Recruitment and Selection

POLICY 302

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/8/26 **SUPERSEDES DATE:** 5/1/26 **ACCREDITATION STANDARD:** N/A

302.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

This policy provides a framework for employee recruiting efforts and identifies internal and external job-related standards for the selection processes of a position. This policy supplements the rules governing the Sheriff's Office employment practices and is promulgated by El Paso County Human Resources.

302.2 DEFINITIONS

The following terms used in this policy are defined in the Sheriff's Office Glossary of Terms.

Eligibility List
Qualifying Experience for Deputy Sheriff
Qualifying Experience for Emergency Services Dispatcher (ESD)

302.3 POLICY

In accordance with applicable federal, state, and local law, the Sheriff's Office provides equal opportunities for applicants and employees, regardless of actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, or any other protected class or status.

The Sheriff's Office does not show partiality or grant any special status to any applicant, employee, or group of employees unless otherwise required by law. The Office will recruit and hire only those individuals who demonstrate a commitment to service and possess the traits and characteristics that reflect personal integrity and high ethical standards.

302.4 RECRUITMENT

The Administrative Management Bureau will employ a comprehensive recruitment and selection strategy using a comprehensive Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) report to recruit and select qualified and diverse candidates. The process should include:

1. Identification of racially and culturally diverse target markets.
2. Use of marketing strategies to target diverse applicant pools.
3. Use of technology and maintenance of a strong internet presence.
4. Outreach through partnerships with media, community groups, citizen academies, colleges, schools, universities, and the military.

The Administrative Management Bureau shall avoid advertising, recruiting, and screening practices which are stereotypical, focus on homogeneous applicant pools, or screen applicants in a discriminatory manner. The Office will strive to facilitate and expedite the screening and testing process and periodically inform candidates of their status.

302.4.1 ANCILLARY RECRUITING TEAM

The Administrative Services Division Commander may direct the formation of an ancillary recruiting team to assist in the recruitment efforts of sworn, professional staff, and volunteer personnel. These ancillary recruiting team members may provide recruiting assistance on an ad-hoc or continual basis.

Members of this ancillary team may include:

1. Full-time employed sworn personnel.
2. Reserve sworn personnel.
3. Professional staff.

The selection process for this team will include the following:

1. The applicant must have a memorandum endorsement initiated by their direct supervisor from their chain of command through their respective bureau chief.
2. A memorandum from the applicant's direct supervisor detailing his/her suitability for this position.
3. A scenario-based interview with the Administrative Services Section Manager and the Recruiting and Backgrounds Unit Sergeant. Through this scenario-based interview, applicants must demonstrate above-average public speaking skills. This scenario-based interview will evaluate the applicant's ability to speak to the following topics, at a minimum:
    a. The Office's Strategic Recruiting Plan.
    b. The Office's two primary operational bureaus.
    c. The POST academy.
    d. The hiring process for both sworn and professional staff personnel.
    e. The unique size of the EPSO within Colorado as a Sheriff's Office and the broad opportunities this presents applicants.
    f. Career specialization and progression opportunities within the Detention Bureau and its specific mission.
    g. Career specialization and progression opportunities within the Law Enforcement Bureau and its specific mission.

