

Police Officer (Entry Level)
CAREERS Application & Police Entry Registration System (PERS)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

APPLICATION RELATED QUESTIONS

- **How do I access the online application for the Police Officer job opportunity?**
 - Please visit the following website: www.cityofchicago.org/PoliceOfficerApplication

- **I cannot log into my account.**
 - Please contact our administrative staff at 1-312-744-4976 between the hours of 8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday through Saturday **OR** e-mail us at: police-application@cityofchicago.org
 - Our staff can provide you with your user name and reset your password which will enable you to access your account. Once your password is reset, the first time you log in the system it will prompt you to immediately change your password to ensure account security. Be sure to write it down and save it in a file or location that you can easily access.

- **I do not own or have access to a computer. How can I apply?**
 - **Chicago Public Libraries**
 - All Chicago Public Libraries have computers available for public use with Internet access. For more information or to locate a Chicago Public Library closest to you, please call 1-312-747-4300 or visit their website at www.chipublib.org
 - In order to access a computer at a Chicago Public Library branch, you will need a Library Card. Library Cards are free and can be obtained at any Chicago Public Library branch with a form of identification as listed below:
 - A current and valid state issued ID with your photo, name and Chicago address (driver's license, Illinois State ID, etc.) Anyone without a fixed address may use a letter certifying their Chicago resident status by the social service agency where he or she receives mail. (No post office box numbers will be accepted).
 - OR**
 - Two pieces of current identification, one must include your name and Chicago address. These may include personal check, current telephone, gas, electric or cable bill, mail with a current postmark (within 30 days) or Voter's Registration card (no post box numbers will be accepted).
 - **Customer Service Helpline**
 - If you need further information you can either call our administrative staff at 1-312-744-4976 between the hours of 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Saturday, **OR** you can e-mail us at police-application@cityofchicago.org

- **The application requires me to provide an e-mail address, but I do not have one. What do I do? How can I complete my online application?**
 - E-mail addresses are required. Free e-mail addresses are available with many different internet service providers. Please visit one of the following websites to set up a free e-mail account:
 - Gmail – www.gmail.com
 - Hotmail – www.hotmail.com
 - Yahoo – www.yahoo.com

- **The online job announcement states that I need to attach certain documents to my online application. I have tried to attach the documents but for some reason cannot. What can I do?**
 - **Customer Service Helpline**
 - You can either call our administrative staff at 1-312-744-4976, Monday through Saturday between the hours of 8:30am and 4:30pm **OR** e-mail us at police-application@cityofchicago.org
 - Our staff will provide you with either a fax number or email address to which you can send your documents. Our staff will then scan the documents and attach them to your online application.
 - *It is the applicant's responsibility to submit the correct documents. At the time of submission, the City of Chicago will not be verifying that the documents are correct or valid. The City of Chicago will attach the documents to the applicant's application within 2-3 business days. It is the applicant's responsibility to review your application to ensure that the documents you faxed or e-mailed to us have been attached to your online job application.*

- **What documents do I need to attach to my online application?**
 - To verify age:
 - A current, valid driver's license.
 - You do not have to have a State of Illinois driver's license to apply; however, if you are offered the Police Officer position, you must have a current, valid driver's license issued by the State of Illinois at the time of hire which is when you enter the Police Academy.
 - A current traffic violation ticket.
 - If you were involved in a recent traffic violation and received a ticket, you may submit your ticket in lieu of your actual driver's license, however, you must have a current, valid State of Illinois driver's license at the time of hire which is when you enter the Police Academy.
 - To verify academic credit hours:
 - Educational Transcripts – certified or non-certified copies.
 - International Transcripts – candidates must also attach a copy of their Foreign Credential Evaluation.

- To verify military experience:
 - Active Military Duty
 - Letter from your Commanding Officer on official stationary verifying applicant's active duty and length of service in the Armed Forces of the United States. The letter should also include a copy of the applicant's Military ID.
 - Veterans
 - DD214 for Veteran status – The copy must include discharge status; this is traditionally known as the Member Copy 4.
 - If a copy of an applicant's DD214 cannot be obtained, then a letter from the United States Veterans Administration on official stationary stating dates of service and character of service can be accepted.

