Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual

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Produced by **California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)**

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POST Mission Statement

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Foreword

The POST Psychological Screening Manual was first issued in 1984. The ensuing years witnessed significant and regular developments in the laws, regulations, and professional guidelines that impact peace officer psychological screening. POST has been at the forefront of these changes—shaping revisions to government codes, creating new requirements to ensure the job-relatedness of psychological screening and the professionalism of psychological evaluators, and actively participating in updates to professional guidance. The volume and significance of those developments necessitated a major revision to the Manual, resulting in the publication of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual in 2014.

Publication of the 2014 Manual marked an important milestone in POST's mission by helping to ensure that, as stipulated in California Government Code § 1031(f) and POST Commission Regulation 1955, every peace officer is "free from any emotional or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer and to otherwise ensure that the candidate is capable of withstanding the psychological demands of the position." There is no more important goal than this.

An unanticipated but gratifying outcome of the 2014 publication of this Manual has been the impact that it has had on the practice of preemployment psychological screening of peace officers and other public safety personnel across the United States. Several of our counterpart agencies in other states have adopted major elements of the Manual as guidance for psychologists conducting screening evaluations in their jurisdictions. It has been described as "essential reading on the state of the art in preemployment psychological screening of peace officer applicants" (Mitchell, 2017, p. 30), and the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions detailed in the Manual have shaped not only professional practice, but they also have explicitly influenced empirical research (e.g., Detrick & Chibnall, 2017; Sellbom, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2020; Tarescavage, Corey, Gupton, & Ben-Porath, 2015; Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015; Whitman et al., 2021), legal decisions outside of California (e.g., Brown v. Sandy City, Utah, 2014), and other states' regulations mandating psychological screening of peace officer candidates (e.g., Texas Administrative Code Title 37, Part 7, § Rule 217.1; Washington Administrative Code 139-07-030).

This current revision to the Manual incorporates guidance from the updated Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures (American Psychological Association, 2018a), the Practice Guidelines for Occupationally Mandated Psychological Evaluations (American Psychological Association, 2018b), as well as changes in law, practice guidance on conducting psychological evaluations remotely, and findings from a wide array of published peer-reviewed research on the use of preemployment psychological tests to predict post-hire outcomes in peace officers. Finally, this version of the Manual includes extensive new information on the assessment of bias in response to Assembly Bill (AB) 846 (2020).

The guidance contained here continues to offer evidence-based processes and procedures to implement the peace officer psychological evaluation requirements of Commission Regulation 1955 and other relevant federal and state requirements. The comprehensive breadth of information covered is of relevance not only to screening psychologists but to hiring authorities and others involved in the peace officer hiring process as well. In fact, one of the significant takeaways from this Manual is the importance of communication between the psychologist, the agency, and others in ensuring that the psychological suitability of each candidate is thoroughly vetted.

As an outgrowth of the 2014 version of this Manual, POST created continuing education for psychological evaluators, including a list of POST-approved courses that meet the POST Continuing Professional Education (CPE) requirements for screening psychologists, stipulated in Commission Regulation 1955(b). To date, POST has approved over 300 courses for more than 1,300 CPE credit hours, contributing to the development and maintenance of professional competence of nearly 250 California licensed psychologists.

Questions about this Manual or peace officer psychological screening in general should be directed to the Strategic Communications and Research Bureau.

MANUEL ALVAREZ, JR.
POST Executive Director

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Acknowledgements

The creation of a manual of this breadth and scope is not possible without the assistance of seemingly countless individuals.

A steering committee of blue-ribbon psychologists guided the development of these guidelines from its onset. The members of that committee are listed in Appendix I. Certain key members of that committee merit special recognition for their involvement throughout the many phases of this project, most notably Drs. **Susan Saxe-Clifford, Gerard Sumprer, Michael Roberts, Philip Trompetter, Robin Inwald** and **Michael Cuttler.**

In addition to clinical psychologists, key figures in the field of industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology were involved in the project from its inception. First and foremost is Dr. **Deniz Ones,** who as the primary contractor for this project served multiple, pivotal roles, assisting in project development, implementation and oversight. Together with Drs. **Chockalingam Viswesvaran, Stephan Dilchert** and **Michael Cullen,** she conducted the POST meta-analysis that provided empirical evidence for the validity of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions.

Drs. **Karen Amendola, John Dovidio, Calvin Lai, Rashawn Ray**, and Manual co-author **David Corey** served as subject matter experts in developing the Bias Assessment Framework and other materials in response to AB 846 (2020). Appendix Q provides a list of AB 846 project participants.

Dr. **Donna Denning**, another eminent I/O psychologist, devoted countless hours offering expert advice and support throughout this effort, from helping shape the project through to providing painstakingly careful reviews of early drafts of the Manual. Drs. **Yossef Ben-Porath, Jocelyn Roland, Casey Stewart,** and **Philip Trompetter** also provided invaluable feedback.

Law enforcement and legal experts provided pivotal input and support as well. Subject matter experts who participated in the workshops leading to the creation of the Psychological Screening Dimensions are listed in Appendix H. POST Assistant Executive Directors **Jan Bullard** and **Alan Deal**, and Senior Consultant **Jeff Dunn** provided careful reviews of early drafts. In addition to reviewing the draft manual, POST legal counsel **William "Toby" Darden** provided legal advice, support and reassurance on an as-needed basis. The authors have turned to **Sharon Rennert,** EEOC Senior Attorney Advisor, numerous times over the years for unfailing help with the interpretations and implications of the ADA and GINA.

Information on specific written instruments was provided by test publishers and researchers, including Drs. **Paul Detrick** (NEO PI-R), **Yossef Ben-Porath** (MMPI-2-RF/MMPI-3), **Michael Stowers**, **Scott Stubenrauch** and **Shaun Wehle** (16PF, 16PF PSR, 16PF/PEPQ PSR+, HBI-R, HLAP & IPI-2), **Michael Roberts** (CPI & PAI), **Ryne Sherman** (Hogan), **Michael Cuttler** (LESI), and **Kevin M. Williams** (M-PULSE).

POST Selection Standards Program Manager **Melani Singley** has been and remains the backbone of this project and provided management and oversight of subsequent updates to this Manual.

Last but certainly not least, we thank former POST Executive Director **Bob Stresak** for his unwavering support leading to the 2014 publication and current POST Executive Director **Manuel Alvarez, Jr.** for his ongoing commitment to ensuring that the *POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual* remains a valued source of up-to-date information and practice guidance for POST-registered Psychological Screening Evaluators.

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David M. Corey

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Organization of the Manual

This Manual is organized into the following ten chapters:

Chapter 1 **Goals and Philosophy** is an important introductory chapter that explains the purpose of the Manual and the philosophy that guided its creation. It defines the target readership and target occupation and lays down the ground rules that clarify and delimit POST's role in providing guidance on peace officer psychological screening.

Chapter 2 **Legal, Regulatory and Professional Requirements** describes the statutory and regulatory requirements that impact preemployment screening of peace officers. Federal and state laws are discussed, including statutes related to equal employment opportunity, privacy, and confidentiality. Relevant professional standards and guidelines, and specifically their impact on psychological screening, are also discussed.

Chapter 3 **Selection and Training of Screening Psychologists** discusses the many competencies and responsibilities of screening psychologists, and provides law enforcement agencies with criteria and considerations in their selection. It includes information on POST continuing professional education (CPE) requirements for psychologists and discusses agency obligations to provide the screening psychologist with information on an initial and ongoing basis.

Chapter 4 **Development and Validation of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions** begins by describing the extensive literature review conducted by POST on research related to personality predictors of peace officer behaviors and the conduct of peace officer psychological assessment. It describes the multi-phase job analysis leading to the creation of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions, and the large-scale meta-analysis that provided empirical evidence of the validity of these dimensions for predicting a variety of job behaviors, performance, and outcomes.

Chapter 5 **Evaluation Process and Procedures** offers a step-by-step procedure for conducting psychological assessments of peace officer candidates, from the acquisition and review of job information and risk management considerations from the hiring authority, to the acquisition and use of outcome data on hired officers.

Chapter 6 **Written Psychological Tests** provides guidance on evaluating written instruments for use in the psychological evaluation, including a discussion of psychometric, legal, and practical criteria and considerations. Guidance on specific issues, such as underreporting/socially desirable responding, is also provided. The chapter concludes with information on commonly-used instruments.

Chapter 7 **Personal History Information** discusses methods of collecting and using behavioral history data through the use of standardized self-report questionnaires, background investigation reports, and information from mental health professionals. It discusses ways of detecting deception and evaluating personal history information in the context of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions and the Bias Assessment Framework.

Goals and Philosophy 1

There is no more important function in the peace officer hiring process than ensuring that those hired are psychologically capable of handling the pressures, stressors and job demands inherent in this occupation. Poor hiring decisions not only drain a law enforcement agency's time and other resources but, even more importantly, they can have direct and serious consequences for the individual, fellow officers, the agency, the community, and society at large.

The goal of this Manual is to assist California law enforcement agencies and their psychological evaluators in the challenging task of screening out peace officer candidates who lack the requisite psychological competencies to be a safe and effective peace officer and are at risk of succumbing to the pressures and stressors of the job, and do so in a manner that avoids unnecessary or unlawful infringement on candidate employment rights. To this end, the Manual explains and expands upon the psychological screening requirements in California Government Code (GC) section 1031 and POST Commission Regulation 1955, which form the foundation for the guidance herein. The Manual also provides information and practical guidance on the many equal employment opportunity laws, most notably the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), with respect to their impact on the conduct of preemployment psychological screening.

Beyond compliance with government requirements, the guidance in this Manual is intended to assist psychologists in performing peace officer psychological screening evaluations that are valid, reliable, effective, efficient, and accountable. This guidance is based on research conducted by POST—particularly the development and validation of critical peace officer psychological attributes—as well as consideration of the advances in the field of testing, assessment and employee selection practices in general and peace officer psychological screening in particular. Relevant professional standards and guidelines from the American Psychological Association (APA), and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), have also been incorporated into this guidance.

Target Readership

Much of the Manual's guidance is targeted to those who conduct psychological screening evaluations. Per GC § 1031(f), these evaluations must be conducted by licensed psychologists or psychiatrists. However, in practice, qualified psychologists conduct the overwhelming majority of psychological screenings. Therefore, the term "psychologist" is used throughout the Manual to denote those who are qualified to conduct peace officer psychological evaluations per GC § 1031(f).

A very important goal of the Manual is to also provide guidance to law enforcement agency hiring authorities, background investigators, human resource personnel and others involved in the selection process. To this end, there are sections throughout the Manual that are of equal if not greater relevance for these readers, including relevant statutes and regulations and their impact on the oversight and conduct of peace officer psychological screening (Chapter 2); the selection of screening psychologists and agency obligations in orientating and educating psychologists on the demands and responsibilities of their peace officers, and the respective rights and responsibilities of those involved in the candidate evaluation process, including the hiring agency, screening psychologist, and the candidates themselves (Chapter 3); the

POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions and their use by hiring authorities and psychologists as a means of defining peace officer psychological suitability (Chapter 4); the steps in the psychological evaluation process, including those that require direct involvement of the hiring authority (Chapter 5); the respective, interdependent roles of the background investigation and the psychological evaluation (Chapter 7); and reporting requirements and second opinion evaluations (Chapter 10).

Target Occupation

The focus of the Manual is on peace officer candidates. POST Regulation 1950(b) defines a "peace officer candidate" as:

> *"Any individual, regardless of rank or Penal Code classification, who applies for a peace officer position with a POST-participating department, regardless of the individual's prior law enforcement experience either at that department or at a different department within the same city, county, state, or district."*

Local agency policy or regulations may require preemployment psychological evaluations for other job classifications (for example, public safety dispatcher). Although many principles discussed here are relevant to these other classifications, their relevance must be carefully evaluated when applying this guidance to job classes outside the mandate of GC §1031 and POST Regulation 1955.

Target Evaluation

In keeping with POST requirements (Regulation 1955), the guidance in this Manual is intended to assist in the conduct of peace officer preemployment psychological screening. The use of any information provided here for fitness-for-duty or other types of psychological assessments may not be appropriate. It is the responsibility of the psychologist to make this determination.[1]

Psychological Traits vs. Disorders

In earlier versions of POST regulations, the stated purpose of the psychological evaluation was limited to ruling out candidates with mental or emotional disorders and/or job-relevant psychopathology (i.e., psychological *stability*). In 2009, Regulation 1955 formally expanded the role of peace officer psychological screening to include the assessment of both psychological stability *and* normal-range personality traits and characteristics (i.e., psychological *suitability*). This change was made in recognition that personality traits encompass both normal and abnormal personality, and that personality disorders are actually extreme and inflexible manifestations of these otherwise normal traits.

The peace officer psychological evaluation is, in effect, an assessment of the influence of personality traits—both normal and abnormal—on job-related behaviors. Job-relevant traits and their functional competencies, such as stress tolerance, impulse control, the ability to function in a team, and freedom from discriminatory bias, are embodied in the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions, which serve as psychological screening criteria [Regulation 1955(c)]. The development, validation and use of the POST Dimensions in conducting psychological evaluations are detailed in Chapter 4: Development and Validation of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions.

Screen-Out vs. Select-In

Whether targeting psychological stability or suitability, the purpose of POST-mandated peace officer psychological screening is to *screen-out* (deselect candidates who do not meet minimum statutory requirements and POST standards) as opposed to *select-in* (identify the best candidates from among those who are minimally qualified). This is an important

[1] Psychologists who conduct fitness-for-duty evaluations of California peace officers also are required to meet the same eligibility requirements as those conducting psychological screening evaluations in order for the employing agency to rely on the psychologist's fitness determination. See Penal Code § 832.05 and *White v. County of Los Angeles,* B243471 (Cal. Ct. App. 2014).

distinction, as a screen-out model aimed at determining if a candidate is at a low risk for engaging in ineffective or counterproductive job behavior does not imply a prediction that the individual will exhibit high levels of job performance (*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing,* 2014). ***An agency is well within its rights to include a select-in strategy, as well as to adopt more rigorous requirements, higher standards, and/or a more in-depth evaluation beyond that required by POST*** [Commission Regulation 1950(d)].

Pre-Offer vs. Post-Offer

Given that POST-mandated psychological evaluations must include an assessment of the presence of a mental or emotional condition, they are considered medical examinations and as such must be deferred until after a conditional offer of employment has been extended to the candidate, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act. Therefore, the psychological evaluation must be conducted at the post-offer phase, although it includes an assessment of normal-range personality traits and characteristics. The legal stipulations surrounding pre-offer personality testing and post-offer psychological evaluations are discussed in Chapter 2: Legal, Regulatory and Professional Requirements. Separate guidance on the conduct of personality testing at the pre-offer stage is provided in the POST Pre-Offer Personality Testing in the Selection of Entry-Level California Peace Officers: Resource Guide.

Focus on Psychological Constructs vs. Specific Tests

It is not, nor should it be, the purview of POST to endorse the use of specific psychological tests or instruments. Rather than attempt to validate the use of any specific test(s), POST instead has focused on the development and validation of critical peace officer psychological *attributes* or constructs. These constructs are embodied in the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions. The validity of a given test for use in peace officer psychological evaluations is directly related to the test's ability to measure constructs relevant to some or all of those dimensions. Chapter 6: Written Psychological Tests provides criteria for evaluating tests for use in psychological screening. The chapter includes information on commonly used psychological screening instruments provided by test authors, publishers and independent researchers for the purpose of illustrating the application of these criteria.

Psychological Testing vs. Psychological Assessment

Decisions from psychological *testing* are based on test scores. Psychological *assessment*, on the other hand, requires that test scores be interpreted in the context of other information gathered from interviews, observations of behavior, reviews of psychological and other relevant records, as well as information provided by third parties (e.g., background investigators, health professionals). Integrating information from across a variety of sources serves to strengthen the confidence placed in the resulting inferences underlying the determination of candidate psychological suitability (*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing,* 2014).

POST regulations give weight to all data collected during the evaluation, emphasizing the importance of integrating this collective information in the determination of psychological suitability. This Manual is intended to ensure accurate (i.e., valid) assessments and consistent evaluations within and across agencies, and to provide evidence-based support to guide clinical decision-making.

The Integral Role of the Psychologist

The collection, analysis, and integration of psychological information entails a complex and sophisticated set of professional activities. As such, the validity of a psychological evaluation hinges as much on the knowledge and skill of the psychologist as on the instruments used in the assessment. The many competencies and responsibilities of screening psychologists are discussed throughout the Manual, including and especially Chapter 3: Selection and Training of Screening Psychologists.

Guidelines vs. Standards

The guidance in this Manual is intended to facilitate consistency in the conduct of psychological evaluations and in the criteria used by psychologists, both within and across law enforcement agencies. However, beyond compliance with POST regulations, there is no intent to impose a rigid standard of practice or otherwise infringe on the freedom of agencies to provide for the conduct of evaluations according to their respective needs and resources, or to preclude legitimate professional differences among psychologists. Rather, the guidance offered here is intended to provide a solid basis for conducting job-related, lawful, valid, effective, and efficient evaluations.

Setting Realistic Expectations

It is not uncommon to blame any act of peace officer misconduct on the psychological evaluation; however, like all assessments, peace officer psychological screening is an imperfect science. Decision errors occur, including both *false positives* (candidates incorrectly deemed psychologically unsuitable) and *false negatives* (candidates incorrectly deemed psychologically suitable). The Manual includes discussions of the inherent limitations of even well-developed psychological evaluation processes in an attempt to offset the inflated expectations of hiring authorities and the public.

Legal Information vs. Legal Advice

Although the Manual offers guidance on pertinent employment laws and their impact on psychological screening, this information is not intended nor should it be treated as legal advice. Agencies and psychologists are strongly encouraged to work in close consultation with their legal counsel.

Legal, Regulatory and Professional Requirements 2

Beginning with an historical perspective on the evolution of peace officer psychological screening, this chapter provides an overview of relevant statutory and regulatory requirements (particularly POST regulations), equal opportunity employment law, and associated professional standards and guidelines. More information, including a list of statutes, regulations and case law, can be found on the American Board of Police & Public Safety Psychology website ("Core Legal Knowledge in Police & Public Safety Psychology"). Another valuable resource is the AELE Law Enforcement Legal Center (www.aele.org) free law library, which includes a section specifically on preemployment psychological evaluations.[2]

Background

Peace officers operate in a high-risk environment where failure to make quick and effective decisions can result in devastating life-or-death consequences. Their vested power gives them the authority to restrain others' freedom of movement, use justified physical force, and restrict privacy rights by effecting lawful searches and seizures and detaining or arresting individuals. With this power comes many opportunities for its misuse of authority, including excessive and unjustified use of force, witness intimidation, evidence planting and tampering, false arrest and perjury, kickbacks, bribes, theft, illegal seizures, extortion, etc. Such acts result in unwarranted harm to citizens and lead to a community's loss of trust in its law enforcement officers.

