

**University of South Carolina**  
**Division of Law Enforcement and Safety**

***Law Enforcement Officer Application/Selection Process***

The selection process used to hire Law Enforcement Officers by the University of South Carolina (University) Division of Law Enforcement and Safety (Division) is very thorough, and normally takes several months to complete. The process is designed to select the very best applicants who live by our values of integrity, accountability, excellence, and human life.

All elements of the selection process use only those rating criteria or minimum qualifications that are job related and are administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner. The hiring process is described below:

All entry-level positions at the Division will be posted on the University's jobs website at <https://uscjobs.sc.edu>. All applicants must submit their applications through this website and should ensure all personal contact information (i.e. telephone number and e-mail address) is current and correct. Résumés, cover letters, and other documentation should be submitted to the University with the application and not submitted directly to the Division. After the application has been reviewed and approved by the University for compliance with minimum qualifications, it and any other supporting documentation will be sent to the Division. Applicants for employment with the Division are directed to check the USC Jobs website for updates concerning the status of their application.

When the Division receives qualified applications from the University, these applications will be reviewed based on experience, education, and knowledge for the announced positions. After a review of these factors, individuals may be selected to attend an information session hosted by the Division. This session will detail the hiring process, requirements and duties of the position, and other pertinent information related to the process. During this information session, applicants will also be required to sign background and personal information release forms, a conditional offer of employment, and complete the Ryan-Personal Information Questionnaire (R-PIQ). The R-PIQ is specifically designed to assist in the selection and hiring process for public safety agencies. Applicants will also be asked to complete a short writing sample. The number of people selected for this stage of the process will vary, depending on the number of open positions and the qualifications of the applicants.

If selected to proceed upon completion of the R-PIQ, applicants will be contacted to attend a first interview. An applicant selected for a first interview will be required to provide specified documents at this interview. These documents include a completed Group One State Constable Application, a completed Background Questionnaire, valid driver's license, Social Security card, birth certificate, SC voter registration card (law enforcement officers only), high school diploma or equivalency certificate, higher education certificates, DD-214 (for military veterans), certified driving records from every state the applicant has resided in over the last ten years, and any other documents applicable to employment. A preliminary search of law enforcement databases on all applicants will be conducted by the Division at this time.

After the first interview, there will be a review of the applicant's paperwork, relevant experience, and scores from the interview. Based on these results, individuals may be selected to complete a computerized

psychological assessment. This assessment will be emailed to applicants to be completed in a period specified by the Division.

Next, if selected to proceed, a thorough background investigation will be completed on the applicant. It is important for the applicant to notify their references that an investigator will be conducting interviews (both by phone and in-person), and to respond to requests for contact promptly. Upon successful completion of a background investigation, selected applicants will be required to take a polygraph examination. Polygraph examinations are scheduled Monday through Friday during business hours, and may require two to three hours.

Next, if an applicant is selected to proceed, he/she will be scheduled for an interview with a psychologist who specializes in law enforcement-related evaluations. This interview may require up to an hour and a half.

The next phase, if selected, will be an interview with members of the Division's Command Staff. This interview is scheduled Monday through Friday during business hours and may require up to one hour. If other documents are required for the selection process, an applicant will be asked to provide them to the Division at this time.

Lastly, there is a final review of the applicant's qualifications, documentation, interview scores, and testing results. Based on this review, applicants may be selected for final interviews with the Division's Chief of Police. This interview may require up to an hour. Within two business days of this meeting, an applicant can expect a decision regarding an offer of employment.

If an offer of employment is made, all police officer applicants will be scheduled for a physical evaluation by qualified medical personnel. All applicants, regardless of position, will be required to submit to a drug screening. Applicants will also be fitted for uniforms. After a final offer of employment has been made, an applicant will generally be scheduled for an employment start date within two to four weeks of the final interview.

The employment start date usually corresponds to the start of a University pay period; therefore, there is limited flexibility on this date. However, if conflicts regarding the start of employment date exist, they may be discussed with the Division's Personnel Supervisor. If the applicant is anticipating more than two days of planned leave during the first six months of employment, the applicant should discuss this matter with the Division's Personnel Supervisor so scheduling adjustments can be considered.

## **Starting Salary**

The pay schedule for all sworn positions within the Division are set by the University's Office of Salary Administration and is non-negotiable. Consideration is given to applicants who possess prior law enforcement experience within the state of South Carolina, as noted below. Years of service (YOS) are determined by the candidate's date of certification with the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. Upon completion of the Division's Field Training Program, sworn employees receive a 2.5% salary increase.

### **Law Enforcement Officers**

Officer, 0 YOS (entry level): \$38,250                      Upon FTO completion (2.5% increase): \$39,206

Officer, 1 YOS (post probation): \$39,181                      Upon FTO completion (2.5% increase): \$40,186

Officer 1<sup>st</sup> class (3 YOS): \$41,141                      Upon FTO completion (2.5% increase): \$42,196

Master Public Safety Officer (5 YOS): \$45,255                      Upon FTO completion (2.5% increase): \$46,415

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**What benefits are associated with these positions?** These positions have South Carolina state employee benefits which include health insurance, enrollment in applicable South Carolina Retirement Systems programs, tuition assistance program, paid leave (annual and sick), and paid holidays (as defined by the University). More information on the benefits package can be found on the University's website.

**How will I know the status of my application?** Applicants should log into the USC Jobs website to determine the status of their application. The system will update automatically once changes to application status have been made.

**How long will the hiring process take?** Hiring processes may require three to six months, depending on the position being filled and the number of qualified applicants received.

**What style of dress should I wear?** For formal interviews with Division staff, business attire is recommended; for all other appointments, business casual is acceptable.

**If I am not selected for employment, how can I reapply?** Applicants who are not selected for employment with the Division are invited to reapply via the USC Jobs website when subsequent job postings occur.

**Is there a physical fitness requirement for the police officer position?** Yes, there is a fitness requirement for a police officer to attend South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy (SCCJA) training. The standards for this Physical Abilities Test (PAT) are located on the SCCJA's website ([www.sccja.sc.gov](http://www.sccja.sc.gov)). If an applicant is already certified in South Carolina prior to employment with the Division, they are not required to re-take the PAT.

**Can special arrangements be made for out of state applicants due to travel expenses?** If there are approaches to assist these applicants without compromising fairness, the Division will consider them.

**If I am a certified officer from another state, will I have to attend the police academy?** Yes, at least some training at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy will be required to become certified in South Carolina.

**If I am hired as a Law Enforcement Officer, what happens next?** If you are already a South Carolina certified officer, you will go through the Division's orientation process and then begin a field training program. This process usually takes from one to three months. If you have not completed South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy (SCCJA) training, you will go through the orientation process and then be scheduled for training at the SCCJA. After you complete SCCJA training, you will be required to complete a three-month field-training program at the Division.