- To verify fee waiver request, attach at least one of the following **current** documents:
 - IDES Wage Information Sheet
 - IDES Benefit Payment Stub
 - IDPA Medical Card
 - IDPA Verification of Benefits Form / Grant Information Request
 - LINK Card and Receipt
 - The receipt must be from a recent purchase such as a grocery bill within the last month.
 - Government Food Stamp Issuance Document
 - Federal Income Tax Return (most recent tax year)
 - Letter (on shelter letterhead) from the homeless shelter where you stay

- **I am a Veteran and don't possess a copy of my DD214 (Member Copy 4). How can I get in contact with the Veterans Administration?**
 - Please visit the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website for more information at: <http://www.va.gov/>

- **I am not sure if I am eligible for a fee waiver. How can I find out if I am eligible?**
 - In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 2-74-020 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, if you are presently receiving unemployment compensation, SSI, or general assistance **OR** your income is below the federally defined poverty level you may be eligible to receive a fee waiver.
 - To identify whether or not you meet the federally defined poverty level, please visit the following website: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty>
 - Please note, once on the website, you should click on the second link titled "Extension of 2009 HHS Poverty Guidelines Until at Least May 31, 2010." These guidelines have been extended through the end of 2010 per the language in the first link on the website titled "HHS Poverty Guidelines for the Remainder of 2010."

- **I am on active military duty overseas and don't have access to some of the documentation that is required to be attached to the online application. What should I do?**
 - Family members or friends can provide the documentation on your behalf in one of two ways:
 - They can scan and e-mail you the documents directly so that you can attach them to your online application.
 - *It is the applicant's responsibility to submit the correct documents. At the time of submission, the City of Chicago will not be verifying that the documents are correct or valid. The City of Chicago will attach the documents to the applicant's application within 2-3 business days. It is the applicant's responsibility to review your application to ensure that the documents you faxed or e-mailed to us have been attached to your online job application.*
 - Documents can be scanned and e-mailed to police-application@cityofchicago.org **OR** hard copies can be mailed to:
 - Department of Human Resources
ATTN: Police Officer Application Processing
121 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60602
 - *It is the applicant's responsibility to submit the correct documents. At the time of submission, the City of Chicago will not be verifying that the documents are correct or valid. The City of Chicago will attach the documents to the applicant's application within 2-3 business days. It is the applicant's responsibility to review your application to ensure that the documents you faxed or e-mailed to us have been attached to your online job application.*
 - If you do not have any family or friends available to assist you, you must at least attach documentation to your online application validating that you are on active military duty which can be verified with:
 - Letter from your Commanding Officer on official stationary verifying your active duty and length of service in the Armed Forces of the United States. The letter should also include a copy of your Military ID.
 - *If the applicant attaches documentation showing their active military duty status, then they can provide the City of Chicago with all other required documentation at a later date.*
- **Do I need a driver's license to become a Police Officer? Does it have to be a State of Illinois license?**
 - Yes. You must present a current, valid driver's license at the time of application.
 - You do not have to have a State of Illinois driver's license to apply; however, if you are offered the Police Officer position, you must have a current, valid driver's license issued by the State of Illinois at the time of hire.

- **I applied in 2006 and never heard anything. Is that application still valid?**
 - No. If you took the 2006 examination and are still interested in the Police Officer position, but have not been hired, you must reapply at this time.

- **I owe a debt to the City.**
 - **Can I apply?**
 - Yes, you can apply.
 - **Can I be hired?**
 - No. If you are a selected candidate, you will be required to obtain debt clearance from the Department of Revenue before you can be fingerprinted. The Department of Revenue will provide you with clearance if you do not owe any debt, if you pay your debt in full, or if you enroll in a debt payment plan with the City of Chicago.

- **Will I be notified as to the status or results of my application?**
 - If you do not meet the minimum qualifications based on your self assessment during the application process, the CAREERS application system will automatically inform you that your application will not be considered for the position.
 - If you meet the minimum qualifications, attach the appropriate documentation, have paid the application fee (or were granted a fee waiver) and passed the written exam, you will receive correspondence via e-mail informing you that your application has been accepted and you have been placed on the referral list in lottery order.
 - If after reviewing your application it is determined that you do not meet the minimum qualifications, did not attach all required documentation, or did not pay the application fee and were not granted a fee waiver, you will receive correspondence via e-mail informing you that your application has been rejected.