The need to ensure that peace officers are emotionally and psychologically equipped to perform their difficult and taxing duties and to resist temptations to exploit or misuse their police powers was formally acknowledged in 1967 by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (President's Commission Report), who recommended that all law enforcement agencies conduct psychological testing to screen out applicants who are emotionally unstable, brutal, or otherwise unfit for police service. Several years later, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals (National Advisory Commission, 1973) echoed these sentiments in its decree that every police agency should retain the services of a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist to conduct psychological testing of police applicants to screen out those who have mental disorders or are emotionally unfit for police work (Standard 13.5.2). Nearly 50 years ago, the American Bar Association observed that "the psychological suitability of the correctional officer deserves closer scrutiny" (Goldstein, 1975, p. 2) and recommended the use of psychological screening for corrections candidates. California preceded these various calls to action when, in 1961, it enacted GC §1031(f) into law, requiring that peace officer candidates be found free of physical, emotional, or mental conditions that might adversely affect their exercise of the powers of a peace officer.

There are currently at least 40 states with statutory and/or regulatory requirements for preemployment psychological assessments of police officers (Corey & Detrick, 2022), with an estimated 100,000 evaluations performed every year by as many as 4,000 psychologists (Trompetter, 2017). A 2007 study by the U.S. Department of Justice revealed that approximately 98% of U.S. police and sheriffs' agencies serving communities of 25,000 or more residents used psychological screening in selecting applicants (Reaves, 2010).

In addition to complying with statutory requirements, peace officer psychological screening makes good economic sense. A law enforcement agency may spend well over $200,000 to

[2] www.aele.org/law/Digests/empl165.html

recruit, select and train one police officer in the first year (Brooks, 2018). As daunting as this figure is, it pales in comparison to legal costs when a law enforcement agency is found liable for hiring psychologically unfit officers. In numerous court cases, law enforcement agencies have been held responsible for the negligent actions of their police officers when it was determined that there was a failure to institute reasonable measures to prevent, monitor, or respond to such actions. A survey in 1998 found that judgments in these types of cases generally ranged from $125,000 to $2,569,638 (Anderson, 1998). In FY 2018-19, one agency alone paid out over $20 million to plaintiffs as a result of negligent lawsuits, with individual settlements ranging from $2.5 million to $4.6 million (County of Los Angeles, 2020). There can be no doubt that the greatest costs of employing an unfit police officer are borne by the communities they are sworn to serve, other officers, and the reputations of their agencies. A carefully conducted psychological screening evaluation can provide both strong probative evidence that the hiring agency has met its duty to investigate a candidate's psychological suitability (Shaffer & Schmidt, 1999) and help spare the more formidable human and societal costs.

Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

The statutes and regulations that bear a direct impact on psychological screening of California peace officers are summarized below.[3] Table 2.1 presents these codes and regulations in their entirety, annotated to indicate where the requirement is discussed in this Manual.

California Statutes

Government Code (GC) §1031 establishes minimum selection standards for peace officers. It includes minimum criteria on employment eligibility, age (also see GC §1031.4, below), and education. A history of criminal activity, such as a conviction for any felony (GC §1029) or certain misdemeanors (e.g., domestic violence) [California Penal Code (PC) §29805; 18 USC 922(d)(9)], may disqualify a candidate from employment as a peace officer. Peace officers must be found to be of good moral character as determined by a thorough background investigation.

Government Code §1031(f) mandates that peace officers be free of any physical, emotional or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of their powers. It further stipulates that the evaluation of emotional and mental condition must be conducted by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist who has a minimum of five years of experience and has met the POST education and training standards.

Government Code §1031.2 allows for the collection of non-medical background information subsequent to a conditional offer of employment if it can be shown that it was not reasonable to collect this information prior to the offer. This provision is intended to ensure that the collection of personal history information can be continued during the post-offer phase in support of the background investigation and/or the psychological evaluation.

Government Code §1031.3 implemented by Assembly Bill (AB) 846 (2020), required POST, by January 2022, to study, review, and update regulations and associated screening materials related to the evaluation of emotional and mental conditions required by GC §1031(f) to incorporate the identification of implicit and explicit bias towards race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. To that end, POST worked with a Subject Matter Expert (SME) panel, psychological evaluator advisory group and other stakeholders to formulate regulations and guidance materials to meet this requirement, including the development of the Bias Assessment Framework (Chapter 5, Step 6).

Government Code §1031.4 implemented by AB 89 (2021), requires peace officers to be 21 years of age at the time of appointment, with very few exceptions including those appointed as PC §830.1(c) deputies, who must be minimally 18 years of age.

[3] Additional requirements for individual agencies and jurisdictions, such as Title 2, California Code of Regulations §172 and GC §18931, which impact psychological evaluations conducted on behalf of state agencies, are not addressed here.

Penal Code §832.05 requires departments that hire peace officers to ensure that their screening psychologists and fitness for duty evaluators meet the requirements outlined in GC §1031(f).

POST Regulation 1950, et seq.: Peace Officer Selection Requirements
POST requirements for the selection of peace officers are contained in Regulations 1950-1955. They include:

1950: Selection Requirements – General

1951: Reading and Writing Ability Assessment

1952: Oral Interview

1953: Background Investigation

1954: Medical Evaluation

1955: Psychological Evaluation

The general requirements for peace officer selection (Regulation 1950) and the peace officer psychological evaluation requirements (Regulation 1955) are summarized below.

Regulation 1950: Peace Officer Selection Requirements specifies who is subject to POST selection requirements; namely "peace officer candidates." Peace officer candidates include new hires; rehires/reappointments; laterals; and seasonal, temporary, full and part time officers [1950(b)].

There are a few categories of peace officers that are not subject to POST selection requirements [1950(c)]. They include:

- Officers who change peace officer classifications within the same agency without a break in service.
- Officers who are employed by a department that is absorbed by another department.
- Officers who return to the same department within 180 days of a voluntary separation.
- Officers who are mandatorily reinstated are largely exempted.
- Publicly elected peace officers, including most sheriffs.

Regulation 1950(d) acknowledges that POST requirements serve as minimum standards. Departments retain the right and responsibility to adopt broader, more rigorous selection standards in accordance with their needs, including but not limited to conducting psychological evaluations on the officers listed above in 1950(c) who are exempted from POST selection requirements. It also supports the use of additional and/or more rigorous selection standards (including psychological standards) beyond those required by POST.

Regulation 1955: Peace Officer Psychological Evaluation
The POST requirements for the conduct of peace officer psychological screening include the following provisions:

Regulation 1955(a): Government Code Mandate/Evaluator Requirements. In addition to identifying the statutory authority for these requirements [GC § 1031(f)], this section spells out the licensure, experience and education requirements for psychological evaluators. Specifically, evaluators must:

- Possess a license from the California Board of Psychology, or a license to practice medicine in California and completion of a medical residency in psychiatry; and
- Have at least five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders (three of these years accrued post-doctorate or post-residency).

Regulation 1955 was amended in 2022, adding the domain of Multicultural to the list of competencies required of psychologists, increasing the total to nine domains: Assessment, Clinical, Communication, Jurisprudence, Multicultural, Occupational, Procedural, Psychometric, and Standards. A description of the development and definition of these competencies is provided in Chapter 3: Selection and Training of Screening Psychologists.

Regulation 1955(b) Continuing Professional Education implements the GC § 1031(f) requirement that psychological evaluators meet education and training standards established by POST. Regulation 1955(b) requires that all psychologists complete the POST-developed Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual on-line (book-based) exam and a minimum of 12 hours biennially of POST-approved continuing professional education (CPE). In general, POST approval is granted to courses that: (a) have been determined to have direct relevance and applicability to one or more of the POST competencies and (b) are recognized and accepted by the California Board of Psychology for continuing education credits. POST-approved courses are listed on the POST website, as is a list of psychologists who have completed courses in accordance with this requirement. A detailed discussion of the POST CPE requirement is found in Chapter 3: Selection and Training of Screening Psychologists.

Regulation 1955(c): Timing of the Psychological Evaluation specifies that the psychological evaluation must be conducted following a conditional offer of employment (although the evaluation of normal-range personality traits may occur at the pre-offer stage as well). Details of pre-offer prohibitions and the timing of the psychological evaluation are discussed later in this chapter.

Regulation 1955(c) also clarifies that the psychological evaluation has a "shelf life" of one year. New evaluations must be conducted on officers who are reappointed to the same agency following a break in service regardless of the length of time that the individual has been separated. However, there are exclusions for officers who are mandatorily reinstated [Regulation 1950(c)], officers who are returning to the same department within 180 days of a *voluntary* separation [Regulation 1950(c)(1)(C)] or if the prior evaluation was conducted by the same department within one year of reappointment [Regulation 1955(c)].

Regulation 1955(d): Psychological Screening Procedures and Evaluation Criteria requires the use of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions and the Bias Assessment Framework (Framework). The development, description and validation of the POST Dimensions are discussed in Chapter 4: Development and Validation of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions. *The Use of Measures of Implicit and Explicit Bias for Predicting Discrimination: A Literature Review* by Calvin Lai and Jack Dovidio (Appendix P), current regulations and existing practices provided the foundation for the development of the Framework.

Regulation 1955(d) also stipulates that psychological evaluation procedures and criteria must be relevant to the agency-specific job demands, powers, duties, working conditions, and risk management considerations.

Regulation 1955(e) lists the information sources required during the psychological evaluation:

- *Job information* provided by the hiring department;
- *Two written assessments*, one designed to identify patterns of abnormal behavior, the other designed to evaluate normal-range personality traits. Both must be interpreted using test publisher-authorized scoring keys;
- *Personal history information*, consisting of information collected during the background investigation, including the background narrative report and relevant social media information, supplemented by personal history information collected by the psychologist;
- Information collected during the *clinical interview*, which must be conducted after the collection and review of the above information; and

- Relevant records from the individual's t*reating health professional*.

Regulation 1955(f): Psychological Evaluation Reporting Requirements lists the information that must be included in the background files of appointed peace officers. The regulation sanctions providing the hiring authority with information from the psychological evaluation as necessary and appropriate, including findings from the bias assessment which identify the data sources relied upon. Information considered medical or otherwise confidential must be maintained in a separate and secure medical file in accordance with federal and state laws. These reporting and documentation requirements are detailed in Chapter 10: Evaluation Reporting Requirements, Guidelines and Second Opinions.

Regulation 1955(g): Second Opinions. This section incorporates a provision in the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), which grants any applicant who is medically disqualified the right to submit an independent medical opinion for consideration before a final determination is made. The POST regulation further obligates the department to provide the second-opinion evaluator with the same information provided to the first-opinion psychologist on the job duties, powers, demands and working conditions, as well as the POST psychological screening requirements, procedures and criteria. Good practice guidance and options in second-opinion evaluations and appeals are provided in Chapter 10: Evaluation Reporting Requirements, Guidelines and Second Opinions.

Equal Employment Law and the Psychological Evaluation

Both federal and state laws prohibit employment discrimination based on age, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, political orientation, pregnancy, disability, religion, and other protected class characteristics. There is a wealth of resources related to these statutes and their impact on law enforcement employment practices, including many published by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).[4]

The Civil Rights Act (CRA)

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1991, prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin[5] as a result of *disparate treatment* or *disparate impact*. *Disparate treatment* occurs when members of a protected class are treated differently by intention; that is, when individuals are selected (or deselected) due directly to their protected class status.

More common are allegations of discrimination related to *disparate or adverse impact* – an employment practice that, while facially neutral and applied equally to all individuals, results in a disproportionate number of affected class members being adversely affected. Under the "four-fifths rule" (EEOC, 1979), an employment practice has an adverse impact if it results in the protected class having a selection rate less than four-fifths of that of the majority group. For example, if an agency hired 50% of the male candidates, but only 20% of the female candidates, the ratio of those two hiring rates is 20:50. Since 20 divided by 50 equals 0.40 (40%), this is in violation of the four-fifth rule of 80%.[6]

When adverse impact is detected, the employer must be prepared to demonstrate that the test is valid (i.e., job-related and consistent with business necessity) to be lawful. However, the test may still be found to be unlawful if it can be shown that an alternative test exists that is equally job-related and has less adverse impact.

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[4] See also Berner, 2010; Guion, 2011; Gutman, 2011; and Landy, 2005.

[5] In *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia*, 590 U.S.__,140 S. Ct. 1731 (2020), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 also protects employees from being fired for being gay or transgender.

[6] The 4/5 rule does not take sampling error into account, resulting in cases being labeled as having adverse impact even when the selection rates are equal in population. To account for sampling error, especially when the sample size is small, the 4/5 statistic should be supplemental with tests of statistical significance (Roth, Bobko, Switzer, 2006; also see Morris, 2001).

In 1978, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (Guidelines) to serve as the administrative guidance for the implementation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. The Guidelines provide employers with methods for determining if their tests and selection procedures are lawful for the purposes of Title VII disparate impact theory.[7] These Guidelines outline three methods for demonstrating the validity of an employment test and other selection criteria: (1) *criterion-related validity*—an empirical relationship between test scores and job performance measures, (2) *content validity*—evidence that the content of the selection measure represents important aspects of job performance as shown by job analysis, and (3) *construct validity*—an empirical relationship between scores on the selection measure purported to assess a specific attribute (such as a personality trait) and scores on other proven measures of the same attribute.

The science of validation has undergone considerable changes since 1978. Validation is now seen as a unitary concept, with criterion-related, content and construct validation as sources of evidence rather than distinct types of validity (along with the internal structure, response processes and the consequences of testing). Despite their advanced age, the Guidelines continue to be shown great deference by the courts. Fortunately, the Guidelines explicitly recognize that professional testing standards are constantly evolving and acknowledge that changes in professional standards necessitate changes in their interpretation and adherence.

Personality test scores do not generally demonstrate substantial group differences, especially as compared to cognitive ability test scores, where the scores of African Americans and Hispanics are consistently lower than those of Whites (Foldes, Duehr & Ones, 2008; Ones & Dilchert, 2007). In fact, because of their relative lack of adverse impact, personality tests have been looked to as a way to mitigate or minimize the persistent group differences found for cognitive measures—albeit with limited success.

This does not mean, however, that group membership has no influence on psychological test scores. Because of group membership differences, test publishers historically provided separate group norms based on gender and other class memberships. That practice ended in 1991, when § 106 of the CRA made it unlawful for an employer "to adjust the scores of, use different cutoffs for, or otherwise alter the results of employment related tests on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." As a result, publishers of tests used in employment-related decisions are required to provide combined-group norms (i.e., norms not based on gender, race or other group membership differences).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA)

Overview

The employment provisions (Title I) of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) have widespread impact on psychological screening. The ADA was enacted in 1990; however, as a result of several subsequent employer-friendly Supreme Court rulings, the law was revised, resulting in the 2008 ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA). The ADAAA serves to restore the original legislative intent of the law and its employment protections for individuals with disabilities.[8]

The California FEHA has also undergone several revisions. The most recent revision to the FEHA regulations took effect in 2020 for the purpose of updating definitions of key terms. Earlier revisions were made to ensure that state law affords equal if not greater protection than the ADA Amendments Act. For the purposes of the following discussion, the FEHA and ADA will be discussed together; differences will be noted as necessary.

[7] See 29 C.F.R. Part 1607.

[8] For sake of parsimony, the ADA and the ADAAA are both referred to as "ADA" unless otherwise specified.

Who is Protected?

To be afforded employment protection, an individual must be deemed to have a *disability* and be *otherwise qualified*. The definition of both of these terms has been the subject of much interpretation through enforcement guidance, case law, and other resources. Their specific implications for peace officer psychological screening are discussed below.

Who is Considered to Have a Disability?

The definition of disability is one area where federal and state law differ. The ADA stipulates that an individual is considered disabled if an impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. "Substantial" is generally determined with reference to most people in the general population. The FEHA definition does not require that the limitation be substantial. Neither state nor federal law considers temporary limitations as disabilities, but there is no precise length of time that distinguishes temporary from permanent (several months is a common rule of thumb).

For both the ADA and FEHA, the list of major life activities is quite broad and includes walking, speaking, breathing, hearing, seeing, sitting, standing, reaching, lifting, sleeping, bending, eating, learning, concentrating, communicating, sexual functions, caring for oneself, controlling bowels, performing manual tasks, reading, and running—to name a few.

Mental, emotional and cognitive impairments are covered if they affect major life activities such as thinking, concentrating, and interacting with others or major bodily functions, including brain or neurological functions.[9] Working itself is also considered a major life activity, although to be considered disabled on the basis of this impairment under the ADA an individual generally must be substantially limited to perform a class of jobs, rather than just one specific position. In California, however, the inability to perform in one specific position may meet the disability threshold under FEHA.

A disability determination must be made without regard to mitigation. For example, individuals whose symptoms are controlled with prescription medication are considered disabled if, without medication, they are limited in one or more major life activities or bodily functions. Individuals are protected if an adverse employment action is taken as a result of an actual or perceived disability.

Normal personality traits, such as irresponsibility, poor judgment, irritability, or chronic lateness, fall outside of the definition of disability (EEOC, 1997). However, if these behaviors are the result of an underlying mental or emotional condition, an individual could be considered to have a disability.

Substance use disorders are also covered. A history of drug addiction or dependence—involving illegal drugs or legal drugs used without a prescription—is considered a disability; however, individuals who are currently using illegal drugs, or legal drugs unlawfully, are not. ("Current" is defined as "recent enough to reasonably assume the behavior is still ongoing" (EEOC, 1992). A history of recreational drug use (as opposed to addiction or dependence) also falls outside the bounds of protection.

Although California's Compassionate Use Act of 1996 legalized medical marijuana and the November 2016 passage of Proposition 64: Adult Use of Marijuana Act legalized recreational use of marijuana for adults age 21 and older, the federal government has yet to sanction the legality of such use. Furthermore, in 2008 the California Supreme Court ruled that the Act does not offer employment protection to current and prospective employees (*Ross v. Ragingwire,* 2008). However, effective January 1, 2024, under

[9] The ADA/FEHA do not define mental disability to include transvestism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, other sexual behavior disorders, compulsive gambling, kleptomania, pyromania, and psychoactive substance abuse disorders resulting from current illegal use of drugs..

Government Code section 12954, it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person in hiring, terminating, or any other term or condition of employment, or in otherwise penalizing a person, if discrimination is based on the person's use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace. It is also unlawful for an employer to request information from an applicant for employment relating to the applicant's prior use of cannabis.

Alcohol addiction or dependence—both past and current—are considered disabilities. Like drug abuse, alcohol use that does not rise to the level of an alcohol use disorder is not covered by these laws. Furthermore, qualification standards that rule out individuals with substance abuse disorders, both current and past, are lawful if they are job related and consistent with business necessity.

Who is Considered Qualified?

An individual's ability to perform the *essential job functions*—with or without reasonable accommodation—defines that person's status as "otherwise qualified" and therefore entitled to coverage under these Acts. Essential job functions are distinguished from marginal functions in that they are the reason that the position exists. Employers should base their essential job functions on careful job analyses and document them in job descriptions.

In 2003, POST began a job analysis to define the psychologically relevant peace officer job demands and responsibilities and the associated personality attributes required to withstand these demands and perform these duties. The results served to establish the POST peace officer psychological constructs or "dimensions." The POST Psychological Screening Dimensions are discussed in detail in Chapter 4: Development and Validation of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions.

Reasonable Accommodation

An employer's obligation to provide reasonable accommodation is central to both the ADA and FEHA. Reasonable accommodation can take many forms, including assistive devices, modified work schedules, unpaid leave, and restructuring jobs to remove marginal functions, to name a few.

Considerable guidance is available on reasonable accommodations, including many enforcement guidance documents published by the EEOC. To provide employers with additional assistance, the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) offers employers free consulting services on all aspects of job accommodations, including the accommodation process, accommodation ideas, product vendors, referral to other resources, and ADA compliance assistance. They maintain a Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR) system that provides suggestions for accommodation options for people with a wide variety of disabilities.