302.5 SWORN HIRING PROCEDURES

1. Applicants for sworn positions, both full and part-time, will be administered a standardized written law enforcement exam.
2. Applicants will be contacted in descending order of score to begin the background investigation process.
3. Applicants not immediately selected to complete the background process will remain eligible to continue the process for a period of one (1) year from the date of the completion of the written test, depending on existing vacancies and the needs of the Office.
4. Written Test: The written test will be administered at a pre-determined location or virtually as needed.
    a. Applicants completing in-person testing must present a legal and valid form of picture identification to be admitted to the test. If time allows, the test results will be made available at the test location for the applicants.
    b. Applicants completing a virtual test will receive information through the Background Investigations Unit with instructions on completing the written testing process.
    c. A passing score for the written exam will be considered 70% or greater. Applicants receiving a failing score will be eliminated from further consideration.
5. Additional Background Requirements: All prospective sworn employees must comply with the following phases:
    a. Completed a truth verification exam. The results of this examination will not be used as the sole determinant of employment status.
    b. Successfully passed a background investigation. A portion of the background investigation includes collecting a fingerprint sample from the candidate and submitting that sample to CBI. The Background Investigation Unit is responsible for coordinating the candidate's fingerprinting and the review of any/all records returned by CBI associated with the sample to ensure no disqualifiers are found.
    c. Successfully passed psychological testing and a psychological interview.
    d. Successfully passed a pre-employment physical examination.
    e. Successfully passed a pre-employment drug screen supporting El Paso County's drug-free workplace policy.

302.5.1 SWORN LATERAL HIRING PROCEDURES

All lateral entry candidates will be required to participate in the normal sworn hiring/ selection process. The Sheriff's Office will not accept lateral entry for positions of Sergeant or Lieutenant.

1. Candidates with qualifying experience will be compensated at the recruit salary while in the academy.
2. Upon graduation from the recruit academy, recruits hired as a "lateral" will be compensated at a rate commensurate with their experience.
3. Deputy III - 2 years of qualified experience within the last three years.
4. Deputy II - 4 years of experience within the last five years.
5. Deputies hired through the lateral program will be required to sign a contract stating they will be ineligible for rehire if they leave the Office within two years from their hire date.

6. All lateral hire deputies will be assigned to the Detentions Bureau upon graduation from the academy.
7. Current deputies who meet the lateral hire requirements must submit a request for consideration in writing to the Administrative Management Bureau Chief. Any grade/step advancement would be from the effective date of this program and not from the date of hire.

302.5.2 PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING PROCEDURES

Professional staff positions, both full and part-time, will be advertised and selected as openings occur.
Professional staff Hiring Process:

1. Positions will be advertised through the County Human Resources (HR) Office.
2. All applications will be reviewed for interview eligibility based on information provided on each application related to the criteria outlined in the job description. Candidate applications that do not meet minimum qualifications will be notified that they are no longer being considered for the vacancy.
3. Professional staff applicants will be expected to successfully pass a truth verification examination, a background investigation, and a pre-employment drug screen before employment. A portion of the background investigation includes collecting a fingerprint sample from the candidate and submitting that sample to CBI. The Background Investigation Unit is responsible for coordinating the candidate's fingerprinting and reviewing any/all records returned by CBI associated with the sample to ensure no disqualifiers are found.
4. Professional staff supervisory and management level positions. The interview panel will select a pool of candidate finalists for interview by the Sheriff. The Sheriff will conduct a second interview and may include the Undersheriff and affected bureau chief in this interview. The Sheriff will select the final candidate for all professional staff supervisory and management-level positions.
5. The Sheriff will have final hiring authority for professional staff hiring.

302.5.3 EMERGENCY SERVICES DISPATCHER LATERAL HIRING PROCEDURES

All lateral entry candidates will be required to participate in the normal professional staff hiring/selection process. The Sheriff's Office will not accept lateral entry for positions of Supervisor or Manager.

1. Candidates with qualifying experience will be compensated at the Step 1 (ESDII) salary from the date of hire through completion of training and completion of probation, or one year from date of hire.
2. Candidates with two (2) years of qualifying experience within the last three (3) years will move to Step 2 (ESDI) following completion of training and probation. They will move to Step 3 (ESD) after one full year at Step 2.
3. Candidates with four (4) years of qualifying experience within the last five (5) years will move to Step 3 (ESD) following completion of training and probation. They will move to Step 4 (Senior ESD) after one (1) full year at Step 3.
4. Step 4 (Senior ESD) - one (1) full year after the completion of Step 3.
5. Current dispatchers who meet the lateral hire requirements must submit a request for consideration in writing to the Administrative Management Bureau Chief. Any grade/step advancement would be from the effective date of this program and not from the date of hire.