- **It has been a week since I submitted my application and I have not received any e-mails. What can I do?**
 - Please check the spam filters on your e-mail account. If you do not find any correspondence from the City of Chicago in your spam folder, please contact us via e-mail at police-application@cityofchicago.org or call us at 1-312-744-4976 so that we can better assist you.

- **What happens after I have been informed that my application has been accepted and I have been placed on the referral list in lottery order?**
 - If you meet the minimum qualifications, attach the appropriate documentation, have paid the application fee (or were granted a fee waiver), and passed the written exam, you will receive an e-mail indicating that you have been placed on the referral list in lottery order.
 - The Police Department will notify candidates when they have been selected for further processing.

- **How do I update my contact information (different address or telephone number)?**
 - You can update your personal information by logging into your CAREERS application with your user name and password at www.cityofchicago.org/PoliceOfficerApplication
 - If you forgot your user name or password:
 - Please contact our administrative staff at 1-312-744-4976 between the hours of 8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday through Saturday **OR** e-mail us at police-application@cityofchicago.org
 - Our staff can provide you with your user name and reset your password which will enable you to access your account. Once your password is reset, the first time you log in the system it will prompt you to immediately change your password to ensure account security. Be sure to write it down and save it in a file or location that you can easily access.

- **What if I make a mistake answering the questions and the system informs me I am not qualified for the position?**
 - The qualifying and screening questions are designed to determine if you meet the minimum qualifications for the position. If you do not meet the minimum qualifications, the system will let you know that you are not eligible for the position. **If you make a mistake in answering the questions, there is no recourse for this action.**

- **Can I create multiple profiles/accounts and submit payments for each one to better my chances of where I will be placed on the referral list in lottery order?**
 - No. Every candidate is allowed one application. If you create multiple profiles/accounts, all duplicates will be deleted.

- **While in the application system, I hit the back browser arrow and now the computer screen is showing me an error page. What should I do?**
 - You should not use the back browser in the application system as you may get an error page. Since you received an error page, you will need to start over. Close out of the error page. Click back on the application link which is www.cityofchicago.org/PoliceOfficerApplication, log in, and start over.

- **I finished the application but I forgot to attach all of the required documents. What can I do?**
 - You can update any contact information and attach any additional required documents to your application through the close of the application period which is Friday, November 26, 2010.
 - You can access your application at: www.cityofchicago.org/PoliceOfficerApplication

ELIGIBILITY RELATED QUESTIONS

- **I am not a U.S. citizen. Can I still apply?**
 - You must be a U.S. citizen or a legal resident to apply for the Police Officer position with the City of Chicago.

- **What are the minimum qualifications of the Police Officer position?**
 - Age
 - Non-military applicants must have reached their 25th birthday by the last day of the application period which is **Friday, November 26, 2010**.
 - Military applicants must have reached their 21st birthday by the last day of the application period which is **Friday, November 26, 2010**.
 - Pursuant to the Municipal Code of Chicago, no person may be appointed as a probationary Police Officer after their 40th birthday.
 - Education / Military Experience
 - 60 semester (or 90 quarter) hours of credit from a college or university completed prior to the last day of the application period which is **Friday, November 26, 2010**.

OR

 - Three years (36 months) of continuous active duty in the U. S. Armed Forces.

OR

 - 30 semester (or 45 quarter) hours of credit completed from a college or university prior to the last day of the application period which is **Friday, November 26, 2010** **AND** one year (12 months) of continuous active duty in the U. S. Armed Forces.
 - Academic credit hours must be granted by an accredited educational institution.

- **What's the minimum age to apply for Police Officer? What happens if I miss the age requirement by 1-2 days or a week?**
 - Non-military applicants must have reached their 25th birthday by the last day of the application period which is **Friday, November 26, 2010**.
 - Military applicants must have reached their 21st birthday by the last day of the application period which is **Friday, November 26, 2010**.
 - If you have not reached the specified age by the last day of the posting, your application will not be processed.