A reasonable accommodation that results in an *undue hardship* on an employer or fellow employees is not required. "Undue hardship" refers not only to financial expense but also to accommodations that would be unduly extensive, substantial, or disruptive, or that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business.[10] An employer must assess whether a particular reasonable accommodation request would cause an undue hardship on a case-by-case basis.

The availability of reasonable accommodations for peace officers to mitigate impediments resulting from emotional and psychological conditions is understandably quite limited. Nevertheless, that does not relieve law enforcement employers from their obligation to engage in an "interactive process" (i.e., a constructive dialogue) with the individual to explore accommodation options (such as adjusting work schedules), in consultation with relevant experts, as necessary.

[10] 42 U.S.C. § 12111(10) (1994); 29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(p) (1997)

Personal measures, techniques and devices that an individual uses to control or reduce the impact of an impairment are considered "mitigating measures" rather than reasonable accommodations which address workplace barriers. One type of mitigating measure of particular relevance for peace officer psychological screening is the use of psychotropic medication. An employer may be permitted to monitor the use of medications if they are necessary for safe performance of essential job functions. Whether or not the agency is monitoring the individual, if noncompliance is detected, the individual may no longer be considered qualified for the position.

Direct Threat

An employer may exclude a person who would pose a *direct threat*—that is, a significant risk of substantial harm to the individual or others. This risk is particularly relevant for peace officers and other public safety occupations. The direct threat determination must be based on an individualized assessment using the most current objective medical/psychological evidence rather than merely on generalized studies.

The factors to be considered in a direct threat assessment include:

1. *The duration of the risk (i.e., whether the risk is present throughout the work day or only at certain times or under certain conditions);*
2. *The nature and severity of the potential harm (i.e., what an employer believes could happen to the individual and/or others while performing the job, and how severe the employer regards the anticipated harm);*
3. *The likelihood that the potential harm will occur;*
4. *The imminence of the potential harm; and*
5. *Consideration of relevant information about the individual's past work history.*

Although direct threat is defined as a significant risk [29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(r)], the courts have afforded great deference in the interpretation of this law for peace officers, given the public health and safety implications inherent in the peace officer position and the likelihood of encountering extremely stressful and dangerous situations (Brownfield v. Yakima, 2010). In Burroughs v. City of Springfield (1998), for example, the court upheld the police department's determination of direct threat, stating that the law "does not require employers to take unnecessary risks when dealing with a mentally or physically impaired employee in an inherently dangerous job." Similarly, other courts have ruled that, in cases where the essential job duties necessarily implicate the safety of others, the burden of proof shifts from the employer to the plaintiff (EEOC v. Amego, 1997).

The determination of acceptable risk, and the respective role of the employer and the screening psychologist in making this determination, is discussed in Chapter 9: Reaching a Determination Through Data Integration.

Disability-Related Questions and Examinations

A conditional offer of employment (COE) must precede medical (including psychological) inquiries or examinations, regardless of their job-relatedness. This two-stage procedure serves several purposes. First, it allows a candidate to demonstrate at the pre-offer stage that they have the necessary job qualifications without regard to any disability. Second, because disqualifications at the post-offer stage are assumed to be based on disability the employer (and the screening psychologist as an agent of the employer) must demonstrate that either the decision was not disability-based or that the candidate's condition renders them unqualified. Third and last, it requires the employer to consider whether reasonable accommodation may permit the disabled candidate to perform the essential functions of the position.

Medical inquiries and evaluations may be conducted at the post-offer stage provided that they are uniformly applied to all candidates in the same job class. The ADA does not put

limits on the line of questioning at this stage, so long as the ultimate employment decisions are lawful; however, California FEHA mandates that post-offer inquiries be job-related and consistent with business necessity.

In their 1995 Enforcement Guidance,[11] the EEOC lists eight factors for use in determining whether an inquiry, procedure or test is medical:

1. *Is it administered by a health care professional or someone trained by a health care professional?*
2. *Are the results interpreted by a health care professional or someone trained by a health care professional?*
3. *Is it designed to reveal an impairment or physical or mental health?*
4. *Is the employer trying to determine the applicant's physical or mental health or impairments?*
5. *Is it invasive (for example, does it require the drawing of blood, urine or breath)?*
6. *Does it measure an applicant's performance of a task, or does it measure the applicant's physiological responses to performing the task?*
7. *Is it normally given in a medical setting (for example, a health care professional's office)?*
8. *Is medical equipment used?*

No one factor necessarily signals whether a test is or is not a medical examination; rather, each situation is to be looked at on a case-by-case basis. However, EEOC Guidance does stipulate that psychological tests measuring personality traits such as honesty, preferences, and habits are generally not considered medical tests.

Pre-Offer Prohibitions and the Timing of the Psychological Evaluation

GC § 1031(f) stipulates that the purpose of the peace officer psychological evaluation is to determine whether a candidate is free from job-related emotional or mental conditions. Since emotional and medical conditions are included in the definitions of disability under the ADA and FEHA, these evaluations must be conducted after the COE (i.e., post-offer). However, in addition to identifying psychological conditions and disorders, the psychological evaluation is also required to include an evaluation of "normal" traits and characteristics [Regulation 1955(d)(2)].

The difference between personality traits and psychological conditions can be more apparent than real, making it quite challenging to determine whether a particular test, procedure, or inquiry is "medical." Rather than being categorically distinct from one another, personality traits and psychological disorders can be seen as falling along a behavioral continuum, ranging from "maladaptive positive and negative extremes, with the middle normal range representing typical (i.e., 'normal') traits" (Dilchert, Ones, & Krueger, 2014, p. 98). A personality test measures attributes of normal behavior, abnormal behavior, or some combination of both. Depending upon the original design of the test and the skill of the practitioner, a given test may be used to measure characteristics of normal behavior or to discover abnormal characteristics (Vetter, 1999). This sentiment is echoed in the EEOC Technical Assistance Manual which states that "'stress' and 'depression' are conditions that may or may not be considered impairments, depending upon whether these conditions result from a documented physiological or mental disorder" (EEOC, 2002).

The evaluation of normal-range personality traits at the pre-offer stage is not prohibited; in fact, given the obligation to determine whether a candidate is "otherwise qualified" prior to extending a COE, it could be argued that an assessment of non-medical issues at the pre-offer stage is necessary in order for the offer itself to be "bona fide." Accordingly, some agencies have adopted a bifurcated evaluation process, whereby the assessment of normal range personality is conducted pre-offer, followed by the evaluation of mental/emotional

[11] EEOC Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions and Medical Examinations

stability at the post-offer stage. This leaves open the question, "*Can a psychological evaluation that assesses normal range personality traits and characteristics be lawfully conducted pre-offer if it includes the direct involvement of the psychologist in interpreting test responses and/or conducting the interview?*"

In an attempt to address this and other thorny questions, the eight EEOC factors above are retranslated here to make them particularly meaningful with respect to preemployment psychological screening:

- *Is the evaluation designed or capable of identifying an emotional/psychological disorder/condition?*
- *Does it contain any inquiries or allow for any interpretations that are prohibited pre-offer?*
- *Are the test/interview questions routinely used in a clinical setting to provide evidence that would lead to a diagnosis of a mental disorder or condition? Also, is the process structured, i.e., will all candidates be subject to the same inquiries (notwithstanding targeted follow-ups based on answers to initial questions, similar to the qualifications/hiring interview)?*
- *Is the evaluation one that only medical professionals (i.e., psychologists) can perform?*
- *Does the test publisher stipulate that only clinical psychologists (i.e., those trained in identifying mental/emotional disorders/conditions) are qualified to interpret test scores?*
- *Does the test/interview produce information that can lead to identifying whether candidates have a DSM-5/ICDM condition/disorder (e.g., anxiety, mood, personality disorder)?*

It would appear that the involvement of a clinical psychologist is least problematic if (1) the test was not designed to detect or diagnose emotional or mental conditions, and (2) test interpretation is not limited to licensed clinical psychologists or others with expertise in the diagnosis of mental and emotional disorders. A key factor is whether the information provided during the evaluation would allow an expert to make disability-related diagnoses.[12]

Confidentiality

ADA and FEHA impose strict confidentiality limitations on the communication of psychological findings, conclusions, and other information deemed medical. Such information must be kept separate from the candidate's background investigation file, limiting access only to those with a need to know: supervisors and managers who may be told about work restrictions and accommodations, first aid and safety personnel, government investigators, and workers' compensation and insurance personnel.

A common misperception is that these confidentiality rules restrict the employer's screening psychologist from disclosing relevant medical information to the hiring authority. Since these psychologists serve as agents of the employer, there are no statutory prohibitions against sharing results with the hiring authority and others involved in the peace officer hiring process. Per the 1995 EEOC Enforcement Guidance pertaining to preemployment examinations, medical information may be given to "appropriate decision-makers involved in the hiring process so they can make employment decisions consistent with the ADA."

This is not to say that psychologists should share all the details of their evaluations with the law enforcement agency. As stipulated in POST Regulation 1955(f)(5), information provided to the hiring authority "shall be limited to that which is necessary and appropriate, such as the candidate's job-relevant functional limitations, reasonable accommodation requirements, and the nature and seriousness of the potential risks posed by the candidate." Information that serves as a basis for the psychologist's determination, or that may otherwise prove useful in making the ultimate employment decision, rightly falls into the "need to know" category.

[12] See *Barnes v. Cochran* (1996); *Karraker v. Rent-a-Center* (2005); *Thompson v. Borg-Warner* (1996).

Chapter 10, Access to Psychological Records, cautions psychologists about providing psychological reports and other information deemed medical to those outside the agency, including background investigators from other departments. However, the mere fact that a candidate was disqualified on the basis of the psychological evaluation is not considered medical information and therefore can be reported to others as necessary.

Other state and federal statutes, including the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule,[13] the California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA),[14] and the California Information Practices Act (CIPA)[15] protect the privacy of an individual's health information held by certain health care providers or employers. These laws also include provisions dealing with a person's right to access their own health information. Because of the many variables associated with these different laws and their implications for different types of agencies, the answer to whether candidates have a right of access to the records from a psychological screening evaluation is not entirely clear-cut. However, candidates are not entitled to these records provided that they knowingly signed a waiver of their access rights as provided under state and federal law. Waivers and confidentiality provisions are discussed in more depth in Chapter 5: Evaluation Process and Procedures.

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA)

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits the use of genetic information in making employment decisions. Unlike the ADA, which allows for the acquisition of medical information at the post-offer stage, GINA prohibits the intentional acquisition of genetic information at any stage of the employment process (e.g., pre-offer, post-offer, fitness-for-duty). It is not unlawful to acquire such genetic information inadvertently; however, this information must not be considered when making employment decisions and, like the ADA's treatment of medical information, is subject to strict confidentiality requirements.

GINA does not prohibit the collection of medical/psychological information pertaining to the candidates themselves, including histories and current manifestations of conditions, diseases or disorders. However, this same information cannot be collected on family members. This extends to biological family members up to great-great grandparents and first cousins, and to any nonbiological family member who is a dependent of the candidate as a result of marriage, birth, or adoption.

GINA prohibits seeking information about a covered family member's condition, disease or disorder, including substance use disorders, mental illness, etc. However, questions designed to understand the conduct or actions of such a family member and their consequences for the candidate are permissible. For example, exploring a candidate's unresolved emotional trauma inflicted by a schizophrenic parent is allowable, as long as the focus of the discussion is on the impacting behavior (e.g., when the abuse started, when it stopped, what form the abuse took, how often the abuse occurred), rather than on the parent's mental health condition.

At the onset of the psychological evaluation, candidates must be made aware of the prohibition against the collection of genetic information as defined by GINA. Screening psychologists must also include admonitions against providing such GINA-prohibited information when requesting information from other health care professionals. A GINA disclaimer is provided in Chapter 5: Evaluation Process and Procedures. Psychologists who fail to give such admonitions may not be able to claim the "inadvertent acquisition" defense in the event of a GINA violation.

[13] Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191 Title 45, Subtitle A, Subchapter C, Part 164, Subpart E, Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information

[14] Confidentiality of Medical Information Act, California Civil code § 56-56.16

[15] California Information Practices Act of 1977. Civil Code § 1798.30-1798.44

Privacy Laws

Although the right to privacy is not specifically mentioned in the United States Constitution, the U.S. Supreme Court has held that several of the amendments create this right. In addition, eleven states, including California, have explicit provisions in their constitutions relating to a right to privacy.[16] California alone elevates privacy to the status of an inalienable right on par with defending life and possessing property (Article 1, §1, California Constitution).

By their very nature, psychological evaluations and personality tests are often perceived as an invasion of privacy. Psychological and personality tests have been assailed for forcing applicants to reveal their private thoughts, beliefs, and emotions in order to enable employers to gain information that would otherwise not be apparent and that the individuals may not wish to reveal. Moreover, individual personality test items have been criticized as threatening, obnoxious, unrelated to the job, and lacking face value or procedural justice (*Soroka v. Dayton Hudson*, 1991). In a lamentation of the erosion of privacy rights, Chief Justice William Douglas singled out personality tests, which he argued "seek to ferret out a man's innermost thoughts on family life, religion, racial attitudes, national origin, politics, atheism, ideology, sex, and the like" (Nevins, 2005; *Osborn v. U.S.,* 1966).

While psychological testing in any high-stakes context invites direct and serious scrutiny, "failing the psych" can bring with it the additional stigma of being labeled a psychological misfit. A person's personality is functionally equivalent to a person's reputation, and most people care deeply about their reputations and will go to great lengths to preserve them (Hogan et al., 1996).

Fortunately, courts appear to balance an applicant's reasonable expectation of privacy against an employer's legitimate business needs. When these needs are directly related to public health and safety, courts generally pay considerable deference to employers. For example, in *McKenna v. Fargo* (1978), while recognizing that the use of the MMPI for screening firefighters was invasive, the Court nevertheless determined that the employer's hiring interests justified its use.

Law enforcement employers are not always given a pass. For example, in *Thorne v. City of El Segundo* (1983), the city refused to hire the plaintiff as a police officer after she admitted during a polygraph test that she had had an affair with a police officer in that department and had terminated a pregnancy. The court held that the privacy of her off-duty conduct was constitutionally protected. Furthermore, male candidates were not subjected to the same degree of interrogation, nor could the city demonstrate any impact of the sexual behavior on job performance or produce any policies or regulations against gender discrimination.

To survive allegations of privacy invasion, the relevance of the questions asked and instruments used must be directly related to the demands and requirements of the job. Linking tests and inquiries to the validated constructs provided in the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions provides powerful evidence to that end.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

Enacted in 1994, USERRA is intended to eliminate employment impediments or discrimination as a result of military service. USERRA applies to federal, state, and local governments and agencies as well as private companies of any size. Under USERRA, employees returning from military service have return rights to their previous employment if the absence for military service is less than five years total time, not including training periods. USERRA rights, like many other military benefits, are not available to persons separated from military service with a dishonorable, bad conduct, or other-than-honorable discharge.

Under USERRA, employing agencies may not use the mere fact that a peace officer is returning from the military as a basis for conducting a medical or psychological evaluation. If a returning

[16] Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Montana, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Washington.

officer manifests physical impairments or psychological problems, an evaluation may be conducted; however, the officer must first be returned to duty and then placed on restricted duty or administrative leave with pay before being sent for a fitness-for-duty evaluation.

Many veterans returning from combat may suffer from disabling injuries, such as traumatic brain injuries or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), preventing them from returning immediately to work or assuming the same duties and responsibilities of the pre-deployment assignment. USERRA requires employers to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the disabled veteran, including providing retraining, and to make reasonable efforts to assist the veteran in becoming qualified for the same or another job. Service members convalescing from injuries received during service or training may have up to two years from the date of completion of service to return to the job or apply for reemployment. A public employer can only deny a returning veteran reemployment to their former position if retraining or accommodating the individual would impose an undue hardship on the employer. The burden is on the employer to prove undue hardship.

Professional Standards and Guidelines

APA Ethical Standards

As with all psychologists, the professional work of screening psychologists is guided by a set of ethical principles, including *beneficence* (benefiting those with whom they work), *nonmaleficence* (taking care to do no harm), and *integrity* (promoting accuracy, honesty, and truthfulness in their professional activities). From these general principles, 89 ethical standards of conduct provide specific guidance to psychologists in the performance of their professional activities. The general principles and specific standards are contained in the *Ethical Principles for Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (EPPCC; American Psychological Association, 2017).

Although these ethical standards are intended to guide psychologists generally, California law stipulates that the EPPCC comprises the "standards of ethical conduct relating to the practice of psychology" and the "accepted standard of care … in all Board (of Psychology) enforcement policies and disciplinary case evaluations."[17] Consequently, in California the ethical standards spelled out in the EPPCC are not simply goals, they are the law. In the context of peace officer psychological screening, several APA ethical standards warrant particular attention and vigilance (McCutcheon, 2011, 2017). These are found primarily in seven groups of standards:

1. ***Resolving Ethical Issues:*** Screening psychologists perform evaluations on behalf of and for the benefit of the employing department. As agents of the employer, psychologists may face occasional conflicts between the ethical standards and an employer's organizational policies. Standards 1.01, 1.02 and 1.03 address psychologists' obligations to ensure that their professional work, including within and for organizations, adheres to the requirements of the EPPCC, the law, regulations, or other governing legal authorities, and they describe how conflicts in ethics and law are to be addressed.
2. ***Competence:*** The work of psychologists who conduct psychological evaluations of peace officer candidates is complex and demanding. Standards 2.01, 2.03, 2.04, and 2.05 admonish psychologists to practice only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, consultation, study, or professional experience. These standards also establish expectations that psychologists maintain competence and base their scientific and professional judgments on established scientific and professional knowledge of the discipline. These ethical standards also are reflected in the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, Division 13.1, §1396 (Competence), which states, "A psychologist shall not function outside his or her particular field or fields of competence as established by his or her education, training and experience." POST regulations echo this through the evaluator competencies and continuing education and training required of psychologists.

[17] California Business and Professions Code §2936

3. ***Human Relations:*** Although POST Regulation 1955(a)(3) stipulates that the "evaluator shall conduct the examination on behalf of and for the benefit of the employing department," psychologists nevertheless have an obligation to not exploit or unlawfully discriminate against those they evaluate. Ethical Standards 3.01-3.12 obligate psychologists to anticipate and avoid harm both to candidates and client agencies when harm is reasonably foreseeable and avoidable. They prohibit unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, conflicts of interest, and exploitative relationships (including certain kinds of multiple relationships). These standards also obligate psychologists to cooperate with other professionals, to provide information to candidates about the evaluation process and other elements of informed consent or disclosure before services are provided, and to take reasonable care to avoid interruption of services in the event of their unavailability. This latter obligation is particularly important for private practitioners whose unplanned absences without a practice management plan could impede a client agency's ability to meet hiring and academy deadlines.

4. ***Confidentiality:*** POST Regulation 1955(e)(4) recognizes that screening psychologists gather confidential information that, while necessary and important to their evaluations, may not be necessary or appropriate to disclose in its entirety to the hiring agency. Psychologists must use discretion when making judgments about the disclosure of confidential information. Ethical Standards 4.01 to 4.07 require psychologists to maintain and protect confidential information obtained, discovered or generated in the course of their professional services.