302.5.4 SELECTION PROCESS

The Division Commander or designee in whose division the assignment/posting is to be made or hired for will conduct a formal and objective interview process of all qualified and eligible applicants. The selection process will be conducted as follows:

1. Assignments/Postings:
    a. All position requirements will be sent to the HR Specialist(s), who will create the job posting request.
        I. The Administrative Services Division Commander or designee will review and approve all job announcements.
    b. The minimum posting requirement for internal postings will be three (3) days.
    c. The minimum posting requirement for external postings will be three (3) days.
2. The Division Commander or designee will appoint oral board members and draft interview questions.
    a. Oral board members are required to complete yearly training on oral board etiquette.
    b. Oral board members should consist of at least one (1) Office employee, one (1) first-line supervisor or manager from

their division, and another Office member from another division, preferably from outside their bureau. External oral board members should be limited to County employees and/or first responder personnel.

c. When the need arises to utilize community members on a selection process panel, they must be vetted through the Background Investigations Unit.
d. All interview questions will total a score of 100 points and/or percentage.
e. Selected questions for an assignment will be sent to the HR Specialist(s) via the chain of command before any interview(s) are conducted for approval, and selected questions for all other postings will be sent to the HR Specialist via the chain of command before any interview(s) are conducted for approval.
f. If a posting receives one (1) qualified applicant who is internal to that Division, the Commander or designee may conduct a one-on-one interview or waive the interview entirely.
g. An interview MUST be conducted if the applicant is not internal to that Division.
h. Oral board members must reflect the Office and El Paso County community if feasible.
i. All oral board members must be consistent for all interviews conducted within each specific assignment/posting.

3. After the Division Commander or designee completes the oral board and scoring, all applicable scoring sheets for an assignment must be sent to the HR Specialist(s). All applicable scoring sheets for all other job postings must be sent to the HR Specialist.
    a. HR Specialist(s) will develop eligibility lists for all assignments, in conjunction with the Division Commander or designee.
    b. For assignments, once the selection is made, the HR Specialist(s) will send written notifications for applicants selected for the position and those remaining on an eligibility list. The HR Specialist will notify all candidates who were not selected and not placed on an eligibility list. The total period of the list, if any, will be determined by the Division Commander or designee, but it will not exceed a one (1) year period and move forward with the hiring process. Should a vacancy become available during the established timeframe, candidates will transfer based on scores established during the selection process.
    c. For all other postings, once the selection is made, the HR Specialist will notify all candidates who were not selected and placed on an eligibility list. Once all notifications have been sent, the hiring process will continue with the HR Specialist extending the top-scoring candidate(s) a contingent offer. Should a vacancy become available during the established timeframe, candidates will transfer based on scores established during the selection process.
    d. If more than one (1) opening exists, the selection range will be expanded by one (1) applicant for each position.

302.6 RE-EMPLOYMENT

Sworn Employees:

1. Full and part-time sworn employees who resign their position voluntarily may be considered for re-employment based on the needs of the Office and their past employment record. The HR Specialist(s) must receive the request for re-employment within two (2) years from the end of employment. Full-time employees who are terminated for cause or under the provisions of CRS 30-10-506, as amended, are not eligible for re-employment.
2. Sworn personnel eligible for re-employment shall be re-employed at one grade lower than their prior grade level or their last grade level at the discretion of the Sheriff or Undersheriff. Re-employment candidates will not be eligible for lateral entry as defined in this policy.
3. All sworn personnel will undergo a 1-year probationary period from the rehire date if they have been gone longer than 180 days.
4. All sworn personnel re-employed must satisfactorily complete a truth verification examination, background investigation, and physical and psychological evaluation unless the Sheriff or Undersheriff waives. Those individuals seeking re-employment who have not been continuously employed in a law enforcement capacity must undergo a physical and psychological evaluation in accordance with POST rules unless such evaluations were within one (1) year before the date of employment. A portion of the background investigation includes collecting a fingerprint sample from the candidate and submitting that sample to CBI. The Background Investigation Unit is responsible for coordinating the candidate's fingerprinting and the review of any/all records returned by CBI associated with the sample to ensure no disqualifiers are found.
5. After any employment separation from the Sheriff's Office, all rehired sworn personnel will be assigned a new Employee Identification Number (EID).