- **What is the maximum age an applicant can be to apply and/or enter the academy?**
 - Pursuant to the Municipal Code of Chicago, no person will be eligible to enter the Police Training Academy **AFTER** their 40th birthday.
 - If you have reached the age of 40, your application will not be processed.

- **I am serving in the military reserves. Does my time in the reserves count for military experience?**
 - Only active duty counts towards military experience.
 - As listed in the job announcement, you must meet **one** of the following:
 - 3 years (36 months) of continuous active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces by **Friday, November 26, 2010.**
 - 1 year (12 months) of continuous active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces **AND** 30 semester (or 45 quarter) hours of credit by **Friday, November 26, 2010**
 - 60 semester (or 90 quarter) hours of credit earned by **Friday, November 26, 2010.**

- **Do I have to be a resident of the City of Chicago to apply?**
 - No, you do not have to be a resident of the City of Chicago to apply. However, should you be offered the position, you must be a resident of the City of Chicago by the first day of employment.

- **I am a Police Officer in another jurisdiction. Do I have to go through the Chicago Police Department training program?**
 - Yes. Regardless of your current status, everyone hired for the position of Police Officer must attend and graduate from the training academy in order to hold that title.

- **If I meet the minimum qualifications and am placed on the referral list in lottery order, how long am I on the referral list? When does the referral list expire?**
 - A Police Officer referral list lasts approximately 3-4 years. The applicant's from the 2006 examination were all called by 2010 at which time the list was exhausted and retired. Please be sure to update your contact information (i.e. address, phone, and e-mail) as necessary.

- **The job announcement states that I must obtain a valid Firearms Owner's Identification (FOID) card issued by the State of Illinois at the time of hire. How do I obtain this?**
 - Please visit the Illinois State Police website for more information and to obtain the FOID application. The website address is <http://www.isp.state.il.us/foid>





- **Will I have to take a written exam at any point during the hiring process?**
 - Yes.
 - Applicants who successfully complete the online application and submit a successful registration fee payment or have their fee waiver accepted will be invited to participate in a written exam.

- **What can I expect from the hiring process?**
 - Applicants who successfully complete the application, complete the fee payment process or have their fee waiver accepted will be invited to participate in the written test.
 - Applicants who pass the written test will be evaluated to see if they meet the minimum qualifications of the job and attached all appropriate, required documentation to their application. If they do, they will be placed on the referral list in lottery order. As vacancies become available, applicants will be referred in lottery order to the Police Department. Candidates must pass a background investigation, medical examination, psychological test, drug screen, physical fitness test, and other pre-employment procedures as determined by the Chicago Police Department.

PAYMENT RELATED QUESTIONS

- **I cannot afford to pay the \$30 application fee.**
 - The online application allows you to request a fee waiver, provided that you meet the financial criteria.
 - In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 2-74-020 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, if you are presently receiving unemployment compensation, SSI, general assistance, OR your income is below the federally defined poverty level you may be eligible to receive a fee waiver. To find out if you meet the federally defined poverty level, please visit the following website: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty>
 - Please note, once on the website, you should click on the second link titled “Extension of 2009 HHS Poverty Guidelines Until at Least May 31, 2010.” These guidelines have been extended through the end of 2010 per the language in the first link on the website titled “HHS Poverty Guidelines for the Remainder of 2010.”
 - Your request for a fee waiver must be accompanied by at least one current document listed below. Please attach one of the required documents to the resume tab of your CAREERS application. Failure to do so will result in an incomplete application and you will not be considered for this position.
 - IDES Wage Information Sheet
 - IDES Benefit Payment Stub
 - IDPA Medical Card
 - IDPA Verification of Benefits Form / Grant Information Request
 - LINK Card and Receipt
 - The receipt must be from a recent purchase such as a grocery bill within the last month.
 - Food Stamp Issuance Document
 - Federal Income Tax Return (most recent tax year)
 - Letter (on shelter letterhead) from the homeless shelter where you currently stay.
 - If you have any questions about attaching your documents, please contact our administrative staff at 1-312-744-4976 between the hours of 8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday through Saturday **OR** e-mail us at police-application@cityofchicago.org
 - Any falsification or omission of information that you provide in support of your financial status for the purpose of receiving this fee waiver may result in your disqualification and/or termination of employment; and may be punishable under laws governing perjury and/or a violation of Municipal Code of Chicago 2-74-020.
 - If your fee waiver is approved and you meet minimum qualifications, attach the appropriate documentation, and pass the written exam, you will be placed on a referral list in lottery order. As the Department of Police needs to fill vacancies, applicants on the referral list will be referred to the Department of Police in a random lottery order.