5. ***Record Keeping:*** California Government Code §12946 requires that all files containing application records—including a psychologist's records and reports—be retained for a minimum of two years after the records were created or received,[18] and for the duration of the employment in the case of those who were hired. If a candidate is disqualified or an employee is terminated, their records must be retained for a minimum of two years from the date of the employment action. If a complaint is made in reference to the termination, all records and files must be maintained until the complaint is fully and finally disposed of and all appeals or related proceedings have exhausted. Additionally, GC § 12960 recently extended the time from one to three years to file an employment discrimination claim, thus psychologists should work with the hiring department to determine appropriate record retention. Ethical Standards 6.01 and 6.02 clarify psychologists' obligations with respect to the control, maintenance, dissemination, storage, retention, and disposal of confidential records and scientific work.

6. ***Research and Publication:*** The development and improvement of psychological assessment instruments require validation research and independent scientific scrutiny. Screening psychologists play an important role in this research, whether as principal investigators or collaborators. All such research requires the informed consent of participants, as described in Standards 8.02 and 8.05.

7. ***Assessment:*** The ethical standards in this section of the EPPCC are foundational to a screening psychologist's work and help to ensure its integrity and effectiveness. As described in Ethical Standards 9.01 to 9.11, psychologists are obligated to (a) base their opinions on information and techniques sufficient to substantiate their findings; (b) provide opinions about the psychological characteristics of individuals only after they have conducted an examination of the individual sufficient to support them; (c) use assessment information in a manner and for purposes having adequate empirical support; (d) select, administer, score, and interpret assessment instruments competently; and (e) maintain test security.

[18] The State Personnel Board must maintain files and records for one year.

IACP Preemployment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines (2020)
The Police Psychological Services Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) publishes guidelines to assist law enforcement agencies and psychologists on a variety of subjects, including fitness-for-duty evaluations, officer-involved shootings, and peer support. The IACP Preemployment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines serve as recommended professional policy for public safety agencies and evaluators who are charged with the responsibility of conducting defensible psychological screenings on candidates who have arrest authority or the legal authority to detain and confine individuals. As would be expected, there is a high degree of similarity between the IACP good practice guidelines and the guidance provided here.

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (2014)
The Standards were developed jointly by the American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Psychological Association (APA), and National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), and serve as the most important authority in the testing community. These Standards provide benchmarks for evaluating written tests, including validity evidence, scale interpretations, norms, documentation, fairness, subgroup analyses, and responsibilities of test users.

Of particular relevance to psychological screening, the Standards clarify the difference between "psychological testing" and "psychological assessment." As discussed earlier, a psychological assessment is defined as a comprehensive examination which includes administering tests and interpreting test scores in the context of other information about the candidate obtained through interviews, observation, and a review of psychological and other relevant records. *"The tasks of a psychological assessment—collecting, evaluating, integrating, and reporting salient information relevant to those aspects of a (candidate's) functioning … comprise a complex and sophisticated set of professional activities"* (p. 119). The Standards for psychological assessments focus on ensuring that those tasked with this function have the requisite education, training and experience, both with respect to psychological assessment per se and the specific instruments and methods selected.

Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures (2018a)
Published by the American Psychological Association, the Principles provide sound practice guidelines regarding the development of personnel selection procedures. Unlike the Standards, the Principles are intended as recommendations rather than mandates. Guidance covers the process of test validation, sources of validity evidence, generalizing validity evidence, fairness and bias, and operational considerations in personnel selection. The Principles also endorse and support a multi-method approach to validation involving the triangulation of information from multiple sources, similar to that required in the conduct of peace officer psychological evaluations: *"Validation conclusions based on existing evidence may be strengthened by evidence from more than one method, especially when the validity inference depends heavily on some underlying or theoretical explanatory concept or construct" (p. 6).*

Professional Practice Guidelines for Occupationally Mandated Psychological Evaluations (2018b)
Published by the American Psychological Association,[19] these aspirational guidelines apply to any clinical evaluation (i.e., an inquiry, procedure or test that seeks information about an individual's mental impairments or health) conducted for occupational purposes, whether intended to obtain or maintain employment. The document includes six guidelines pertaining to a psychologist's preparation for the evaluation, four guidelines associated with conducting the evaluation, and three relating to the communication of results from the evaluation. We discuss these guidelines further in Chapter 3 in the context of evaluator competencies.

[19] https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/features/amp-amp0000170.pdf

Table 2.1
Psychological Evaluation Codes and Regulations

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
California State Laws	
Government Code Section 1031. Each class of public officers or employees declared by law to be peace officers shall meet all of the following minimum standards: ... (f) Be found to be free from any physical, emotional, or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer. (1) Physical condition shall be evaluated by a licensed physician and surgeon. (2) Emotional and mental condition shall be evaluated by either of the following: (A) A physician and surgeon who holds a valid California license to practice medicine, has successfully completed a postgraduate medical residency education program in psychiatry accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, and has at least the equivalent of five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, including the equivalent of three full-time years accrued after completion of the psychiatric residency program. (B) A psychologist licensed by the California Board of Psychology who has at least the equivalent of five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, including the equivalent of three full-time years accrued postdoctorate. The physician and surgeon or psychologist shall also have met any applicable education and training procedures set forth by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training designed for the conduct of preemployment psychological screening of peace officers. (g) This section shall not be construed to preclude the adoption of additional or higher standards, including age.	*Govt. Code § 1031 provides the statutory authority for POST to promulgate the psychological screening requirements in Commission Regulation 1955.* *AB 846 (2020) expanded Government Code section 1031(f) to include freedom from bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.*
Government Code Section 1031.2 Consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336) and paragraph (3) of subdivision (e) of Government Code § 12940, the collection of nonmedical or nonpsychological information of peace officers, in accordance with a thorough background investigation, as required by subdivision (d) of § 1031, may be deferred until after a conditional offer of employment is issued if the employer can demonstrate that the information could not reasonably have been collected prior to the offer.	*This statute, sponsored by POST, allows the background investigation to continue post-offer, which allows the background investigator to collect additional third-party information in response to requests by psychologists or others involved in the hiring process.*

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
California State Laws	
Government Code Section 1031.3 Required POST to study, review and update regulations and screening materials to incorporate identification of implicit and explicit biases into the psychological screening process. **Government Code Section 1031.4** Requires peace officers to be 21 years of age. Limited exceptions (e.g., PC 830.1(c), jail deputies) apply. **Penal Code Section 832.05** Requires agencies to utilize psychologists who meet the requirements set forth in Government Code section 1031(f) for conducting both pre-employment screening and fitness for duty evaluations.	*AB 846 (2020) added section 1031.3 to the Government Code. The Bias Assessment Framework (see Chapter 5, Step 6) was developed and this Manual updated to incorporate relevant guidance in response to this mandate.*

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
POST Commission Regulations	
Regulation 1950. Peace Officer Selection Requirements	
(a) Peace Officer Selection Requirements The purpose of these regulations is to implement the minimum peace officer selection standards set forth in California Government Code §1031 and as authorized by California Penal Code §13510. Peace officer training requirements are addressed separately in Commission Regulations 1005 and 1007. All POST documents and forms mentioned in these regulations are available on the POST Website. (1) Every POST-participating department and/or agency (hereinafter referred to as "department") shall ensure that every "peace officer candidate," as defined in subsection 1950(b), satisfies all minimum selection requirements specified in the following regulations unless waived by the Commission on a case-by-case basis. Statutory requirements in these regulations cannot be waived by the Commission. • Reading and Writing Ability Assessment (Commission Regulation 1951) • Oral Interview (Commission Regulation 1952) • Background Investigation (Commission Regulation 1953) • Medical Evaluation (Commission Regulation 1954) • Psychological Evaluation (Commission Regulation 1955) (2) All requirements specified in these regulations shall be satisfied prior to the date of employment. For purposes of these regulations, "date of employment" is defined as date of appointment as a peace officer or, at the department's discretion, the date the candidate is hired as a peace officer trainee and enrolled in a POST-certified Basic Course.	*Separate POST guidance manuals are available on the oral interview, background investigation, medical evaluation, and pre-offer personality testing.* *Agencies who use the (non-sworn) "peace officer trainee" classification do not need to rescreen these employees if more than one year elapses between the date of evaluation and date of peace officer appointment.*
(b) Peace Officer Candidate Definition For purposes of these regulations, a "peace officer candidate" is any individual, regardless of rank or Penal Code classification, who applies for a peace officer position with a POST-participating department, regardless of the individual's prior law enforcement experience either at that department or at a different department within the same city, county, state, or district.	*POST selection standards apply to all peace officers in POST-participating agencies: new hires, rehires/reappointments, laterals, seasonal, temporary, full-time, and part-time. The few exceptions are discussed in 1950(c).*
(c) Exceptions For purposes of these regulations, peace officers described in this section are not considered "candidates" and are therefore exempted from Commission Regulations 1951-1955. (1) The department has sole responsibility for determining what, if any, assessments are necessary for a peace officer who: (A) Changes peace officer classifications, such as from reserve officer to regular officer, within the same POST-participating department if documentation is available for inspection verifying that all current minimum selection requirements were previously met, and the peace officer has worked continuously for the department since the time of initial appointment. (B) Is employed by a department that, through reorganization, is merged with another department within the same city, county, state, or district, if documentation is available for inspection verifying that the officer was hired in accordance with the POST requirements in effect at the time of hire.	*Psychological evaluations are not required for employees who have changed peace officer classifications within the same department. By the same token, the criteria used in all peace officer psychological evaluations must meet POST requirements, regardless of the temporary or limited nature of duties of the position.* *Psychological evaluations of peace officers who are inherited from another agency are at the discretion of the employer, provided they met all applicable requirements at the time of hire.*

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
POST Commission Regulations	
(C) Is reappointed to the same POST-participating department within 180 days of voluntary separation. (2) For a peace officer who has been mandatorily reinstated, the department shall: (A) Report the reinstatement to POST through the submittal of a Notice of Appointment/Termination, POST 2-114 (Rev 02/2013), indicating a correction to record, together with a copy of the official reinstatement documentation [refer to Commission Regulation 1003(b)(2)]; (B) Resubmit the officer's fingerprints to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to verify legal eligibility for a peace officer position (California Government Code sections 1029 and 1030) and to determine eligibility to possess a firearm [Penal Code section 29805 and U.S. Code Title 18 section 922(d)(9)]. Fingerprints do not need to be resubmitted if the officer was never removed from the department's peace officer files of the DOJ or FBI; (C) Perform a records check of the California Department of Motor Vehicles (California Vehicle Code section 12500); (D) Verify qualification for appointment as a peace officer (Government Code section 1029). (3) Publicly elected peace officers are exempted from Commission Regulations 1951-1955.	*Evaluation requirements for those re-hired within 180 days is up to the individual department.* *Officers who are ordered reinstated from a constructive discharge are largely exempt from POST selection standards; only updated fingerprints and DMV checks, and citizenship check (if appropriate) are required. However, reinstated officers are not exempt from agency policies and requirements that apply to currently employed officers (for example, notifying the agency if taking performance-impacting prescription medication).*
(d) Adoption of Additional Requirements and/or Higher Standards The requirements described herein serve as minimum selection requirements. Per Government Code section 1031(g) and Penal Code section 13510(d), the adoption of more rigorous requirements, higher standards, additional assessments and/or more in-depth evaluations than those stated in these regulations is at the discretion of the employing department.	*These regulations constitute minimum standards; individual agencies can (and, in many cases, should) expand their selection requirements; as appropriate and lawful..*
Regulation 1953. Peace Officer Background Investigation (a) Government Code Mandate Every peace officer candidate shall be the subject of a thorough background investigation to verify good moral character and the absence of past behavior indicative of unsuitability to perform the duties of a peace officer [Government Code section 1031(d)]. (1) Effective July 1, 2023, every background investigator shall satisfactorily complete POST-certified background investigation training prior to conducting investigations. (b) Background Investigation Evaluation Criteria The background and personal history sections of the Bias Assessment Framework [Commission Regulation 1955(d)(3)] and the entire set of POST Background Investigation Dimensions (Dimensions), herein incorporated by reference, described in the *POST Background Investigation Manual – Guidelines for the Investigator (2022)* - Integrity, Impulse Control/Attention to Safety, Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior, Stress Tolerance, Confronting and Overcoming Problems, Obstacles, and Adversity, Conscientiousness, Interpersonal Skills, Decision-Making and Judgment, Learning Ability, and Communication Skills - shall be considered in the conduct of every peace officer background investigation. The manual provides guidance in conducting	

background investigations. The use of the manual is discretionary, with the exception of the Dimensions and the relevant sections of the Bias Assessment Framework.

(c) Personal History Statements

Every peace officer candidate shall complete, sign, and date a personal history statement at the onset of the background investigation. A personal history statement can be either the Personal History Statement - Peace Officer, POST 2-251 or an alternative personal history statement. An alternative personal history statement shall include inquiries related to the following areas of investigation: personal identifying information, relatives and references contact information, education history, residence history, experience and employment history, military history, financial history, legal history, driving history, and other topics related to moral character.

(d) Collection of Background Information: Pre and Post Conditional Offer of Employment

(1) Nonmedical or nonpsychological background information may be collected after a conditional offer of employment (COE) is issued if it could not have reasonably been collected prior to the COE (Government Code section 1031.2). This may include:

(A) Official documents that cannot be obtained and evaluated in a timely manner during the pre-offer period, and

(B) Information derived from contacts and interviews with references.

(2) At the post-offer stage, background investigators, examining physicians, examining psychologists, and others involved in the hiring decision shall work cooperatively to ensure that each has the information necessary to conduct their respective investigations and/or assessments of the candidate.

(e) Areas of Investigation

…

(7) Relatives/Personal References Checks

(A) Every peace officer candidate shall be the subject of reference checks through contacts and interviews with relatives, including former spouses, and personal references listed on the candidate's personal history statement. Additional references (e.g., secondary references), provided by the initial contacts, shall also be contacted and interviewed to determine whether the candidate has exhibited behavior incompatible with the position sought. Sufficient information shall be collected and reviewed to determine candidate suitability.

(B) Proof of reference checks shall be documented by written information showing that relatives and personal references identified by the candidate and additional references provided by the initial contacts (e.g., secondary references) were interviewed. Documentation shall include the identity of each individual contacted, if the contact is an initial or secondary reference, the contact's relationship to the candidate, and an account of the information provided by the contact. All requests for information shall be documented.

…

(12) Social Media Check

(A) Every peace officer candidate shall be the subject of a social media

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
POST Commission Regulations	
search for statements, postings, and/or endorsements made by the candidate that are relevant to suitability for peace officer employment, including bias-relevant information consistent with the requirements of Commission Regulation 1955(d)(3) and any public expression of hate made in an online forum, as defined in Penal Code section 13680(g)(1). Social media may include, but not be limited to, social networking sites, online forums, blogs, and video sharing platforms. Searches must be conducted in compliance with state and federal laws.	*Effective August 2022, hiring departments must conduct social media searches to determine peace officer suitability, including searches for bias-relevant information.*
(B) Proof shall consist of documentation verifying a social media search was conducted which, at a minimum, shall include written documentation of websites searched and/or services used, including webpage URLs and findings. When there is evidence of activity relevant to peace officer suitability, documentation shall consist of screenshots, printouts, website links, and/or other documentation verifying the information and shall be limited to that which is relevant to suitability for peace officer employment.	
…	
(g) Documentation and Reporting	
(1) Background Narrative Report The background investigator shall summarize the background investigation results in a narrative report that includes sufficient information for the reviewing authority to extend, as appropriate, a conditional offer of employment. The report shall include sections that summarize relevant Background Investigation Dimensions and any findings of behaviors, traits and/or attributes that may be relevant to bias per the Bias Assessment Framework [subsection 1953(b)], including whether the candidate has engaged or is engaging in membership in a hate group, participation in any hate group activity or advocacy of public expressions of hate, per Penal Code section 13680, et seq. The report shall identify the data sources reviewed for the findings, regardless of weight given. The report shall include narrative information in order of, and consistent with, the required areas of investigation [subsection 1953(e)] … The report, along with all supporting documentation obtained during the course of the background investigation, shall be included in the candidate's background investigation file. The supporting documents shall be originals or true, current, and accurate copies as attested to by the background investigator. The background investigation file shall be made available during POST compliance inspections.	*Background investigators are required to provide the screening psychologist with the background narrative report and any other relevant background information, which would include findings of biased behaviors and relevant bias-related traits and attributes in support of the psychological evaluation prescribed by Government Code section 1031(f) and Commission Regulation 1955.*
(2) Retention The background narrative report and supporting documentation shall be retained in the individual's background investigation file for as long as the individual remains in the department's employ. Additional record retention requirements are described in Government Code section 12946.	
(3) Information Access The narrative report and any other relevant background information [subsection 1953(g)(1)] shall be shared with the psychological evaluator [Commission Regulation 1955(e)(3)]. This information shall also be shared with others involved in the hiring process, such as screening physicians, if it is relevant to their respective evaluations.	
…	

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
POST Commission Regulations	
Regulation 1955. Peace Officer Psychological Evaluation	
(a) Government Code Mandate/Evaluator Requirements Every peace officer candidate shall be evaluated to determine if the candidate is free from any emotional or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer [Government Code section 1031(f)], and to otherwise ensure that the candidate is capable of withstanding the psychological demands of the position.	*AB 846 (2020) added a requirement that the evaluation of emotional and mental conditions also include bias against individuals with actual or perceived group characteristics.*
(1) The psychological evaluation shall be conducted by either of the following:	
(A) A physician and surgeon who holds a valid California license to practice medicine, has successfully completed a postgraduate medical residency education program in psychiatry accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, and has at least the equivalent of five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, including the equivalent of three full-time years accrued after completion of the psychiatric residency program.	
(B) A psychologist licensed by the California Board of Psychology who has at least the equivalent of five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, including the equivalent of three full-time years accrued post-doctorate.	*Evaluator education and experience requirements are discussed in Chapter 3: Selection and Training of Screening Psychologists.*
(2) The psychological evaluator (hereinafter referred to as "evaluator") shall be competent in the conduct of preemployment psychological screening of peace officers. The required areas of competence are defined in the POST Peace Officer Psychological Evaluator Competencies (Competencies): Assessment, Clinical, Communication, Jurisprudence, Multicultural, Occupational, Procedural, Psychometric, and Standards, herein incorporated by reference. The Competencies are contained and defined in Chapter 3 of the *POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual*.	*Psychologist Competencies are discussed in Chapter 3 and listed in Table 3.1. Multicultural competence was added to the list of competencies in August 2022.*
(3) The evaluator must complete a minimum of 12 hours biennially of POST-approved continuing professional education per subsection 1955(b).	*The biennial training requirement runs concurrent with the psychologist's license renewal cycle.*
(4) The evaluator shall conduct the examination on behalf of and for the benefit of the employing department.	
(b) Continuing Professional Education (CPE)	
(1) CPE Course Requirement POST approval will be granted to courses that meet the following requirements for both course quality and relevance:	*A list of approved CPE courses can be found on the POST website: https://post.ca.gov/approved-cpe-courses*
(A) Course Quality Course quality is satisfied by any course recognized and accepted by the California Board of Psychology for continuing education credit [16 CCR section 1397.61(c)(1)] including:	
1. Courses provided by American Psychological Association (APA), or its approved sponsors; or	
2. Continuing medical education (CME) courses specifically applicable and pertinent to the practice of psychology and that are accredited by the California Medical Association (CMA) or the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME); or	

