GANANOQUE POLICE SERVICE  |  www.gananoquepoliceservice.com
GREATER SUDBURY POLICE SERVICE  |  www.police.sudbury.on.ca
GUELPH POLICE SERVICE  |  www.guelphpolice.com
HALTON REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE  |  www.hrps.on.ca
HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE  |  www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca
HANOVER POLICE SERVICE  |  www.hanover.ca/police
KINGSTON POLICE  |  www.kpf.ca
LAC SEUL POLICE SERVICE  |  www.lacseulpolice.com
LASALLE POLICE SERVICE  |  www.police.lasalle.on.ca
LONDON POLICE SERVICE  |  www.police.london.ca
MIDLAND POLICE SERVICE  |  www.police.midland.on.ca
NIAGARA PARKS POLICE SERVICE  |  www.niagaraparks.com/about/niagara-parks-police.html
NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE  |  www.niagarapolice.ca
NISHNAWBE-ASKI POLICE SERVICE  |  www.naps.ca
NORTH BAY POLICE SERVICE  |  www.northbaypolice.on.ca
ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE  |  www.opp.ca
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Ron Bain
Executive Director, OACP