6. Sworn personnel eligible for re-employment shall take precedence over new employee hiring lists when vacancies occur.

Professional Staff Employees:

1. Full and part-time professional staff employees who resign voluntarily may be considered for re-employment based on the needs of the Office and their past employment record. The HR Specialist(s) must receive the request for re-employment within two (2) years from the ending employment—full-time employees who are terminated for cause or are not eligible for re-employment.
2. Professional staff personnel eligible for re-employment will be granted an interview for the position opening they have applied for.
3. Professional staff personnel requesting re-employment may be considered for direct rehire at the discretion of the Sheriff or Undersheriff.
4. Professional staff personnel rehired will undergo a 6-month probationary period.
5. Professional staff personnel who are rehired after any employment separation from the Sheriff's Office will be assigned a new Employee Identification Number (EID).
6. Professional staff applicants must pass a background investigation and a pre-employment drug screen before employment. A portion of the background investigation includes collecting a fingerprint sample from the candidate and submitting that sample to CBI. The Background Investigation Unit is responsible for coordinating the candidate's fingerprinting and the review of any/all records returned by CBI associated with the sample to ensure no disqualifiers are found. Some positions may have additional requirements to include but are not limited to a truth verification examination, a motor vehicle record check, a physical exam, and professional license verification. These requirements will be included in the job description at the time of posting.

302.6.1 RETENTION OPPORTUNITY – CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT

Deputy Recruits who have not met the POST Academy performance criteria, or voluntarily vacate their academy seat, may be considered for assignment to a professional staff position immediately upon dismissal or resignation from the academy if the following criteria are met:

1. The employee must have been employed for at least one year with EPSO prior to starting the POST Academy with no gaps in employment.
2. Professional staff position vacancies exist and job(s) are currently posted.
3. The employee must meet all minimum requirements of the posted professional staff position(s) in which they have an interest.
4. The employee must complete an application for the job they are interested in.
5. The employee is not currently the subject of an Internal Affairs or Chain of Command Investigation.
6. The employee must use accrued vacation or comp time during the administrative transition and processing.

If criteria have been met, the member may be placed into the position at the discretion of the Sheriff. They must accept the job offer / position within three business days; if they fail to do so, the offer will be rescinded.

This retention opportunity does not create any entitlement to continued employment. In some cases, a suitable opportunity for continued employment may not be available based on the needs of the Office. In the event the employee does not accept, or a suitable position is not available, separation from employment will proceed in accordance with policy.

302.7 DISQUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

Disqualification criteria have been established to identify applicants with qualities preferred to maintain an ethical and professional work environment. They will be applied when considering an applicant's suitability for employment or service with the Office.

302.7.1 SWORN APPLICANT DISQUALIFIERS

Sworn applicants screened out of the background investigation process will receive a written notification stating they are no longer being considered for the position. Sworn applicants may be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

1. Felony convictions.
2. Failure to meet minimum age requirements.
3. A conviction involving crimes of moral turpitude and certain misdemeanors such as domestic violence.

