





POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

	RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION	
	POLICY NUMBER: 31-1	ISSUING AUTHORITY 
	EFFECTIVE DATE: June 12, 2025	Christine A. Elow Police Commissioner

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

The process of recruiting and selecting police department personnel involves attracting, screening, interviewing, and offering employment to the best possible candidates. The process should be fair, offer equal opportunity, and attempt to create a workforce that represents the ethnic and gender composition of the community it serves. Also, the process should identify candidates who understand and are committed to the vision and mission of the department including the principles of procedural justice.

The City of Cambridge's vision is for its operations and environment to fully embody the principles of antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion to provide the highest quality services to all residents and the best possible work environment for all employees.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Cambridge Police Department to:

- A. abide by all Equal Employment Opportunity standards set forth in law and established in City of Cambridge policy and hiring practices;
- B. attempt to ensure that the department workforce fairly represents the community it serves;
- C. adhere to well-defined and timely recruitment and selection processes that seek to attract and employ the best possible candidates;
- D. select candidates who not only have or can acquire the required knowledge, skills and abilities, but also have a personal commitment to the principles of procedural justice including fair and impartial policing; and
- E. abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the state for those positions that come under the Civil Service System.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Antiracism*: An active commitment to dismantling institutional structures, beliefs, and behaviors that perpetuate inequity based on race. It is the practice of opposing the devaluing of human beings at individual, interpersonal, and systems levels.
- B. *Diversity*: The quality or state of being composed of many different elements or types. People who bring varied backgrounds, perspectives, values, and beliefs as assets to groups and organizations in which they interact.
- C. *EEOC*: The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was established on July 2, 1965. Its mandate is specified under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, transgender status, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information.
- D. *Equity*: The presence of impartial access to opportunities, resources, and supports and the absence of disparities, biases and barriers that are systematically associated with social and historical advantage and disadvantage.
- E. *Inclusion*: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and have unobstructed access to participation. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and values all people in words and in actions.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. 31.1.1 (M) Agency Participation
 - 1. The department shall actively participate in a recruitment program.
- B. 31.1.2 (M) Assignment/Recruitment
 - 1. Individuals assigned to recruitment activities in the City will have received training in personnel matters, especially equal employment opportunity and key recruitment objectives.
- C. 31.2.1 (M) Recruitment Plan
 - 1. The department shall maintain a recruitment plan for full-time sworn personnel outlining the steps to achieve the goals of an ethnic, racial, and gender workforce composition in approximate proportion to the available workforce in the City of Cambridge to include:
 - a. statement of objectives;
 - b. plan of action designed to achieve the identified objectives; and

- c. positions in the department responsible for plan administration.

D. 31.2.2 (M) Annual Analysis

1. The department shall conduct an annual analysis on the recruitment plan that is reviewed by the Commissioner or designee. The analysis report shall include the following:
 - a. progress toward stated objectives;
 - (1) A breakdown of the demographic and supplemental characteristics of newly hired officers by:
 - (i) Race
 - (ii) Gender
 - (iii) Residential Status
 - (2) Utilize available statistics to show the comparison between demographic composition of the available workforce in the City of Cambridge, the demographic composition of the applicant pool, and the department's current officer demographic composition.
 - b. revisions to the plan, as needed; and
 - (1) The department's leadership team shall review the recruitment plan on an annual basis to ensure it meets the needs of the department based on identified trends.
 - (2) If revisions to the plan are necessary, the leadership team shall assist the Director of Communications and Media Relations in the revisions to the plan. These revisions shall be made clear in the analysis and how it supports the recruitment objectives.
 - c. demographic data of sworn personnel.
 - (1) A breakdown in race and gender of sworn officers and current academy recruits.
 - (2) A breakdown in race and gender of sworn officers by rank.

E. 31.2.3 (M) Equal Employment Opportunity Plan

1. The City of Cambridge maintains an Affirmative Action Plan that informs hiring practices in all City departments. A particular section of the plan will apply specifically to the department. Affirmative action guidelines for all departments of the City, including the police department, are set by the Office of Equity and Inclusion with the approval of the City Manager and the City Solicitor.
2. It is the responsibility of the department to abide by and enforce the directives included in the City's Affirmative Action Plan.
3. The City of Cambridge maintains a discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and retaliation policy, which applies to all City departments including the Police Department as part of its overall EEO efforts. This policy includes a complaint and investigation process.

4. It is the City's policy that all department job posters include the following language: The City of Cambridge is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, disability, or any other protected category. Women, minorities, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ Community, and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply for positions within the police department. The City is committed to advancing a workforce culture of antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Auxiliary aids and services, written materials in alternative formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures will be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities free of charge, upon request by contacting Human Resources.

F. 31.3.1 (M) Job Announcements

1. The department's job announcements and recruitment notices through the City for all personnel shall:
 - a. provide a description of the duties, responsibilities, requisite skills, educational level, and other minimum qualifications or requirements;
 - b. advertise entry-level job vacancies through electronic, print, or other sources;
 - c. advertise the agency as an equal opportunity employer on all employment applications and recruitment advertisements; and
 - d. advertise official application filing deadlines.

G. 31.3.2 (M) Notification Expectations

1. The department shall work with community organizations and key community leaders to support its recruitment goals.
 - a. Such efforts will include partnerships with community organizations, civic groups, and faith-based organizations that are in contact with individuals who are likely candidates for recruitment.
 - b. Notifications may also be achieved through electronic systems.

H. 31.3.3 (M) Maintaining Applicant Contact

1. Contact shall be maintained with applicants for all positions from initial application to final employment disposition for sworn and as practical for non-sworn positions.