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POST Commission Regulations	
3. Courses provided by the California Psychological Association, or its approved sponsors; or 4. Courses approved by an accrediting agency for continuing education courses taken prior to January 1, 2013, pursuant to 16 CCR section 1397.61 as it existed prior to January 1, 2013. The quality of courses recognized and accepted by other accrediting bodies, associations, or organizations will be considered on a case-by-basis. (B) Course Relevance As determined by POST, courses must have direct relevance and applicability to preemployment psychological assessment by providing instruction and training in one or more of the Competencies [subsection 1955(a)(2)].	
(2) CPE Course Approval POST approval shall be granted to courses that meet the requirements outlined in subsection 1955(b)(1). To be considered for POST approval, a course approval request must be submitted to POST via the electronic CPE Tracking System. The request may be submitted by a course instructor, provider, sponsor, law enforcement agency, or an individual who has taken or is considering taking a course. Requests for POST approval must include the following information: (A) Course provider (B) Course instructor (C) Course title and description (D) Approving association (E) Course topics and hourly distribution (F) Learning objectives (G) Method(s) of instruction (e.g., workshop, webinar, independent learning) A list of POST-approved CPE courses are maintained on the POST Website.	*Anyone can submit a course for POST approval, including course providers, attendees, or others.*
(3) Evaluator CPE Requirement (A) Effective July 1, 2019, all evaluators must complete the POST-developed Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual on-line exam prior to conducting preemployment psychological screening. (B) Effective September 1, 2014, evaluators must complete 12 hours of POST-approved CPE every license renewal cycle. For partial cycles, CPE hours are prorated at .5 hours per month, based on the evaluator's license renewal date. The POST CPE requirement must be met no later than the evaluator's license renewal date. Additional CPE hours above the 12 hour minimum do not count toward the next two-year cycle. (C) The evaluator may satisfy no more than 75% [up to nine (9) hours] of the POST CPE requirement through independent learning that meets subsection 1955(b)(1). Independent learning includes, but is not limited to, courses delivered via the Internet, including asynchronous training, correspondence, and home study.	*Completion of this requirement provides psychologists with eight (8) hours of POST CPE, which counts toward their 12 hour biennial requirement. (POST is a CPA-approved provider, thus the training also provides CE units required for licensure.)*

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(4) Verification of Course Completion To verify compliance with subsection 1955(a)(3), the evaluator must submit a psychological evaluator profile request to POST via the electronic CPE Tracking System and provide verification of course completion. (A) Evaluator Information The profile request must include the evaluator's name and contact information; license # and renewal date; and additional information (curriculum vitae, professional website URL), if available. (B) Course Information Once the course is approved, the evaluator can request approval of CPE course completion through the on-line CPE tracking system. The request must be accompanied by official documentation of course completion, such as completion certificate, roster, and/or other official education or training records. A list of evaluators and their contact information is available on the POST website (www.post.ca.gov).	*Psychologists must electronically submit verification of training to POST. Verification of completed CPE can be submitted anytime. There is no need to wait until all required training is complete.*
(c) Timing of the Psychological Evaluation The psychological evaluation shall commence only after a conditional offer of employment has been extended to the peace officer candidate [Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U. S. Code § 12101 et seq); California Fair Employment and Housing Act (Government Code §12940 et seq)]. The psychological evaluation must be completed within one year prior to date of employment. A new psychological evaluation shall be conducted on peace officer candidates reappointed to the same department, unless the prior evaluation occurred within one year of the date of reappointment.	*Issues associated with the conduct of psychological evaluations pre- and post-offer are discussed here in Chapter 2.* *The one-year clock begins the date the psychological evaluation was conducted, not the date of separation from the department.*
(d) Psychological Screening Procedures and Evaluation Criteria (1) The psychological screening procedures and evaluation criteria used in the conduct of the psychological evaluation shall be based on the peace officer duties, powers, demands, and working conditions as defined by the department. This information shall be provided to the evaluator, along with any other information (e.g., risk management considerations) that will allow the evaluator to make a psychological suitability determination.	*The agency's obligation to provide the psychologist with job information is discussed in Chapter 5.*
(2) Every peace officer candidate shall be evaluated, at a minimum, against job-related psychological constructs herein incorporated by reference in the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions (Dimensions): Social Competence, Teamwork, Adaptability/Flexibility, Conscientiousness/ Dependability, Impulse Control, Integrity/Ethics, Emotional Regulation/ Stress Tolerance, Decision-Making/Judgment, Assertiveness/Persuasiveness, and Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior. The Dimensions are contained and defined in Chapter 4 of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual.	*The development and validation of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions is discussed in Chapter 4.*
(3) When evaluating a peace officer candidate for explicit and implicit bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer, psychological evaluators shall use the Bias Assessment Framework, herein incorporated by reference. The evaluator shall assess the candidate on each of the three Targeted Constructs identified in the Bias Assessment	*The Bias Assessment Framework was developed to meet the requirements of Government Code sections 1031 and 1031.3. Information on implementing this requirement can be found in Chapter 5, Step 6.*

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
POST Commission Regulations	
Framework (Biased Behaviors, Biased Attitudes, and Bias-Relevant Traits and Attributes.	
(4) The *POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Manual* provides guidance in the evaluation of peace officer candidates. The use of the Manual is discretionary with the exception of the required Psychological Evaluator Competencies, the Psychological Screening Dimensions, and the Bias Assessment Framework outlined in 1955(a)(2), 1955(d)(2), and 1955(d)(3), respectively.	
(e) Required Sources of Information for the Psychological Evaluation The psychological evaluation shall include a review by the evaluator of the following sources of information prior to making a determination about the candidate's psychological suitability.	
(1) Job Information Job information shall consist of the peace officer duties, powers, demands, and working conditions provided by the department per subsection 1955(d)(1).	*The job information provided by the department must be reviewed by the psychologist before conducting evaluations.*
(2) Written Assessments Written assessments shall consist of a minimum of two written psychological instruments. One of these instruments shall be designed and validated to identify patterns of abnormal behavior; the other instrument shall be designed and validated to assess normal behavior. Both instruments shall have documented evidence of their relevance for evaluating peace officer suitability. Together, the instruments shall provide information about each candidate related to: (1) freedom from emotional and/or mental conditions that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer, and (2) psychological suitability per the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions [subsection 1955(d)(2)]. The psychological assessments shall be interpreted using appropriate, authorized test publisher scoring keys. If mail-order, Internet-based, or computerized test interpretations are used, the evaluator shall verify and interpret the individual results.	*Written assessments are covered in Chapter 6.* *As discussed in Chapter 9: Data Integration and Reaching a Determination, the psychological evaluation must address both normal and abnormal conditions and characteristics.*
(3) Personal History Information Personal history information includes the candidate's relevant work, life and developmental history based on information collected during the background investigation [Commission Regulation 1953(g)(3)]. This includes the background narrative report and any other relevant background information including, but not limited to, documentation obtained through the social media search [Commission Regulation 1953(e)(12)]. This information may be augmented by responses on a personal history questionnaire collected as part of the psychological evaluation.	*Psychologists must review the background information. A social media check was implemented in August 2022 as part of the background investigation. Relevant results must be provided to the screening psychologist. This and other personal history issues are discussed in Chapter 7.*
(4) Psychological Interview A psychological interview shall be administered to each peace officer candidate subsequent to a review and evaluation of the results of the written assessments [subsection 1955(e)(2)] and the candidate's personal history information [subsection 1955(e)(3)]. Sufficient interview time shall be allotted to address all issues arising from the reviewed information and other issues that may arise during the interview. Psychological Records Psychological records and relevant medical records shall be obtained from the candidate's treating health professional, if warranted and obtainable. This	*The psychological interview must be conducted **after** reviewing the results of the two required assessments and the candidate's personal history information. The interview discussed in Chapter 8.*

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
POST Commission Regulations	
information may be provided by the candidate, or, with written authorization from the candidate (Civil Code § 56.11), may be obtained directly from the health professional.	
(5) Psychological Records Psychological records and relevant medical records shall be obtained from the candidate's treating health professional, if warranted and obtainable. This information may be provided by the candidate, or, with written authorization from the candidate (Civil Code § 56.11), may be obtained directly from the health professional.	*Chapter 7 discusses obtaining information from candidates' mental health professionals*
(f) Psychological Evaluation Reporting Requirements	
(1) Data from all sources of information shall be considered; the evaluator's determination shall not be based on one single data source unless clinically justified.	*Considerations and criteria in arriving at a suitability determination are discussed in Chapter 9.*
(2) The evaluator shall provide the department with their findings from the bias assessment [subsection 1955(d)(3)] and identify the data sources relied upon for their findings, including information obtained through the background investigation [Commission Regulation 1953(g)(3)].	*The psychologist must provide their bias assessment findings to the hiring department.*
(3) The evaluator shall make a determination of the candidate's psychological suitability, which includes whether the candidate is free from any emotional or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer and is capable of withstanding the psychological demands of the position, and shall provide the department with a completed and signed POST form 2-364 (10/2023), Psychological Suitability Declaration, herein incorporated by reference, affirming that the candidate was evaluated in accordance with Commission Regulation 1955. Prior to appointment as a peace officer, the candidate must be determined to be psychologically suitable.	*Evaluation reporting requirements and guidelines are addressed in Chapter 10.*
(4) The department shall maintain the psychological suitability declaration in the candidate's background investigation file; the declaration shall be available to POST during compliance inspections.	*Record keeping requirements are discussed in Chapter 10.*
(5) Any additional information reported by the evaluator to the department shall be limited to that which is necessary and appropriate, such as the candidate's job-relevant functional limitations, reasonable accommodation requirements, and the nature and seriousness of the potential risks posed by the candidate. All information deemed medical in nature shall be maintained as a confidential record, separate from the background investigation file.	*Advice regarding the nature and depth of information to report to the hiring authority is discussed in Chapter 10.*
(6) Information from the psychological evaluation may be provided to others involved in the hiring process, if it is relevant to their respective determinations of candidate suitability.	*Communications with others involved in the hiring process is discussed in Chapter 5, step 9.*
(g) Second Opinions	
(1) A candidate who is found psychologically unsuitable has the right to submit an independent evaluation for consideration before a final determination of disqualification is made [2 California Code of Regulations section 11071(b)(2)]. Consideration should include determining whether the second opinion evaluator meets the requirements set forth in Government Code section 1031(f) and subsection 1955(b).	*A discussion of second opinion evaluations is included in Chapter 10.*

Law / Regulation	Notes / Comments
POST Commission Regulations	
(2) When a candidate notifies the department that s/he is seeking an independent opinion, the department shall make available the peace officer duties, powers, demands, and working conditions and the requirements specified in Commission Regulation 1955. Other information, such as specific procedures or findings from the initial evaluation, may be shared with the second-opinion evaluator at the discretion of the department. The means for resolving discrepancies in evaluations is at the discretion of the department, consistent with local personnel policies and/or rules.	

Table 2.2 Bias Assessment Framework

Intended uses: (a) to guide background investigators to bias-relevant areas of inquiry for inclusion in the background investigation report reviewed by the screening psychologist; and (b) to guide screening psychologists in the collection and evidence-based use of bias-related information derived from sources of information identified in POST Commission Regulation 1955(e).

Targeted Construct	Data Sources					
	Background and Personal History		Written Instruments		Psychological Interview	
	Aggravating or Facilitative	Mitigating or Protective	Aggravating or Facilitative	Mitigating or Protective	Aggravating or Facilitative	Mitigating or Protective
Biased Behaviors	History of biased behaviors[1]	Evidence of mitigating or protective factors subsequent to biased behavior	Responses to written self-report questionnaire pertaining to a history of biased behaviors[2]	Not directly assessed	Interview questions pertaining to a history of biased behaviors	Interview questions pertaining to behaviors contrary to bias or that mitigate a history of biased behaviors
Biased Attitudes	Not directly assessed	Not directly assessed	*Published measures of biased attitudes are available but have not been validated for use in personnel selection. They may be useful in the context of the psychological interview.*	*Published measures of biased attitudes are available but have not been validated for use in personnel selection. They may be useful in the context of the psychological interview.*	Interview-based assessment of biased attitudes	Interview-based assessment of attitudes in opposition to the targeted bias
Bias-Relevant Traits & Attributes[3]	Indicators of aggravating or facilitative traits or attributes	Indicators of mitigating or protective traits or attributes	Indicators of aggravating or facilitative traits or attributes	Indicators of mitigating or protective traits or attributes	Indicators of aggravating or facilitative traits or attributes	Indicators of mitigating or protective traits or attributes

[1] Background investigations should include a broad range of diverse references and developed references including workplace (e.g., supervisors, co-workers), family members, neighbors, close personal relationships, social and family friends, teachers, military colleagues, and other contacts.

[2] Psychological evaluators are required to assess each of the targeted constructs, but the data sources used for the assessments are at the discretion of each evaluator. For example, when the background investigation and psychological interview adequately assess biased behaviors and biased attitudes, respectively, written assessments of those constructs may not contribute incrementally to the assessment.

[3] When there is clear and direct evidence of unmitigated biased behaviors or attitudes, other factors are not relevant for assessing the bias of a peace officer candidate. However, when direct evidence of explicit or implicit bias is unavailable, ambiguous, or relatively weak, it may be useful to consider related factors such as neutral or favorable intergroup contact, motivations to respond without prejudice, perceptions of social norms about prejudice, and executive function. These factors also generally contribute to more equitable behavior and fair treatment of others, and thus can mitigate tendencies to act in discriminatory ways even when some evidence of bias is detected.

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Selection and Training of Screening Psychologists 3

Qualifications of a Screening Psychologist

Effective peace officer psychological screening involves a great deal more than merely administering and interpreting psychological tests. Evaluations that are practically useful, scientifically valid, and legally defensible require multiple tasks performed by a psychologist with the necessary training, education, experience, and sophistication (Meyer et al., 2001).

By law, preemployment screening of peace officer candidates must be performed by a psychologist who is licensed by the California Board of Psychology and has accrued a minimum of five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, including the equivalent of three full-time years accrued postdoctorate [California Government Code § 1031(f)]. In addition to clinical training and experience necessary for making informed judgments about the presence or absence of job-relevant psychopathology, psychologists must have the testing or research skills sufficient to evaluate the effectiveness of various instruments for use in conducting evaluations of peace officer candidates:

> *Before conducting clinical assessments of police candidates, the mental health professional should be well acquainted with the specific field of psychological testing for law enforcement personnel. Administering and scoring a battery of tests in the context of the preemployment screening of officers is not the same as in other occupations or other testing situations. Moreover, evaluators should complete specialized training in this area, develop refined methods and test procedures for police work, and be capable of offering assistance to counsel if (and when) necessary.* (Claussen-Rogers & Arrigo, 2005, p.164)

Screening candidates requires a substantial shift in roles for clinicians whose training and experience lies primarily in intervention or in assessment for the purpose of diagnosis and treatment planning (Gallo & Halgin, 2011). Whereas the treating clinician's work is focused on helping and supporting the individual, the screening psychologist is tasked with analyzing and integrating information from multiple sources to assess suitability on a range of statutory and regulatory criteria, and ultimately making a determination that may impede the candidate's career ambition. These functions demand a level of objectivity and even skepticism that is not always nurtured in therapeutic settings (Greenberg & Shuman, 1997).

In 2005, the California legislature recognized the unique requirements of screening psychologists by enacting California Government Code § 1031(f)(2)(B), which obligates psychologists to meet applicable education and training procedures set forth by POST. In 2013, in acknowledgement of the competencies required beyond those typically attained by generalists or other specialists, the American Psychological Association formally recognized Police & Public Safety Psychology as a specialty in professional psychology.[20] The competencies established as part of the specialty designation provided the basis for the psychologist qualification standards, and the education and training procedures, required by the Government Code.

Peace Officer Psychological Evaluator Competencies

Ethical standards, professional practice guidelines, and licensing laws[21] all stipulate that psychologists limit their practice to those areas of competence for which they have obtained the requisite education, training, supervised experience, consultation, study, and professional experience (IACP, 2020). The broad foundational and functional competencies integral to the

[20] See http://apa.org/ed/graduate/specialize/recognized.aspx

[21] APA (2017), EPPCC Standard 2.01; California Business and Professions Code § 2915(i).

services of a police psychologist have been developed by the American Board of Police & Public Safety Psychology (ABPPSP) in conjunction with its role in certifying the competence of police and public safety psychologists.[22]

POST Regulation 1955(a)(2) requires competence in the conduct of preemployment psychological screening of peace officers as defined by the POST Peace Officer Psychological Evaluator Competencies. These competencies were drawn from the police psychologist competencies developed by the ABPPSP. However, while the ABPPSP competencies pertain to the wide variety of roles of police psychologists (e.g., assessment, consulting, employee assistance, operational assistance), the POST Competencies focus on those that are relevant to the preemployment screening of peace officers. Table 3.1 lists and defines the POST Competencies, followed by a more in-depth discussion of each.

Table 3.1
POST Peace Officer Psychological Evaluator Competencies

Competence	Definition
Assessment	Ability to properly gather, analyze and integrate the full range of pertinent assessment data (e.g., personal health records, background investigation and other personal history information, psychological testing, clinical interview and observations) to reach a determination of psychological suitability for exercising the powers of a peace officer.
Clinical	Ability to assess the impact of a candidate's emotional or mental condition, and normal and abnormal personality traits and adaptation, on peace officer psychological suitability.
Communication	Ability to communicate the necessary and appropriate findings, conclusions, and recommendations in a manner that is clear and useful to the hiring agency and others involved in the candidate screening process, and conforms to POST requirements.
Jurisprudence	Knowledge and application of federal and state statutes, regulations, and case law pertinent to peace officer psychological screening, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act, California Fair Employment & Housing Act, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.
Multicultural	Ability to interact effectively with candidates in cross-cultural situations, including the consideration of customs, beliefs, values, and patterns of behavior reflecting disability, sexual orientation, and racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and national identity.
Occupational	Knowledge of peace officer essential job functions and working conditions, the chain of command, and the psychological demands and stressors inherent in the peace officer position.
Procedural	Knowledge and application of peace officer psychological screening procedures and criteria that are in compliance with POST requirements and are responsive to the needs and considerations of the hiring authority.
Psychometric	Understanding of psychological test properties, including validity, reliability, base rates, test norms and group differences, and the ability to select appropriate tests for evaluating peace officer psychological suitability and to make proper, accurate inferences from test results.
Standards	Knowledge and application of ethical principles and standards, and professional standards and guidelines, pertinent to peace officer psychological screening (e.g., privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, disclosure).

Assessment Competence

Ability to properly gather, analyze and integrate the full range of pertinent assessment data (e.g., personal health records, background investigation and other personal history information, psychological testing, clinical interview and observations) to reach a determination of psychological suitability for exercising the powers of a peace officer.

[22] See American Board of Police & Public Safety Psychology. (2019). Examination Manual; see also Gallo & Halgin (2011); IACP Preemployment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines (IACP, 2020), §4 (Examiner Qualifications).

In contrast to psychological testing—a relatively straightforward process in which descriptive meaning is based purely on test scores—psychological assessment is a complicated activity that requires consideration of a variety of test scores obtained from multiple test methods in the context of history, referral information, and observed behavior (Meyer et al., 2001). It requires the psychologist to integrate data from disparate sources, weighing the reliability and relevance of each against the selection criteria to come to a determination of suitability. That determination must be based on statutory, regulatory and agency-specific requirements and, of course, expert clinical judgment. Gathering, analyzing and integrating the data necessary to reach that suitability determination properly is the subject of assessment competence.

