



CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



Pre-Employment Candidate Files

Eff. Date 07/20/2026

Purpose

The Madison Police Department (MPD) maintains information on all candidates competing for employment within the MPD pursuant to State of Wisconsin Statutes and City of Madison Ordinance.

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to identify and clarify specific categories of records contained within these files that specifically relate to candidates that are hired. **These files have restricted access. Access to portions of these files may be denied due to exceptions noted in Wisconsin State Statutes §§19.31-19.39 and §103.13.** Accordingly, not all portions of an employee's pre-employment file will be available to the employee.

Pre-Employment files are not considered part of the employment file by definition in Wisconsin State Statute §§ 165.85 (2) (ap) (2021 Wisconsin Act 82). Law Enforcement entities seeking to view or receive copies under 2021 Wisconsin Act 82 to employment records do not have access to pre-employment files (see statutory definition above). See SOP titled "Personnel File Contents and the Process for Accessing These Records" for a listing of employment file contents. MPD may allow for the in-person review of pre-employment files when requested by another law enforcement entity (with the appropriate signed consent), but only for those candidates who were not hired by MPD. These in-person file reviews shall be logged with the MPD Records Section as a release of records.

File/Definition

The following files are stored in the Master file room located at the City County Building (CCB) at Headquarters in separate folders within a secured area. These files can only be accessed by the Human Resources Coordinator and the Police Executive Office Supervisor. Documents referenced within the file categories below are representative of the types of documents that may be found therein but are not inclusive lists. Document types within the identified categories will vary between commissioned and non-commissioned employees.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION FILE (MANILA)

(Maintained by the Human Resources Coordinator and the Police Executive Office Supervisor, ONLY if the applicant is hired)

- Preliminary Application (includes responses to essay questions on the application, education diplomas, education transcripts, a certified copy of birth certificate, applicant photo)
- Biographical Information (Applicant Data Sheet)
- Letters of Recommendation (if submitted with application)
- Military Service Records (if submitted with application)
- Resume (if submitted with application)
- Pre-Employment Contract (Agreement to Reimburse Costs and Expenses)
- Statement of Commitment

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TESTING FILE (GRAY)

(Maintained by the Human Resources Coordinator and the Police Executive Office Supervisor, ONLY if the applicant is hired)

- Written Test Score Sheet
- Written Essay
- Physical Agility Test Score and Waiver
- Oral Board Questions/Response Evaluations

PRE-EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND FILE (RED)

(Maintained by the Human Resources Coordinator and the Police Executive Office Supervisor, ONLY if the applicant is hired)

- Criminal History Checks
- Field Training Officer (FTO) Ride-a-long Overview
- MPD Background Summary

These documents are part of the pre-employment background file and are electronic only through the ESOPH program:

- Personal History Statement (includes biographical information, education/employment/military history, family members, past residences) and references that were requested as part of the background process)
- Authorization for Release of Information

The City of Madison does not consider the background investigation for employment a part of the official employment file record. According to the city it is not a part of the employment file, therefore it is exempt from release even with a waiver.

INTERN FILE

(Maintained by the assigned Training Sergeant)

Rules and Guidelines**RETENTION OF RECORDS**

- Medical test results after a conditional offer of employment are to be stored in the Medical file within the Personnel File Records of an employee, which includes a cover sheet medically clearing the applicant and drug screen results.
- Pre-employment Application, Pre-Employment Testing, and Pre-Employment Background files have very limited access, generally restricted to the Human Resources Coordinator and the Police Executive Office Supervisor.
- If the candidate is hired, all documents listed above will be stored for at least eight (8) years after separation from service (consistent with the contents of their Personnel File Records, although these records are not considered a part of their Personnel File).

Hiring process records and background files for individuals who were not hired by the MPD will be retained for at least three (3) years after the related hiring process.

For commissioned positions, the Captain of Training and/or their designee are responsible for maintaining and purging these records.

For candidates in a civilian position process, the respective Civilian Managers and/or their designees are responsible for maintaining and purging these records.

The assigned Training Sergeant is responsible for intern process and background records for individuals who were not later hired by the MPD. Associated intern records will be retained for at least three (3) years after the document's origin date. The assigned Training Sergeant is responsible for maintaining and purging these records.

Original SOP: 02/25/2015

(Revised: 03/04/2016, 02/03/2017, 12/21/2017, 01/15/2020, 01/31/2023, 1/22/2024, 05/19/2025, 07/20/2026)