I. 31.4.1 (M) Selection Process Described

1. Full-time sworn police officers shall be selected according to the following procedures.
 - a. All candidates for the position of Police Officer in the City of Cambridge are required to meet minimum qualifications as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws regarding Civil Service and City of Cambridge Residency Requirements.

- b. Candidates shall be subject to a comprehensive background investigation conducted by the Cambridge Police Department Professional Standards Unit to determine fitness for the position, minimum qualifications, and strength of character.
 - c. When the department calls for and receives a certification list from the Human Resources Division (HRD) of the Commonwealth, the appropriate number of candidates are notified by HRD and advised to appear to sign the certification by a specified date if they are willing to accept the appointment. At that time, candidates will sign an initial Authorization for Release of Information as well as a CORI release, provide contact information and a copy of an active driver's license.
 - d. All applicants are required to fill out by hand a discoverable physical application and will sign attesting to its truthfulness.
 - e. The next step is a face-to-face interview, in person or by electronic means, when all portions of the application are reviewed including but not limited to military records, employment history, driving record, education, and residency claims.
 - f. After the first interview, investigators for the department will conduct the background investigation and a follow-up interview if necessary to discuss outstanding issues. When the process is complete, the Professional Standards Unit will document all relevant information in the Applicant Summary, which is forwarded to the Hiring Authority whose decisions are final.
 - g. All candidates must successfully pass the following components of the selection process: Physical Abilities Test (PAT), medical examination, psychological examination, and the Cooper test.
 - h. Notification to the Civil Service Commission regarding withdrawals, bypasses, and requests for removal will be managed through the appropriate channels.
 - i. Candidates who are bypassed for any reason may appeal in writing to the Civil Service Commission within sixty calendar days of receipt of bypass notification.
2. Full-time and part-time professional staff members shall be selected according to the following procedures.
- a. A legitimate vacancy must exist for any substantiated reason.
 - b. The department forwards a request to fill the vacancy along with the reason to the Office of the City Manager and the Personnel Director for the City.
 - c. Once the department receives permission to fill the vacancy, the position is posted internally or externally, or both.
 - d. The selection process must follow collective bargaining agreements, if applicable.
 - e. Interviews are held with predetermined interview questions; and depending on the position, the department may employ additional candidate assessments.

- f. All candidates for full-time and part-time professional staff positions must fill out various employment application forms.
 - g. The Professional Standards Unit shall conduct background investigations for selected top candidates.
 - h. Finally, the Commissioner approves the list of candidates selected, which is then forwarded to the City Manager for a hiring justification and salary recommendation.
 - 3. While the department employs retired officers, also known as sworn special officers, for the limited purpose of performing paid police details, the department does not employ part-time sworn officers for the purpose of performing patrol functions.
- J. 31.4.2 (M) Job Relatedness
- 1. All elements of the selection process for sworn personnel shall use only those rating criteria and minimum qualifications that are job related.
- K. 31.4.3 (M) Uniform Administration
- 1. All elements of the selection process for all personnel shall be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner within the classification.
- L. 31.4.4 (M) Candidate Information
- 1. As appropriate, candidates for all positions shall be informed of:
 - a. all elements of the selection process;
 - b. the expected duration of the selection process;
 - c. the department's position on reapplication in the future.
- M. 31.4.5 (M) Notification of Ineligibility
- 1. All candidates not selected for sworn positions shall be informed as soon as practicable.
- N. 31.4.6 (M) Records
- 1. Procedures for the maintenance of candidate records include the following.
 - a. The disposition of records of candidates not selected.
 - (1) Physical and digital records of candidates not selected for employment shall be retained indefinitely in the Professional Standards Unit, unless otherwise proscribed by law.
 - b. The secure storage of selection materials.
 - (1) All retained records shall be kept confidential and secure.
 - c. The retention of background information.

- (1) The background investigation material shall be retained confidentially and securely in the Professional Standards Unit. Background investigation materials shall be retained indefinitely in the Professional Standards Unit.
- d. The retention of medical, emotional stability, and psychological fitness examinations.
 - (1) Medical and psychological fitness examinations for candidates selected for employment shall be kept confidentially and securely in the Office of Planning, Budget, and Personnel. Said materials shall be retained indefinitely. Medical and psychological fitness examination records for candidates not selected for employment shall be promptly destroyed once a candidate has not been selected for employment.
- O. 31.4.7 (M) Selection Criteria
 1. The selection criteria for all sworn positions shall be identical as it pertains to skills, knowledge, and abilities.
- P. 31.4.8 (M) Sworn Appointment Requirements
 1. Any sworn position shall meet all state requirements equivalent to full-time sworn personnel at the time of sworn appointment.
- Q. 31.5.1 (M) Background Investigations
 1. A background investigation of each candidate for all positions shall be conducted prior to appointment which includes:
 - a. verification of qualifying credentials;
 - b. criminal history report;
 - c. verification of personal and professional references;
 - d. education verification;
 - e. employment history;
 - f. a review of relevant national or state decertification resources, if available.
- R. 31.5.2 (M) Training
 1. Personnel used to conduct background investigations shall be trained in collecting the required information.
- S. 31.5.3 (M) Truth Verification
 1. The department does not employ polygraph examinations or other instruments of deception detection in its selection process.
- T. 31.5.4 (M) Conducted by Certified Personnel

1. Polygraph examinations or other instruments for the detection of deception are not employed by the department in its selection process.

U. 31.5.5 (M) Use of Results

1. Polygraph examinations or other instruments for the detection of deception are not employed by the department in its selection process.

V. 31.5.6 (M) Medical Examinations

1. A job-related medical examination shall be conducted, prior to appointment for a sworn position.

W. 31.5.7 (M) Emotional Stability/Psychological Fitness Examinations

1. A psychological fitness examination of each candidate for a sworn position shall be conducted and assessed by a qualified professional prior to appointment.