The "*Professional Practice Guidelines for Occupationally Mandated Psychological Evaluations*" (OMPE Guidelines; APA, 2018b) provide practice guideline statements that suggest or recommend specific professional behavior, endeavor or conduct for psychologists (APA, 2015). The importance of assessment competence is underscored in Statement #8, "Psychologists seek to select and rely on assessment tools validated for use with a population appropriate to the evaluation" and Statement #10, "Psychologists strive to use multiple sources of relevant and reliable information collected according to established principles and methods". These are discussed in more detail in Chapters 5-8.

Meyer et al. (2001) delineated the many proficiencies underlying assessment competence:

a. *A sophisticated understanding of personality, psychopathology, or the many ways in which disorders are manifested in cognition and behavior;*

b. *Knowledge of psychological measurement, statistics, and research methods;*

c. *Recognition that different assessment methods produce qualitatively distinct kinds of information;*

d. *An understanding of the particular strengths and limitations of each method and of different scales within each method;*

e. *A capacity to conceptualize the diverse real-world conditions that could give rise to a particular pattern of test data;*

f. *The ability to challenge one's judgment by systematically linking the presence and absence of test indicators to the psychological characteristics under consideration; and*

g. *Interpersonal skill and emotional sensitivity to effectively communicate findings.*

Clinical Competence

Ability to assess the impact of a candidate's emotional or mental condition, and normal and abnormal personality traits and adaptation, on peace officer psychological suitability.

Clinical competence involves much more than diagnostic skill. In addition to the ability to detect the presence or absence of emotional or mental conditions and normal and abnormal personality traits, the psychologist must be able to judge the impact of those findings on the ability to safely and effectively exercise peace officer powers.

A mental health diagnosis alone does not automatically render a candidate unsuitable, nor does the absence of one necessarily indicate that the candidate is suitable. The determination of suitability is not based simply on where the candidate falls on the continuum between normal and pathological. Instead, it must be based on an individualized assessment of the candidate's traits, symptoms, behaviors, condition(s), and other unique psychological characteristics in relation to their ability to safely and effectively exercise the powers and responsibilities of a peace officer and to withstand the psychological demands of the position.

The OMPE Guidelines (APA, 2018b) underscore the importance of clinical competence in Statement #4, "Psychologists strive to support conclusions about the job relevance of a psychological condition with established scientific and professional knowledge." This

guideline statement notes, "It is not per se the diagnosis or mental condition of an applicant … that is job-relevant, but rather the impact of that diagnosis or condition on the individual's ability to perform the duties of the position in a safe, effect, and/or efficient manner [citations omitted]. Consequently, it is important that psychologists conducting these evaluations form evidence-based conclusions about the nexus between an individual's psychological condition, manifested symptoms, and occupational functioning" (p. 191).

Communication Competence

Ability to communicate the necessary and appropriate findings, conclusions, and recommendations in a manner that is clear and useful to the hiring agency and others involved in the candidate screening process, and conforms to POST requirements.

The psychological evaluation report is intended to document the psychologist's determination in compliance with POST requirements and to communicate to the hiring authority any additional information that will aid in making a lawful and appropriate hiring decision and facilitate the recruit's successful training and performance. That additional information should include any job-relevant functional limitations, reasonable accommodation requirements, and the nature and seriousness of the potential risks posed by the candidate [Commission Regulation 1955(f)]. Communication competence is necessary to provide the hiring authority with relevant, accurate and complete information in a fair and unbiased manner. It also requires engaging in informal and formal conversations with the hiring authority and others involved in the hiring process to both provide and receive information important in the overall determination of the candidate's eligibility for peace officer appointment.

The OMPE Guidelines (APA, 2018b) discuss the importance of communication competence in two Statements: #11, "Psychologists strive to provide opinions and make recommendations that are directly relevant to the referral question(s)" and #12, "Psychologists seek to document the basis for their opinion(s) in language that is clear and appropriate to the targeted audience." In Chapter 10, we discuss other implications of these guidelines for preparation of the written report.

Jurisprudence Competence

Knowledge and application of federal and state statutes, regulations, and case law pertinent to peace officer psychological screening, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act, California Fair Employment & Housing Act, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.

Many of the procedures and practice standards followed by screening psychologists stem from legal requirements established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended (ADAAA); the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA); and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA). Psychologists must be very familiar with these statutes as they pertain to the timing and conduct of the evaluation, access to confidential information, documentation, and record keeping.[23] They must also keep abreast of pertinent court decisions pertaining to these and other relevant laws affecting the practice of peace officer psychological screening and rules and interpretive guidance promulgated by enforcement agencies (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, California Civil Rights Department (CRD), California State Personnel Board).

A proficient understanding of statutory, regulatory and case law provides the screening psychologist with the competence to meet a hiring agency's unique and situational requirements that are not covered by POST regulations or practice guidelines. Knowing how to do so within the boundaries of the law is a core component of risk management for the agency and the psychologist.

[23] Psychologists conducting evaluations for state law enforcement agencies must be knowledgeable of the requirements in California Code of Regulations, Title 2 § 172 and Government Code § 18931.

Multicultural Competence

Ability to interact effectively with candidates in cross-cultural situations, including the consideration of customs, beliefs, values, and patterns of behavior reflecting disability, sexual orientation, and racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and national identity.

Culture[24] is the foundation for all human behavior, particularly social interaction. Indeed, as Dressler (2014) noted, "Social life—all of human life—only works because we share various understandings of the world" (p. 194). Such shared understandings are referred to as intercultural competence and consist of (a) awareness of one's own and others' cultural practices and world views, (b) attitudes toward cultural differences, and (c) cross-cultural skills (i.e., effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations) (Deardorff, 2009).

These components are highly interdependent and interactive. For example, culturally competent attitudes (e.g., being interested in, respecting and valuing others' cultural backgrounds; tolerating ambiguity) facilitate increased cultural awareness and knowledge; increased knowledge contributes to greater openness to intercultural experience; and improvement in cross-cultural skills (e.g., listening and evaluating nonjudgmentally; communicating appropriately) contributes to more desirable and effective outcomes in cross-cultural situations, thereby strengthening knowledge, attitudes and skills. Foundational to all aspects of multicultural competence is the ability to see from others' perspectives (Deardorff, 2009). This "goes beyond the conventional surface-level knowledge of foods, greetings, customs, and so on" and "entails a more holistic, contextual understanding of a culture, including the historical political, and social contexts" (p. 68).

The benefits of multicultural competence accrue especially in contexts where individuals hold markedly different cultural heritages or identities. Both psychologists and peace officers frequently work in such contexts, which pose risks for significant misperceptions, misinterpretations, and misunderstandings, as well as discriminatory outcomes. The expectations for psychologists in such situations are reflected in the American Psychological Association (APA) *Multicultural Guidelines* (APA, 2017), and readers are encouraged to study these guidelines for recommended practices.[25] These guidelines include:

- *Psychologists seek to recognize and understand that identity and self-definition are fluid and complex and that the interaction between the two is dynamic. To this end, psychologists appreciate that intersectionality is shaped by the multiplicity of the individual's social contexts. (Guideline 1)*
- *Psychologists aspire to recognize and understand that as cultural beings, they hold attitudes and beliefs that can influence their perceptions of and interactions with others as well as their clinical and empirical conceptualizations. As such, psychologists strive to move beyond conceptualizations rooted in categorical assumptions, biases, and/or formulations based on limited knowledge about individuals and communities. (Guideline 2)*
- *Psychologists strive to recognize and understand the role of language and communication through engagement that is sensitive to the lived experience of the individual, couple, family, group, community, and/or organizations with whom they interact. Psychologists also seek to understand how they bring their own language and communication to these interactions. (Guideline 3)*

[24] "Culture is a shared range of human phenomena that does not necessarily relate to genetic inheritance. The elements of cultures are inter-related and function together as a living, adapting system that members internalize. Culture acts as a refracted lens through which group (or cultural subgroup) members 'see' reality and in which both the individual and collective group experiences the world. This framework is created … to ensure the survival and wellbeing of its members, and to provide meaning for and in life individually and socially … [and] also shapes and is shaped by the forms and institutions developed by its members to structure their world and to establish their meaning within it" (Kagawa-Singer, Dressler, George, & Elwood, 2014; p. 29).

[25] Available at *https://www.apa.org/about/policy/multicultural-guidelines.pdf*

Peace officers frequently perform their duties in cross-cultural contexts. It is for this reason that California law requires peace officer candidates to "be found to be free from … bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer" [G.C. § 1031(f)]. See Chapter 5 for a discussion of how this is assessed using the Bias Assessment Framework.

The OMPE Guidelines (APA, 2018) also encourage psychologists to "endeavor to recognize individual and group differences and the importance of practicing with cultural competence" (p. 193). This includes considering how cultural differences between the psychologist and examinee may affect the evaluation; seeking education, training, consultation, or supervision prior to the evaluation if cultural factors associated with the examinee fall outside the psychologist's range of experience or competence; and noting any important limitations of their interpretations resulting from cultural differences.

Occupational Competence

Knowledge of peace officer essential job functions and working conditions, the chain of command, and the psychological demands and stressors inherent in the peace officer position.

POST Regulation 1955(a) requires the psychologist to determine a candidate's ability to withstand the psychological demands of the position. Doing so necessitates an adequate understanding of those demands. While many of the psychological demands made of peace officers are inherent to the position (e.g., use of force, potential for injury or death, exposure to people in pain or distress, emotional constraint and control, role conflict), others can vary considerably by the nature of the assignment, size and location of the agency, organizational factors (e.g., quality of leadership, fiscal uncertainty, volume of calls for service), and community considerations (e.g., agency-media relations, history of police-community conflict).

Kirschman, Kamena, and Fay (2014) eloquently described the unique stressors to which peace officers are exposed:

> *The psychological hazards of police work are less obvious and more ubiquitous than the physical ones. Police officers and many first responders see more misery and despair in the first few years of their jobs than the rest of us do in a lifetime. This list is long: exposure to people in pain, exposure to unthinkable cruelty, exposure to innocent victims, and exposure to the infinite ways, many quite grotesque, that humans die—all of this amplified by concern for one's safety, frustration with the judicial system, the weight of responsibility, negative media coverage, organizational stress, betrayal, and wear and tear on family life. (p. 54)*

Occupational competence also includes a knowledge of the essential functions of the job, the working conditions, the relationship of the position to other collateral roles (i.e., how the position interacts with other functional positions in the organization), and, in particular, any aspects of the position that set it apart from other peace officer positions. For example, when evaluating a candidate for a deputy sheriff position in a rural county, it may be important to know that the position could require the incumbent to be available 24/7 with no available back-up for extended blocks of time. Alternatively, for police officers in a dense urban city, an understanding of the demands for multicultural sensitivity, frequent interactions with the seriously mentally ill, and a high call-for-service volume may be especially relevant.

The OMPE Guidelines (APA, 2018b) reflect occupational competence in Statement #3, "Psychologists seek to understand the psychologically relevant demands and working conditions of the examinee's position." The guideline emphasizes that occupational competence "is a necessary foundation for judgments about the examinee's ability to perform the essential functions of the position" (p. 191).

Acquiring this level of occupational competence requires more than merely a review of an agency's job description. As articulated by Claussen-Rogers and Arrigo (2005):

> *To promote competence and qualification among psychologists who administer tests and evaluate officers, ongoing engagement with the law enforcement culture is essential. More than reading about various facets of police work, the evaluator must become an "insider."*

Examples of how to cultivate this relationship include periodic ride-alongs during various work shifts, participation in law enforcement training events with recruits and seasoned officers, and routine social and professional interaction with members of a department or precinct. Regardless of the particular interventions undertaken, the key is for the psychologist to become acclimated to the rhythms of the police culture in order to gain as much practical understanding about the profession as possible. This proposed level of involvement will help familiarize the mental health specialist with the job-related pressures and stress of policing first hand. (pp. 165-166, citations removed)

Procedural Competence

Knowledge and application of peace officer psychological screening procedures and criteria that are in compliance with POST requirements and are responsive to the needs and considerations of the hiring authority.

Procedural competence begins with a complete understanding of the requirements contained in POST Regulation 1955, including and especially the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions (Table 4.9). Procedural competence involves far more than merely knowing the names used to label the dimensions. It requires knowledge of how each dimension is manifested in positive and counterproductive behaviors. Adaptability-Flexibility, for example, requires the ability to "make sudden adjustment in use of force as appropriate," but it also requires the less obvious ability to perform autonomously and without supervision.

Procedural competence also includes knowledge of the hiring authority's particular needs and considerations that go beyond the minimum requirements set by POST regulations. This may consist of a particular timeframe for completion of the evaluation, a requirement that the candidate be given feedback after the evaluation, the relative importance given to the screening dimensions, or additional job-relevant attributes beyond those established by POST.

Procedural competence is also reflected in the OMPE Guidelines at Statement #2, "In addressing the referral question(s), psychologists endeavor to apply the criterion standard as defined by statutory, regulatory, administrative, and/or other authoritative sources." All elements of the assessment—including the "focus of the evaluation, the methodology used to conduct it, the analysis of the data, the selection of findings, the formulation of opinions, and the communication of the results" (APA, 2018b, p. 190)—all stem from a complete understanding of the statutory, POST-mandated, and agency-specific criteria.

Psychologists conducting police suitability evaluations should also be mindful of the importance of disclosing relevant information to "all those with whom the examiner interacts. To the referring party, the examiner typically owes a duty to disclose costs, availability, expected timeline for report delivery, and factors that may lead to an interruption in services" (Corey & Zelig, 2020, p. 139).

Psychometric Competence

Understanding of psychological test properties, including validity, reliability, base rates, test norms and group differences, and the ability to select appropriate tests for evaluating peace officer psychological suitability and to make proper, accurate inferences from test results.

Psychologists are responsible for the appropriate selection, application, interpretation, and use of assessment instruments, whether they score and interpret such tests themselves or use automated or other services [see APA EPPCC Standard 9.09(c)]. This requires an advanced level of expertise in the understanding and interpretation of the assessment instruments used in their screening protocol, particularly as applied to peace officer evaluations. In addition to understanding an instrument's overall validity and reliability evidence, a psychologist must understand which scales are valid predictors of job-relevant behaviors and/or traits and which are not, the levels or elevations at which valid inferences can be made, and any limitations to their predictive or inferential validity. This necessitates considerable familiarity with the published literature or use of computer-based interpretive reports that link test scores to job-relevant correlates and inferences supported by the literature.

Standards Competence

Knowledge and application of ethical principles and standards, and professional guidelines pertinent to peace officer psychological screening (e.g., privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and disclosure).

Standards competence requires knowledge of professional standards relevant to privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and disclosure.[26] Privacy refers to a person's interest in controlling the nature of the information they give, who receives it, and how it is used. Confidentiality is an obligation belonging to the psychologist who receives private information and requires that the information be accessible only to those authorized to receive it. Professional standards of practice also obligate a psychologist to ensure that, prior to participating in the evaluation, the candidate understands the nature, purpose, scope, and intended uses of the evaluation, the limits of confidentiality, limitations of access to the evaluation records, and other relevant information.

Education and Training in Peace Officer Psychological Screening

In addition to five years of clinical experience, Government Code §1031(f) requires psychologists to *"have met any applicable education and training procedures set forth by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training designed for the conduct of preemployment psychological screening of peace officers."* To implement this requirement, Commission Regulation 1955(b)(3) obligates psychologists to dedicate a portion of their biennial continuing education training to courses directly related to the preemployment psychological screening of peace officers. Specifics of this requirement are discussed below.

Continuing Professional Education

California Business and Professions Code requires licensed psychologists and psychiatrists to obtain 36 hours of continuing professional development biennially to maintain their professional license.[27] Those hours must include "continuing education learning activities approved in four different categories: (1) Professional; (2) Academic; (3) Sponsored continuing education coursework and (4) Board certification from the American Board of Professional Psychology." POST Regulation 1955(a)(3) requires peace officer screening psychologists to devote a minimum of 12 of these required 36 CE hours toward POST-approved continuing professional education (CPE) courses that have relevant and direct application to the Competencies described above.

CPE Course Approval

POST approval is based on *course quality* and *course relevance*. Per Commission Regulation 1955(b)(2), *course quality* is satisfied by any course recognized and accepted by the California Board of Psychology for continuing education credit,[28] including those approved by the American Psychological Association and the California Psychological Association. Courses presented and/or approved by other bona fide organizations will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. To determine *course relevance*, an expert panel reviews course content to ensure that it has direct applicability to one or more of the evaluator competencies described in Table 3.1.

Course providers as well as others (e.g., past and prospective students) can submit courses for approval through the on-line CPE Tracking System. Approved courses are added to the CPE list on the POST website.

Verification of Training

To comply with the POST CPE requirement, psychologists must first create a profile

[26] Ethical principles, standards, and professional guidelines pertinent to peace officer psychological screening, including the APA Ethical Principles for Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the IACP Preemployment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines, and the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, are discussed in Chapter 2.

[27] Ca. B&P § 2915(a)

[28] See 16 CCR § 1397.61(c)(1)

through the on-line CPE Tracking System. Psychologist profiles display professional information provided by the psychologist, compliance information and a list of their completed POST-approved courses. These public profiles provide a way for agencies to verify that their psychologists have completed the necessary training to meet POST requirements and to ensure that, over time, training is acquired across all competencies. The profiles also serve as a resource for agencies seeking the services of a screening psychologist. Once created, psychologists can log in to their existing profile to update their profile information, and add completed POST-approved CPE courses.

Sources of Continuing Professional Education

Acquisition of training and maintenance of the core competencies may come from doctoral-level education and training, postdoctoral fellowships and supervision, and/or post-licensure education, training and experience. Post-licensure education is provided by a number of professional groups described below that focus on police and public safety psychology.

There are many compelling reasons for screening psychologists to become active members in these organizations by attending conferences and other continuing education opportunities. Research findings, important legal and practice updates, and other information pertinent to this specialty are often disseminated first at the annual conferences or workshops offered by these organizations and only later in practice guidelines and other publications. In addition, attendance at these educational events provides participants with opportunities to discuss research, practices, and emerging trends with other screening psychologists and to discover gaps in one's knowledge and clinical expertise.

Undergoing specialty board certification can make a significant contribution to professional development (Corey et al., 2011). As a process of self-examination and peer assessment, board certification requires psychologists to identify and describe the legal, ethical, scientific, and practice-standard bases for their work. This causes participants to clarify the essential skills and knowledge they rely on when carrying out their services.

Specialty Training and Professional Associations

Police Psychological Services Section, International Association of Chiefs of Police

The Police Psychological Services Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP-PPSS) is the oldest and largest association representing the police profession. IACP-PPSS has more than 200 members who provide psychological services to the over 6500 IACP member agencies from the U.S. and abroad. The section meets over three days in conjunction with the IACP annual conference or virtually via online platform. Ad hoc committees have issued practice guidelines for police-related psychological functions such as preemployment psychological screening, fitness-for-duty evaluations, post-shooting intervention, peer counseling, and police operational consulting. IACP-PPSS is an APA-accredited provider of continuing education and offers 10-12 hours of training annually on a wide range of police psychology topics offered in assessment, intervention, operational consulting, and organizational consulting tracks. Information about membership, past and upcoming conferences, guidelines, and other resources are provided on the Section's website: https://www.theiacp.org/working-group/section/psychological-services-section.

