

Lawrence Township Police Department

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Chief of Police

Promoting Diversity in Law Enforcement Recruiting and Hiring Program Goals

On December 7, 2021, then Attorney General Andrew Bruck issued Attorney a General Guideline for Promoting Diversity in Law Enforcement Recruiting and Hiring. The Lawrence Township Police Department is committed to and strives for a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community that we serve.

An analysis of the 2020 census revealed the following demographics for the Township of Lawrence:

- 61% White
- 10% Black
- 15% Asian
- 12% Hispanic

At the present time, the Lawrence Township Police Department is made up of 61 sworn police officers which includes our Class III school officers. A breakdown of the demographics of our police force is as follows:

- 87% White
- 10% Black
- 0% Asian
- 3% Hispanic

Of the 61 officers, 56 are male and 5 are female.

It is important to realized that the Lawrence Township Police Department is governed by Civil Service statutes and regulations. This system required the police department to hire police officer candidates from certified lists supplied by the New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC) following a state-administered testing process. The CSC usually administers this testing process every two years, and the CSC uses the results to compile a ranked list of qualified law enforcement candidates. Since we follow this process, we are limited to the list of qualified candidates provided by the Civil Service Commission and only candidates who fail background checks, medical/psychological exams, residency requirements may be removed or bypassed on the lists.

More specifically, pursuant to the CSC's "rule of three", the CSC provides an agency seeking to hire a new officer with the top three candidates from the CSC's certified list. The police department is then limited to those three candidates to fill the vacancy. Veterans of military service who pass the exam are given preference and placed at the top of the certified list.

It should also be noted that on February 4, 2021 Senate Bill S3220 was approved which states that the Civil Service Commission shall exempt from the requirement to take the entry level law enforcement exam a person who has successfully completed a full Basic Course for Police Officers training course at a school approved by the Police Training Commission. In order to be eligible to do this, the governing body of the municipality must adopt an ordinance or resolution authorizing such hiring by the police department and adopt a conflict of interest and nepotism policy. This ordinance was adopted by the governing body of the Township of Lawrence on March 1, 2022 under resolution 113-22

While the Lawrence Township Police Department recognizes the difficulties and limitations that come along with being a Civil Service agency, we are committed to taking additional steps to increase the recruitment of under-represented populations in our community. These populations include people of Asian and Hispanic origins.

In order to be successful in our recruitment efforts, the Lawrence Township Police Department is committed to taking the following steps to ensure our goals are met;

- Increase our presence on social media to include facebook, instagram and twitter. This includes announcing testing information/protocols and providing testing preparation materials.
- Setting up recruitment nights at the police department in order to aid with the civic service commission testing process, the testing preparation process, and providing information regarding the police academy standards, background investigation process and hiring process.
- Attending employment fairs at Rider University, the College of New Jersey and Mercer County Community College.
- Connecting with community stakeholders such as religious groups, civic organizations and educational institutions.
- Developing recruitment information and fliers to be distributed at local community events and the national night out celebrations.
- Developing a recruitment specialist who can be a mentor for underrepresented groups to aid in recruitment, testing, and the application process.

At least annually, the Chief of Police shall evaluate whether the goals of this program are achieved by conducting the demographic analysis as previously stated. If the program goals have not been met during the given calendar year, the goals and objectives of the program will be re-evaluated in an effort to do so.