4. Any domestic violence conviction (including deferred sentences in which a guilty plea or plea of nolo contendre was entered).
5. Admission to actions that meet the elements for crimes of moral turpitude or domestic violence.
6. Failure to meet minimum educational requirements.
7. No valid driver's license.
8. The use of any product containing THC, including but not limited to marijuana and related cannabis products, within the past 1 year (12 months) from the application date. This prohibition applies to any product that may be ingested, inhaled, applied topically, or consumed in any other manner.
9. Schedule III drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
10. Schedule II drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
11. Schedule I drug use (excluding marijuana) within the past three (3) years.
12. Any history of illegal drug sales/distribution, including marijuana, Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances, or any other prescription drug (details and time frame will be considered).
13. Dishonorable discharge from any branch of military service.
14. Any DUI/DWAI/DUID conviction (including deferred sentences in which a guilty plea or plea of nolo contendre was entered) within the past three (3) years.
15. Five (5) or more traffic (moving) citations within the past three (3) years.
16. More than one (1) at-fault traffic crash within the past three (3) years.
17. Any suspension/revocation/cancellation/denial of driver's license within the past three (3) years.
18. History of financial irresponsibility.
19. History of poor work performance or disciplinary actions.
20. Criminal associations.
21. A theft or theft from an employer (details and time frame will be considered).
22. Failure to keep appointments or submit all documentation in a complete and timely fashion to the Background Unit.
23. Any sustained excessive Use of Force complaint or any history of excessive use of force.

302.7.2 PROFESSIONAL STAFF APPLICANT DISQUALIFIERS

Professional staff applicants screened out of the background investigation process will receive a letter stating they are no longer being considered for the position. Professional staff applicants may be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

1. Felony convictions.
2. Failure to meet minimum age requirements.
3. A conviction involving crimes of moral turpitude and certain misdemeanors such as domestic violence.
4. Any felony domestic violence conviction (including deferred sentences in which a guilty plea or plea of nolo contendre was entered).
5. Admission to actions that meet the elements for crimes of moral turpitude or domestic violence.
6. Failure to meet minimum educational requirements.
7. No valid driver's license.
8. Marijuana use or the use of any product containing THC, including but not limited to marijuana and related cannabis products, within the past six (6) months from the application date. This prohibition applies to any product that may be ingested, inhaled, applied topically, or consumed in any other manner.
9. Schedule III drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
10. Schedule II drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
11. Schedule I drug use (excluding marijuana) within the past three (3) years.
12. Any history of illegal drug sales/distribution, including marijuana, Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances, or any other prescription drug (details and time frame will be considered).
13. Dishonorable discharge from any branch of military service.
14. History of financial irresponsibility.
15. History of poor work performance or disciplinary actions.
16. Criminal associations.
17. A theft or theft from an employer (details and time frame will be considered).

18. Failure to keep appointments or to submit all documentation in a complete and timely fashion to the Background Unit.

The following disqualifiers will also apply to any professional staff position that requires operating a County-owned vehicle to fulfill the necessary duties and responsibilities:

1. Any DUI/DWAI/DUID conviction (including deferred sentences in which a guilty plea or plea of nolo contendre was entered) within the past three (3) years.
2. Five (5) or more traffic (moving) citations within the past three (3) years.
3. More than one (1) at-fault traffic crash within the past three (3) years.
4. Any suspension/revocation/cancellation/denial of driver's license within the past three (3) years.

302.7.3 VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS, AND CONTRACTORS

Background investigations will be conducted on volunteers, interns, and contractors. A portion of the background investigation includes collecting a fingerprint sample from the candidate and submitting that sample to CBI. The Background Investigation Unit is responsible for coordinating the candidate's fingerprinting and the review of any/all records returned by CBI associated with the sample to ensure no disqualifiers are found. Individuals may be disqualified based on any of the following reasons:

1. Volunteers or interns:
    a. Felony convictions.
    b. Failure to meet minimum age requirements.
    c. A conviction involving crimes of moral turpitude and certain misdemeanors such as domestic violence.
    d. Admission to actions that meet the elements for crimes of moral turpitude or domestic violence.
    e. Felony domestic violence conviction (including a deferred sentence in which a guilty plea or plea of nolo contendre was entered).
    f. Failure to meet minimum education requirements.
    g. Marijuana use or the use of any product containing THC, including but not limited to marijuana and related cannabis products, within the past six (6) months from the application date. This prohibition applies to any product that may be ingested, inhaled, applied topically, or consumed in any other manner.
    h. Schedule III drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
    i. Schedule II drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
    j. Schedule I drug use (excluding marijuana) within the past three (3) years.
    k. Any history of illegal drug sales, including marijuana, Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances, or any other prescription drug.
2. Contractors with inmate or public contact:
    a. A felony conviction involving violence, weapons, assault, or drug trafficking.
    b. A conviction involving crimes of moral turpitude and certain misdemeanors such as domestic violence.
    c. Admission to actions that meet the elements for crimes of moral turpitude or domestic violence.
    d. Marijuana use or the use of any product containing THC, including but not limited to marijuana and related cannabis products, within the past six (6) months from the application date. This prohibition applies to any product that may be ingested, inhaled, applied topically, or consumed in any other manner.
    e. Schedule III drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
    f. Schedule II drug use within the past three (3) years other than prescribed.
    g. Schedule I drug use (excluding marijuana) within the past three (3) years.
    h. Any history of illegal drug sales, including marijuana, Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances, or any other prescription drug.
    i. Failure to meet any qualifications as outlined per relevant contracts.
3. Contractors with no/incidental inmate or public contact:
    a. A felony conviction involving violence, weapons, assault, or drug trafficking.
    b. Any history of illegal drug sales, including marijuana, Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances, or any other prescription drug.
    c. Any drug use within the past 90 days.
    d. Failure to meet any qualifications as outlined per relevant contracts.

4. Volunteers who may be required to operate a county-owned motor vehicle.
    a. Any DUI/DWAI/DUID conviction (including deferred sentences in which a guilty plea or plea of nolo contendre was entered) within the past three (3) years.
    b. Five (5) or more traffic (moving) citations within the past three (3) years.
    c. More than one (1) at-fault traffic crash within the past three (3) years.
    d. Any suspension/revocation/cancellation/denial of driver's license within the past three (3) years.

302.7.4 INTERNAL TRANSFER BACKGROUNDS

1. Professional staff or sworn to professional staff transfers-Background Investigation Unit will conduct updated NCIC/CCIC checks.
2. Professional staff to sworn transfers-Background Investigation Unit will conduct a complete standard sworn background investigation.
3. Volunteer/Intern to sworn or professional staff employee-Background Investigation Unit will conduct a complete standard sworn or professional staff background investigation.

302.8 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Sworn Probationary Period:

1. Upon successful graduation from the Basic Certified Academy, sworn personnel will be on new hire probation for one (1) year, which may be extended for up to six (6) months for training or disciplinary purposes.
2. During their probationary or training review period, sworn personnel who are injured, on or off duty, may have their probationary date extended for the time they are off or on light or modified duty. If the employee can demonstrate proficiency in their assigned duties, the division commander may reduce the probationary date extension after returning to full duty.
3. Sworn personnel who have been rehired will be placed on probation for one (1) year from their hire date and may be extended for up to six (6) months for training or disciplinary purposes unless otherwise directed by the Sheriff or Undersheriff.
4. Sworn personnel on probation may be terminated for policy violation(s), violating a state statute, a county or municipal ordinance, or failing to complete their probation period.

Professional Staff Probationary Period:

1. Professional staff personnel will be on probation for six (6) months from the date of employment. It may be extended for up to three (3) months for training or disciplinary purposes.
2. Professional staff personnel injured, on or off duty, during their probationary or training review period may have their probationary date extended for the time they are off or on light or modified duty. If the employee can demonstrate proficiency in their assigned duties, the division commander may reduce the probationary date extension after returning to full duty.
3. Professional staff personnel who have been rehired will be placed on probation as indicated above unless otherwise directed by the Sheriff or Undersheriff.
4. Professional staff personnel on probation may be terminated from employment for policy violation(s), violating a state statute, a county or municipal ordinance, or failing to complete their probation period.

302.9 RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Members are not required to reside within El Paso County to apply for vacancies.