Society for Police and Criminal Psychology

The Society for Police and Criminal Psychology (SPCP) is an international membership organization that encourages the scientific study of psychology in the criminal justice system and the application of scientific knowledge to problems in criminal justice settings. It focuses broadly on law enforcement, judicial, and corrections elements in criminal justice. Membership is open to psychologists, other mental health professionals, lawyers, police officers, corrections personnel, and other professionals concerned with the psychological study of the criminal justice system.

SPCP holds an annual conference remotely or in various cities throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. The Society publishes the *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*. Information about conferences, journal, and membership procedures can be found on the Society's website: https://www.policepsychology.org/.

American Psychological Association, Division 18, Police & Public Safety Section
This membership organization functions as a section of Division 18 (Psychologists in Public Service) of the American Psychological Association. Psychologists do not need to be members of the APA to join the section. This section holds a conference in conjunction with the annual APA convention, in-person or virtual via online platform, and occasionally sponsors seminars on police and public safety issues. Information about APA Division 18 and the section can be found at the Division 18 website: http://www.apa.org/about/division/div18.aspx.

American Board of Police and Public Safety Psychology
The American Board of Police & Public Safety Psychology (ABPPSP) is a specialty board of the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). The primary objective of the ABPPSP board certification process is to promote, certify and recognize competence in the specialty. The ABPPSP is governed by a board of directors, the members of which are certified in the specialty. The ABPPSP, in association with the ABPP, is responsible for conducting board examinations in the specialty of police and public safety psychology, mentoring and training examiners, and awarding board certification in police and public safety psychology. Board certification by the ABPPSP is intended to certify that the successful candidate has completed the educational, training and experience requirements of the specialty, including passing an examination designed to assess the competencies required to provide quality services in the specialty. Information about the ABPPSP can be found on the ABPP website at www.abpp.org.

American Academy of Police and Public Safety Psychology
The American Academy of Police & Public Safety Psychology (AAPPSP) is the training and education branch of the American Board of Police & Public Safety Psychology. The AAPPSP is an APA-accredited provider of continuing education and offers training in all four specialty domains (i.e., assessment, intervention, operational support, and organizational consulting) as well as in preparation for board certification. Information about AAPPSP workshops are posted on their website: https://www.abpp.org/About/Academies/AAPPSP.aspx.

American Academy of Forensic Psychology
The American Academy of Forensic Psychology (AAFP) is the training and education branch of the American Board of Forensic Psychology, a specialty board of the American Board of Professional Psychology. In addition to a broad focus on criminal and civil forensic psychology, the AAFP offers workshops on various assessment-related topics including preemployment and fitness-for-duty evaluations. The AAFP is an APA-accredited provider of continuing education and occasionally offers workshops in conjunction with the American Academy of Police and Public Safety Psychology.

Selecting Screening Psychologists

In addition to ensuring that their screening psychologists meet POST requirements, hiring agencies should obtain documentation of completed graduate or postgraduate coursework in the use of psychodiagnostic and personality assessment instruments useful in making employment selection decisions. At least partial verification of knowledge and experience can be obtained by (1) having prospective evaluators describe how their screening methods and procedures conform to Commission Regulation 1955, state and federal law, and the contemporary research literature; (2) reviewing evidence of completed training or coursework in these knowledge areas; and (3) obtaining agency references from persons familiar with the psychologist's knowledge of these topics. The sample Peace Officer

Psychological Evaluator Questionnaire (Appendix A) is an example of the information that should be sought from the psychologist.

Professional Experience

Psychologists must acquire relevant education, training, supervised experience, consultation, or study before practicing independently in this area (APA, 2017). In practical terms, this means that those new to this area of practice should perform the requisite number of evaluations with supervision or consultation from an experienced psychologist. Proof of experience can be provided by agency references or, in the case of supervised experience, from the supervising psychologist. In either case, agencies should verify a level of experience commensurate with the scope of work they are proposing to undertake or that they will be receiving on-going consultation and supervision from another psychologist with the necessary experience and qualifications.

Since professional supervision is the means by which new psychologists acquire the necessary experience, both agencies and experienced psychologists should be encouraged to provide such mentorship. A screening psychologist's competence may be further enhanced by: (a) conducting other forensic psychological examinations (e.g., workers' compensation or civil psychological injury claims, fitness-for-duty evaluations); (b) training and instructing peace officers; (c) counseling peace officers and their families; (d) providing law enforcement operational support, such as hostage/crisis negotiation services; and (e) assisting in organizational wellness programs or providing management consultation to law enforcement agencies. Each of these types of experience provides skills, perspectives, and knowledge that can enhance the psychologist's ability to gather, interpret, integrate, and communicate pertinent information.

Agency References

Law enforcement agencies are required to check the employment references of peace officer candidates before making an offer of employment. No less diligence should be paid to the selection of a screening psychologist. Agencies are encouraged to have prospective psychologists provide a list of agencies for which they have evaluated peace officer candidates in the past five years, along with the names and phone numbers of agency contact persons. These agency references can be interviewed to confirm the prospective psychologist's experience and work quality. Psychologists who have not conducted independent screening evaluations should be asked to provide references from past and current supervising psychologists. Checks of state and federal criminal records, databases and reviews of licensing board disciplinary records should rule out any history of personal or professional misconduct that may undermine the credibility of the psychologist or pose other liabilities for the hiring agency.

Verifying Licensure and Certifications

Hiring agencies should ensure that the psychologist's license is valid and unrestricted by confirming licensure status with the California Board of Psychology.[29]

A licensed psychologist from another state or territory of the United States or Canada are allowed to perform preemployment peace officer psychological evaluations for up to a 30-day period per annum so long as all other requirements are met (California Business & Professions Code § 2912).

Requisite experience should be independently verified. For psychologists certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP), credentialed by the National Register of Health Service Providers (NRHSP), or holding a Certificate of Professional Qualification (CPQ) from the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB), confirmation of minimum qualifications is accomplished easily by contacting the respective credentialing

[29] Psychologists and psychiatrists' licenses can be checked through the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) online license search tool.

agency. Each of these agencies verifies licensure and professional experience of credentialed psychologists through primary sources. Psychologists who are not credentialed by ABPP, NRHSP, or ASPPB should provide other written documentation or sign attestations of the requisite experience. Verification of a psychiatrist's board certification is obtained through the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

The Use of Psychological Assistants and Other Auxiliary Staff

Only psychologists meeting the requirements specified in Government Code § 1031(f) and POST Regulation 1955 can conduct psychological evaluations of peace officer candidates. There are five specifically regulated activities in connection with the psychological screening of peace officers: (1) the interpretation of psychological testing, (2) the conduct of the clinical interview, (3) the review of relevant psychological and medical records, (4) the determination of the candidate's psychological suitability for the position based on consideration of all required sources of information, and (5) submission of the psychological evaluation report. Each of these activities must be carried out by the psychologist.

A psychologist's practical needs (especially those with a large practice) and professional responsibilities (such as providing training, supervision or experience) may require the use of auxiliary staff (i.e., administrative assistants, psychological assistants, interns, testing associates, psychologists in training, and others) to perform certain functions. Auxiliary staff may perform *ancillary activities*—tasks that are relevant to the psychological evaluation but are not governed by licensure laws or POST regulations. These include administering and scoring psychological tests, assembling documents for review by the psychologist, facilitating the transfer of information between the hiring agency and the psychologist, and word-processing the written report of the evaluation. Although all of these activities pertain to some central component of the evaluation (e.g., valid interpretation of psychological testing depends upon proper administration and scoring), their performance requires neither licensure as a psychologist nor the commensurate training and experience. Persons performing ancillary activities should be properly trained and supervised by the psychologist who is responsible for their performance.

In contrast to ancillary activities, *regulated activities* are governed by licensure laws and/or POST regulations. Use of auxiliary staff to participate in the psychological interview with the psychologist (who must be present at all times) is permissible so long as it is consistent with California law and professional ethics.[30]

Agency Orientation and Ongoing Integration of the Screening Evaluator

Each agency should provide its psychologist(s) with an initial orientation to the unique features of the environment in which its peace officers work; the factors historically believed to be associated with peace officer success and failure in that particular agency; and the agency's expectations with respect to timelines for examination appointments and written reports, the nature and content of the reports, selection standards, and the reporting chain-of-command. Ride-alongs, especially if the psychologist's experience is limited to agencies only of a particular size, type (e.g., municipal or county), or demographic (i.e., urban, suburban, or rural), are recommended.

Psychologists will be most effective when they are integrated into the agency's information network and not left to operate in isolation. They should be kept informed of important changes in agency needs; success and failure of recruits during academy, field training, and probation; and other relevant feedback. For some agencies, annual meetings between the psychologist(s) and select agency personnel may be sufficient; others may require greater or lesser frequency. A collaborative relationship between an agency and an evaluator is likely to provide other benefits as well, such as an ongoing research and validation program, continuous improvement of screening protocols and methodology, and early resolution of problems.

The following subsections describe the kinds of information agencies should provide to

[30] See APA (2017), EPPCC Standard 2.05, Delegation of Work to Others.

psychologists and the kinds of information that psychologists should solicit from the hiring agencies to optimize their effectiveness.

Information from the Background Investigation

Agencies are obligated to provide the psychologist with pertinent information collected during the background investigation. This includes the narrative report, which must reference the background investigation dimensions and any relevant findings of biased behaviors and/or bias-relevant traits and attributes [Commission Regulation 1953(g)(1)], and, if appropriate, other portions of the background investigation that pertain to relevant work, life and developmental history [Commission Regulation 1955(e)(3)]. Although some may believe that background information may bias the psychological evaluation, in fact, just the opposite is true. When an agency deprives the screening psychologist of its findings from the background investigation, the psychologist is forced to rely on personal history information provided by the candidate, and this self-report cannot be solely relied upon as accurate and complete. By providing the psychologist with objective and third-party information, as required, discrepancies can be identified and reconciled, thereby ensuring that the determination of a candidate's psychological suitability is made with maximum reliability and validity.

Agency-Specific Peace Officer Job Demands and Work Conditions

Familiarity with agency-specific peace officer working demands and conditions can be gained through participation in ride-alongs, agency training events, and immersion in hands-on experiences, and by dialogues between the hiring agency and the psychologist. In such dialogues, the psychologist and hiring agency should review together the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions and the Bias Assessment Framework (see Chapter 5, Step 6), identifying specific behaviors to be emphasized and/or job-relevant attributes to be added. In addition, they should discuss any work demands and disqualifiers that may be unique to that particular agency and/or position.

Sometimes a candidate may reveal information in the course of the psychological evaluation that, had it been reported in the background investigation, would have resulted in disqualification. Examples of this may include the time period since last using an illegal or controlled substance, or the existence of an out-of-state restraining order for domestic violence. Providing psychologists with a complete list of such agency-specific disqualifiers can function as an important backstop in cases where disqualifying information is first discovered during the psychological evaluation.

Desired Bases for the Disqualification of Peace Officer Candidates

Commission Regulation 1950(d) clarifies that the POST selection standards serve as minimum selection requirements. It also authorizes hiring agencies to establish more rigorous requirements, higher standards, and additional and/or more in-depth evaluations, as appropriate. The minimum level of qualification required for passing the psychological evaluation should always depend on the psychological competence required and not be adjusted to regulate the number or proportion of persons passing the evaluation.[31]

The hiring agency must provide the psychologist "with any other information (e.g., risk management considerations) that will allow the evaluator to make a psychological suitability determination" [Commission Regulation 1955(d)]. *Risk management considerations* refer to an agency's willingness—or unwillingness—to accept certain kinds of risk based on its needs, the needs of the community, training and supervision capabilities, etc. For example, a candidate with a positive background and clinical interview, but whose personality test scores indicate the probability of failure in the academy, may be an acceptable risk to a large agency easily able to absorb attrition, but not to an agency with a critical staffing shortage. An open dialogue between the psychologist and the agency is imperative for understanding these risk management considerations.

[31] See Standard 11.16, Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (2014)

Monitoring Performance and Providing Feedback

Monitoring the performance of psychologists is a critical element of quality control. It can range from a simple feedback discussion of how the psychologist complies with the requirements and procedures outlined in this Manual, to a periodic auditing of compliance. Regardless of the form it takes, the interaction between the hiring agency and the psychologist should, at a minimum, include the following periodic feedback:

1. ***Disqualification decisions overturned following second opinions.*** This can be an important indicator that the psychologist's disqualification determinations are not standing up to challenges and may require either a revision in how these judgments are made or in how they are justified in the written report.
2. ***Disqualification rates as a function of protected class.*** Discrimination on the basis of a protected class—as evidenced by adverse impact[32]—is unjust to candidates, poses a significant legal risk to the hiring agency, and thus requires investigation and possible changes to one or more elements of the screening protocol. Although psychologists are generally expected to monitor for adverse impact in screening candidates,[33] it is the hiring agency that carries the most direct responsibility for it and has access to evidence to detect adverse impact in the overall hiring process.
3. ***Post-hire outcomes of incumbents.*** The validity of a psychologist's judgments about candidate suitability is, in the end, determined by post-hire outcomes. How these are measured and reported back to the psychologist can range from global outcomes (e.g., successfully completed vs. failed probation) to a detailed reporting of disciplinary actions and performance measures during the academy, field training and post-probationary performance. At the very least, psychologists must be told who was hired, terminated, resigned under pressure or while under investigation, or resigned in lieu of termination so that they can review their assessment records to determine how similar unwanted outcomes might be prevented. Agencies who provide more extensive outcome data can expect a substantial return on their investment. Quantitative analyses of aggregate data over time can yield important information to refine evaluation methods and more accurately interpret scale scores from the assessment instruments.

   Agencies can use various means of gathering and reporting this information, including setting regular intervals for data collection (e.g., quarterly or semiannually), and using standardized forms for recording outcome data. The Selection Validation Survey provided in Appendix B illustrates one structured method for gathering outcome data during field training and probation.

[32] See Chapter 2 for a discussion of adverse impact.

[33] IACP Preemployment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines (2020) 13.2 states, "The evaluator and the hiring agency are encouraged to evaluate whether final suitability ratings have an adverse impact on protected classes of candidates."

Development and Validation of the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions

4

This chapter describes the procedures and results of a job analysis and empirical validation study conducted by POST in support of the peace officer psychological screening process. This effort included the development of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions and the conduct of a large-scale meta-analysis that served to verify the importance of these dimensions for predicting peace officer performance.

Overview of Literature

The initial phase of this effort consisted of an extensive literature review of the large volume of research on personality tests as predictors of peace officer performance. Research studies—both published and unpublished—were collected on psychological evaluation and personality assessment, particularly as related to peace officer screening. By combing through research databases (PsychLit, ERIC, Dissertation Abstracts, and Mental Measurements Yearbooks) as well as studies from agencies and test publishers, hundreds of documents were amassed. A concurrent legal review was conducted through the collection of case law, law review articles and related documents from LexisNexis and other sources. Particular focus was directed toward current trends in policing (such as community policing) as they related to personality assessment.

Summarizing the reviewed findings and conclusions of research on psychological and personality assessment was quite challenging, due in large part to a lack of consistency in the constructs measured and the manner in which research was conducted. Notwithstanding these inconsistencies, there were psychological indicators of peace officer performance that were reported across multiple studies. These indicators can be roughly organized into attributes of good performers and attributes associated with counterproductive and/or ineffective behavior.

Positive Psychological Indicators

A considerable amount of research focused on the identification of the psychological characteristics of successful peace officers. In general, the results of this research indicated that personality profiles of successful peace officers are reflective of a psychologically healthy person. In particular, peace officers were found to score high on the following attributes:[34]

- Agreeableness
- Assertiveness/Extroversion
- Conscientiousness/Responsibility/ Dependability
- Emotional toughness (freedom from anxiety, hostility and psychological distress)
- Flexibility/Adaptability
- Independence/Achievement orientation
- Integrity
- Intellectual efficiency
- Self-discipline/Self-control
- Social confidence/Self-assuredness
- Social sensitivity
- Tolerance
- Well-being

[34] A sample of research articles focusing on positive psychological indicators includes: Aamodt (2004); Clausson-Rogers and Arrigo (2005); Cuttler and Muchinsky (2006); Detrick and Chibnall (2006, 2013); Hargrave and Hiatt (1989); Hogan, Hogan, and Roberts (1996); Inwald and Brobst (1998); Lorr and Strack (1994); O'Connor et al. (1997); Sarchione et al. (1998).

High scores on these many positive attributes appear to indicate high psychological functioning; they may also be reflective of impression management techniques (i.e., socially desirable responding or underreporting). A reluctance to admit psychologically negative content is quite common for peace officer candidates (Detrick & Chibnall, 2014; Hargrave et al., 1986; O'Conner-Boes et al., 1997; Sellbom et al., 2007) as well as other job candidates completing psychological inventories in high stakes situations.[35] An underreporting pattern of MMPI validity scales involving elevated L and K scales, and low scale F, in peace officer candidates is so common that it has been labeled the "preacher profile" (Hays, 1997).

Negative Psychological Indicators

A considerable amount of peace officer psychological research has also focused on the identification of indicators of dysfunctional peace officer behaviors. Many different counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) have been targeted in these studies, including but not limited to excessive force, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, substance abuse, insubordination or other supervisory problems, embezzlement, deceitfulness, multiple motor vehicle violations, inappropriate verbal conduct, blackmail, bribery, theft, lying, kickbacks, personal violence, revenge, discrimination, and fraud (Fitzgibbons, 1999; Son & Rome, 1998; Sarchione et al., 1998; Sellbom, Fischler et al., 2007; Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015, 2016; Tarescavage, Corey, Gupton, & Ben-Porath, 2015; Tarescavage, Fischler, et al., 2015; Tarescavage, Brewster, et al., 2015).

Using a variety of rational and statistical sorting techniques, Gruys and Sackett (2003) derived 11 categories of counterproductive behavior, depicted in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1
Categories of Counterproductive Work Behavior

Category	Behaviors
Theft and Related Behavior	Theft of cash or property, giving away goods/services, misuse of employee discount
Destruction of Property	Deface, damage, or destroy property, sabotage property
Misuse of Information	Reveal confidential information, falsify records
Misuse of Time and Resources	Waste time, alter time card, conduct personal business during work time
Unsafe Behavior	Failure to follow safety procedures, failure to learn safety procedures
Poor Attendance	Unexcused absence or tardiness, misuse of sick leave
Poor Quality of Work	Intentionally slow or sloppy work
Alcohol Use	Alcohol use on the job, coming to work under the influence of alcohol
Drug Use	Possess, use, or sell drugs at work
Inappropriate Verbal Actions	Argue with customers, verbally harass coworkers
Inappropriate Physical Actions	Physically attack coworkers, sexual advances towards coworkers

Gruys and Sackett (2003)

Research has shown that counterproductive work behaviors are intercorrelated, indicating that those who engage in one of these types of behaviors tend to engage in other acts of counterproductivity (Ashton, 1998; Bennet & Robinson, 2000; Hunt, 1996; Ones & Viswesvaran, 2003). Further research exploring these interrelationships has found that CWBs cluster into two categories: (1) *interpersonal deviance* or deviant behaviors targeted toward individuals (e.g., violence, gossip, theft from co-workers), and (2) *organizational deviance*, composed of deviant behaviors directed toward the organization (e.g., intentionally working slowly, damaging company property, sharing confidential company information) (Berry, Ones, & Sackett, 2007). Generally speaking, CWBs are best predicted by conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability; conscientiousness alone appears to be the best predictor of organizational

[35] Underreporting is discussed in detail in Chapter 6: Written Psychological Tests.

deviance. Agreeableness seems to be more closely related to deviant behaviors directed toward the individual.