- **If I don't have a credit card, can I use my debit card to pay the application fee?**
 - Yes. Debit cards are acceptable as long as your debit card possesses a credit card logo such as American Express, Discover, Master Card or Visa.

-  American Express
-  Discover
-  Master Card
-  Visa

- **Do you accept checks or money orders for payment of the application fee?**
 - No. Neither checks nor Money Orders are acceptable forms of payment on the website.
 - You can pay the application fee with a valid credit card or debit card that possesses a credit card logo such as American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa.

-  American Express
-  Discover
-  Master Card
-  Visa

- **Will my application fee be refunded if I am not selected for the position?**
 - No. Application fees are non-refundable.
- **Will a receipt be available for printing when a payment of \$30 is made?**
 - Yes, at the completion of the payment process, you will receive a confirmation page including a confirmation number signifying your payment was successful and complete. It is your responsibility to print a copy of this page and retain it for your records.
 - You will also receive a copy of the confirmation page via e-mail once your payment has been submitted. It is your responsibility to save this e-mail and retain it for your records.
- **I went to the payment website and entered my user name and e-mail address but the system will not let me log in.**
 - The user name and e-mail address that you must use to enter the payment website is the **SAME** user name and e-mail address you used to enter your online application.
 - If you continue to have difficulty, please call our administrative support staff at 1-312-744-4976 from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Saturday **OR** e-mail us at police-application@cityofchicago.org

- **On the payment website, I noticed that my information was listed incorrectly on the summary page. Can I correct this information?**
 - Yes. You can update any contact information and attach any additional required documents to your application through the close of the application period which is **Friday, November 26, 2010**.
 - You can access your application at: www.cityofchicago.org/PoliceOfficerApplication

- **While in the payment system, I hit the back browser arrow and now the computer screen is showing me an error page. What should I do?**
 - You should not use the back browser in the payment system as you may get an error page. Since you received an error page, you will need to start over. Close out of the error page. Click back on the payment link, log in, and start over.

- **I received an e-mail stating that my fee waiver request was denied. I checked my application and realized I attached the wrong documentation for my fee waiver request. What can I do?**
 - Please call our administrative support staff at 1-312-744-4976 from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Saturday **OR** e-mail us at police-application@cityofchicago.org and we can assist you.

POLICE DEPARTMENT/ JOB SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- **Can I prepare for the POWER test to be given upon admittance to the Police Training Academy?**
 - Yes. Information about the selection process can be found on the Chicago Police Department's website: www.chicagopolice.org

- **What type of training will I receive while in the Police Training Academy?**
 - Among other things, probationary police officers receive physical, practical and academic training on Chicago Police Department policies and procedures; the law; communication skills; strategies and tactics; professionalism; and how to use various technologies while at the Academy.

- **How long does it take to graduate from the Police Training Academy?**
 - Approximately six (6) months. Probationary police officers must successfully complete all training modules in order to graduate.

- **If I get into the academy and graduate, what location will I be assigned?**
 - Assignments of graduates will depend on operational needs of the Police Department at the time of graduation.

- **Does the probationary period start after I graduate from the Police Training Academy? How long is the probationary period?**
 - The probationary period is eighteen (18) months, starting with entry into the Police Training Academy.

- **Do I have to graduate from the Police Training Academy to work as a Police Officer?**
 - Yes.

- **What is the salary of a Police Officer?**
 - \$43,104 / annually

- **What are the benefits that are offered with the Police Officer position?**
 - Salary
 - Tuition Reimbursement
 - Prescription, Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance
 - Opportunity for Advancement
 - Attractive Work Schedule
 - Paid Holidays and Vacation Days
 - Retirement Plan
 - Annual Uniform Allowance
 - Home Purchase Assistance