In general, relative to non-problem officers, problem officers exhibit more of the following characteristics:[36]

- Aggressiveness, argumentativeness, and antagonism
- Antisocial tendencies
- Disregard for societal rules and laws
- Egocentricity
- Emotional instability/anxiety
- Hostility
- Immaturity
- Impulsiveness
- Insensitivity or oversensitivity
- Intolerance
- Irresponsibility/unreliability
- Lack of empathy
- Overconfidence
- Paranoia
- Pessimism
- Poor decision-making
- Proneness to alcohol abuse
- Rebelliousness
- Social introversion
- Suspiciousness, cynicism and distrustfulness

Inconsistencies and Contradictions

These findings are not intended to belie an empirical literature that is vast and frequently contradictory. It is not uncommon for validity coefficients on the same psychological attribute to range from strong positive associations (i.e., observed correlations of .40) to negative values. For example, low socialization and responsibility have been found to be predictive of corruption by some (e.g., Sarchione et al., 1998) but not others (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). In another study, most "good" candidates scored higher on self-discipline, independence, extraversion and emotional toughness, and lower on anxiety; however, 27% of these good candidates also scored lower on self-control and extraversion and much higher on anxiety (Lorr & Strack, 1994). Inconsistencies and contradictions in results have led some to declare that the development of a police personality profile is fruitless (Lorr & Strack, 1994), and to question the effectiveness of preemployment psychological testing itself (Barrett, 2003; Claussen & Arrigo, 2005). Far from proving the invalidity of these measures, the accumulation of inconsistent and seemingly contradictory findings help to flesh-out the meaning of a construct.

Construct Naming Confusion

Another prime reason for discrepant and often inconclusive results across studies is the lack of consensus regarding the labels, definitions and measurement of the psychological constructs. Due in good part to a focus on the validation of specific instruments and inventories rather than on the constructs they intend to measure, this disparity created a proverbial Tower of Babel of varying names and definitions given to the same attributes and the scales intended for their measurement. As a result, different scales predict different things for different researchers, hampering the aggregation of findings across studies necessary to advance the science (Lough & Ryan, 2005).

The Five-Factor Model

In the 1990s, a taxonomy of psychological constructs was developed that provides a common lexicon for classifying personality attributes. The "Big Five" personality taxonomy is organized into five broad factors: Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Emotional Stability/Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness to Experience (Goldberg, 1993). Descriptions of each of these factors are provided in Table 4.2.

[36] Butcher, Ones, & Cullen (2006); Claussen-Rogers & Arrigo (2005); Costello & Schneider (1996); Cullen & Sackett (2003); Davis et al. (2004); Fischler (2004/2005); Hargrave et al. (1988); Hargrave & Hiatt (1989); Hargrave, Hiatt, & Gaffney (1986); Heyer (1998); Hiatt & Hargrave (1988); Hogan, Hogan, & Roberts (1996); Inwald (1998); O'Conner-Boes et al. (1997); Sarchione et al. (1998).

Table 4.2
Big Five Personality Traits

Trait	Description
Conscientiousness	Refers to the cluster of traits relating to prudence, achievement, dependability, persistence, and impulse control. Sometimes referred to as Conformity or Dependability (carefulness, thoroughness, responsibility, organization, efficiency). Typical behaviors characterizing individuals high on this personality trait include careful planning, delaying gratification, following rules and norms, being organized, working hard, and persisting in goal-directed behavior. Individuals scoring low are often disorganized, irresponsible, careless, negligent, undependable, and sometimes hedonistic and impulsive (as opposed to harm avoiding).
Emotional Stability	Refers to an individual's tendency to become emotionally upset. Emotionally stable individuals are relaxed, self-assured, even-tempered and calm. Individuals scoring low on this personality trait are described as moody, anxious, worrying, insecure and tense.
Extraversion	Encompasses traits relating to sociability, dominance, energy and positive affect. Individuals scoring high on this dimension are described as energetic, active, vigorous, talkative, assertive, fun-loving, gregarious, persuasive and positive. Individuals scoring low are described as introverted, silent, submissive, passive, unenergetic, reserved, or being a loner.
Openness to Experience	The most controversial of the Big Five. Traits commonly associated with this dimension include imagination, curiosity, originality, broadmindedness and intelligence. Individuals scoring high are described as having wide interests, being imaginative, curious, creative and insightful. Low scoring individuals are described as shallow, conventional, un-analytical, down-to-earth and lacking in imagination.
Agreeableness	Includes such characteristics as likeability, kindness, courteousness, politeness, and nurturance. Individuals scoring high are described as amicable, cooperative, popular, easy to live with, affectionate, sensitive, caring, kind and tender-hearted. Those who score low are described as uncooperative, disagreeable, unfriendly, selfish and hostile.

Adapted from Dilchert, Ones, Van Rooy, and Viswesvaran (2006)

The Big Five has provided a means of bringing some order to the study of personality and, therefore, a way to systematically analyze the relationship between job behavior and personality constructs rather than just individual personality tests. The results of such studies have shown that the best predictors of job behavior, including but not limited to peace officer job behavior, involve the Big Five factors of Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability and Agreeableness (Berry et al., 2007; Cortina et al., 1992; Cullen & Sackett, 2003; Sackett & DeVore, 2001). In their meta-analysis, Barrick and Mount (1991) found Conscientiousness to have the strongest estimated corrected correlation with peace officer job performance ratings and productivity data. Based on the results of his meta-analysis, Aamodt (2004) also determined that Conscientiousness had the strongest relationship with job performance ratings. Emotional Stability and Agreeableness have been found to predict a broad range of counterproductive work behaviors as well (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). Aamodt's meta-analysis provided confirmatory evidence that Emotional Stability is predictive of peace officer discipline problems and Agreeableness is associated with both performance ratings and discipline problems. In his study of police officers in Europe, Salgado (1997) also found a similar association between job performance and Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability and Extraversion.

Ones (1993) determined that the combination of Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability make up a higher-order "integrity" construct. In support of her research, she found that tests designed expressly to measure integrity, including both those that directly assess attitudes toward theft and dishonesty (overt tests) and personality-based measures (covert tests), were found to correlate most highly with scores on a linear composite of these three Big Five factors.

Although other models of personality exist, the Five Factor Model (FFM) was used as the organizing structure for the POST meta-analysis.

Peace Officer Psychological Job Demands

A review of the literature and the results of numerous job analyses confirm that the work of a peace officer is cognitively and emotionally complex, dangerous, physically demanding, and emotionally wrenching (e.g., Ash, Slora, & Britton, 1990). Examples of peace officer stressors are numerous and varied: dealing with criminals, balancing keeping the peace and handling community criticism and aggression, negative public perception and scrutiny, court appearances, unending paperwork, long hours and shiftwork (Werner, 2008). The degree of stress experienced by peace officers eclipses that of most other occupations, with examples that include high speed pursuits, physical confrontations, shootings, and seeing human suffering and injustices, particularly those involving children. Officers are called upon to make split-second, high-stakes decisions and must be prepared to use deadly force and to act in an appropriate, assertive manner when physically attacked (Finn & Tomz, 1997; Sigler & Wilson, 1988).

Another often more pervasive form of stress facing peace officers is inherent in law enforcement organizations themselves. Officers often see management practices and the criminal justice system as hindering rather than supporting their ability to perform their job (Brooks & Piquero, 1998; Stevens, 1999). Shift work can result in chronic fatigue, decrements in job performance, physical and sleeping problems, and domestic strife (Hurrell, 1986; Villa, 1996; Villa & Taiji, 1999). Staff shortages, work overload, tedious tasks and equipment failure compound the problem (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Finn & Tomz, 1997), leading to mental, emotional and physical exhaustion (Figely, 1999; Stack & Kelley, 1994).

These circumstances and job demands require that peace officers adopt multiple roles, including law enforcer, public servant, and social worker. Balancing these many, often conflicting roles—and knowing which role is appropriate at any given moment—requires keen decision-making, judgment and adaptability. An officer must carefully exert the right amount of control in any given situation: too much, and the officer risks citizen complaints; too little may instigate aggression in others. Complying with and exercising authority also requires a delicate balance: officers must follow directives, yet be able to take initiative and exert independent action. One personality characteristic can be important in one situation, but its polar opposite could be appropriate in another (Beutler & O'Leary, 1980).

Community Policing

The advent of community policing had a direct impact on the psychological and cognitive demands on peace officers. Initiated in the 1980s, the philosophy of community policing rests on the organizational strategy of developing line officers permanently in areas where they can operate as community-based problem solvers, gathering information first-hand and learning about the dynamics of the community. Proactive problem-solving is stressed, as well as police-community partnerships to address the causes of crime and the fear within the community due to the threat of crime (California Dept. of Justice, 1999). The focus of police activity in this model shifted from apprehending suspects to dealing with the underlying causes of crime. With that shift came an increase in the cognitive and psychological complexity of the peace officer's job. Instead of merely reacting to specified situations constrained by rigid guidelines and regulations and excessive supervision, the job now required analysis and creativity to identify and solve problems, social and communication skills to develop cooperative relationships in the community, and problem-solving and decision-making skills to guide behavior (Booth, 1995; Sampson & Scott, 2000).

These additional job demands and stressors serve to heighten the psychological requirements of peace officers. Emotional stability, coping skills, judgment, flexibility, and social skills all play an even more important role than that required by traditional policing. The empirical confirmation of the influence of community policing on peace officer psychological requirements is discussed later in the description of Phase 3 of the POST job analysis.

POST Psychologically-Based Job Analysis

In the next stage of the project, a comprehensive job analysis was conducted to develop and content-validate the peace officer psychological demands and requirements. The multi-phase, multi-method procedure described here led to the creation of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions.

Phase 1: Review of Past Job Analysis Information

Phase 1 began with a review of past peace officer job analyses conducted by POST and others. Peace officer job information was solicited from law enforcement agencies, associations, and organizations both within and outside of California. Appendix C lists the agencies and organizations that provided job analytic information and the job analysis resource documents.

Members of the Police Psychological Services Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) were asked to provide job information related to psychological traits or from which traits could be inferred. This included job analyses, position descriptions, content validation studies conducted on the entry-level peace officer position, and anything else that provided a glimpse as to the psychological challenges and realities—and resulting performance problems—associated with the job (e.g., disciplinary action reports, fitness-for-duty reports, internal affairs investigations).

From this information, an initial list of psychologically relevant performance problems, job functions, and job demands were developed, as depicted in Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5, respectively.

Relevant information was also collected from a variety of personality-based job analysis questionnaires, including but not limited to peace officer-specific inventories. The following questionnaires were reviewed:

- The Performance Improvement Characteristics (Hogan Assessment Systems; Tulsa, OK)
- Personnel Requirements Survey (Institute for Personality & Ability Testing; Champaign, IL)
- Hilson Job Analysis Questionnaire (Hilson Research, Inc.; Kew Garden, NY)
- Law Enforcement Applicant Profile (Personnel Decisions, Inc., Minneapolis, MN)
- The Work Characteristics Inventory (California State Personnel Board, Sacramento, CA)
- Personality-Related Position Requirements Form (Raymark, Schmit, & Guion, 1997)

Table 4.3
Peace Officer Job Performance Problems

- Excessive/inappropriate use of force
- Misuse of authority
- Partiality in enforcing the law (due to prejudice or dishonesty)
- Bias/prejudice/intolerance (reflected in dealing with co-workers, citizens)
- Substance abuse
- Theft
- Dishonesty
- Law violation
- Inappropriate reaction to crises/emergencies
- Reaction to gradual stress buildup over time
- Panic under stress
- Disorderliness/sloppy—haphazard work
- Inattention to detail
- Failure to carry tasks to completion
- Inability to work on several concurrent tasks
- Poor prioritization skills
- Hostility towards authority
- Hot-temperedness
- Failure to take work seriously
- Impulsiveness
- Inability to cope with job structure
- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Poor service attitude (officious, sarcastic, rude)
- Disregard for rules and regulations
- Recurrent somatic problems
- Failure to keep up with paperwork
- Tampering with evidence
- Going through the motions without attention/vigilance
- Low activity level
- Inability to interpret rules
- Failure to switch "roles" (e.g., law enforcer to public servant or humanitarian)

Table 4.4
Peace Officer Essential Job Functions

Job Function	Description
Detecting and Investigating Crimes	Detecting criminal activity, identifying criminals and systematically inspecting, gathering, and controlling property and information needed to investigate and resolve crimes.
Apprehending and Arresting Suspects	Locating, pursuing, controlling, arresting and processing suspects.
Preparing for and Presenting Legal Testimony	Preparing for testimony at hearings or trials, giving depositions and testifying in court.
Managing Traffic	Maintaining the safe flow of traffic, citing and/or arresting Vehicle Code violators and investigating traffic accidents and hazards.
Providing Emergency Assistance to the Public	Protecting or assisting persons in emergency situations such as accidents, disasters and crimes in progress.
Maintaining Order in the Community	Monitoring activity in the community, mediating disputes, quelling disturbances and controlling crowds.
Advising and Assisting the Public	Providing information and assistance to the public in non-emergency and non-enforcement situations.
Working with the Community to Reduce Crime and Address Community Concerns	Involvement in activities and programs that are intended to increase community involvement in reducing crime and addressing other community concerns.
Enhancing Police-Community Relations	Involvement in activities and programs that are intended specifically to build public awareness, trust and confidence in local law enforcement.
Maintaining and Improving Job Readiness	Maintaining and improving the knowledge, skills and abilities that are necessary to effectively perform patrol officer/deputy duties.
Documenting Investigations, Enforcement Actions and Other Patrol Contracts/ Activities	Documenting investigative actions and findings, enforcement actions and other patrol activities and contracts for possible future reference in legal/administrative proceedings, and/or comply with federal/state/local requirements.

Table 4.5
Peace Officer Psychological Job Demands

- Discretionary use of force
- Verbal abuse from suspects, victims, bystanders, etc.
- Willingness to use force
- Constant exposure to the worst elements of society; easy to become very jaded/cynical
- Discretionary use of police powers (arrest)
- Access to money and property seized at crime scenes
- Securing public trust (life and property)
- Decision-making under extreme pressure/stress
- Access to sensitive information
- Periods of quiet/boredom interrupted by sudden emergency response
- Responding to tragedies, emergencies, disasters, and highly stressful situations
- Need to respond to a series of diverse calls and adapt responses ("shift gears" from routine to emergency calls)
- Unpleasant/repugnant persons and situations
- Public contact; communicate with the entire gamut of society; adapt effectively
- Threats to personal safety, physical attacks
- Serve a diverse community, regardless of culture or socioeconomic status
- Risk of personal injury, including mortal injury

Phase 2: Development of the POST Job Analysis Questionnaires

In the next phase, a series of job analysis questionnaires were created and administered. The initial questionnaire (Appendix D) listed the traits identified during the earlier phases of the project and asked raters to indicate their importance to successful job performance. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 125 subject matter experts (SMEs), consisting of POST law enforcement consultants, field training officers, representatives of the Peace Officer Research Advisory Council (PORAC), background investigators, and academy instructors. Table 4.6 displays the average importance ratings and standard deviations for each rater group. As indicated in the table, average ratings ranged between "important" and "critical" for all traits; no trait was rated less than important.

Table 4.6
Trait/Abilities Importance Ratings Means and Standard Deviations

	POST Consultants		FTOs		Union/Labor Reps		Background Investigators		Academy Instructors		
Traits/Abilities	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Total**
1. Integrity	3.9	.38	3.9	.30	3.9	.36	3.9	.06	4.0	.18	**3.93**
2. Stress Tolerance	3.9	.38	3.7	.51	3.6	.49	3.6	.09	3.6	.49	**3.64**
3. Anger Control	3.9	.38	3.7	.55	3.4	.74	3.4	.14	3.8	.47	**3.60**
4. Decision-Making	3.3	.76	3.5	.62	3.3	.81	3.3	.14	3.7	.47	**3.48**
5. Courage/Assertiveness	3.6	.53	3.7	.59	3.3	.74	3.3	.13	2.9	.76	**3.31**
6. Impulse/Self-control	3.6	.53	3.2	.62	3.3	.74	3.3	.13	3.3	.79	**3.29**
7. Objectivity/Tolerance	3.3	.49	3.5	.63	3.3	.68	2.6	.16	3.3	.64	**3.25**
8. Dependability/Reliability	2.6	.53	3.1	.60	2.9	.64	3.1	.22	3.7	.55	**3.18**
9. Teamwork	2.4	.53	3.2	.69	3.1	.72	3.1	.13	3.3	.75	**3.14**
10. Worldliness/Practical Intelligence	2.7	.95	3.3	.65	3.0	.92	3.0	.17	3.3	.72	**3.13**
11. Influence/Leadership	2.7	.49	3.0	.86	3.1	.75	3.1	.14	3.3	.72	**3.10**
12. Conformance to Rules/Regulations	2.9	.90	3.2	.80	2.8	.57	3.0	.21	3.2	.72	**3.04**
13. Adaptability/Flexibility	2.6	.53	3.0	.80	2.8	.75	2.7	.13	3.3	.63	**2.95**
14. Interpersonal Sensitivity	2.9	.90	3.0	.77	2.8	.79	2.8	.14	3.1	.80	**2.93**
15. Initiative/Achievement Motivation	2.6	.53	2.7	.73	2.7	.60	2.9	.22	3.4	.61	**2.91**
16. Positive Attitude	2.9	1.07	2.8	.58	2.6	.74	2.6	.13	3.4	.61	**2.87**
17. Acceptance of Criticism	2.9	.69	2.8	.54	2.7	.78	2.7	.13	2.9	.72	**2.79**
18. Vigilance/Attention to Detail	2.4	.53	2.7	.82	2.6	.74	2.7	.13	3.2	.74	**2.78**
19. Interpersonal Interest/Social Concern	2.1	.90	2.3	.74	2.3	.80	2.3	.15	2.9	.84	**2.44**

0=Unimportant; 1=Somewhat Important; 2=Important; 3=Very Important; 4=Critical

To provide more detailed trait information, another more sophisticated questionnaire was created. This questionnaire was modeled after the inventory of General Position Requirements (GPR; Raymark et al.,1996). The GPR consists of 107 personality-based job behaviors (e.g., "take charge in unusual or emergency situations") organized into 19 categories (e.g., Leadership); raters indicate whether a statement is essential, helpful, or not required for the position in question.

POST edited the GPR statements to make them more contextually relevant for peace officers. For example, "Negotiate on behalf of the work unit for a fair share of organizational resources" was revised to read "Negotiate with people to achieve a consensus on a proposed decision or action." Additional changes were made based on information acquired during the earlier stages of the job analysis. The resulting POST Personality-Based Requirements Questionnaire for Entry-Level Patrol Officers consisted of 123 behaviors, organized into 11 trait categories, displayed in Appendix E.

A total of 33 SMEs completed the POST questionnaire. Sample characteristics of the raters are displayed in Appendix F. Sixteen of the SMEs rated the behaviors in reference to traditional law

enforcement; the remaining 17 raters, experts in community policing, used that orientation as a reference for their ratings. Each behavior was rated using the same metric as the GPR (1=not important, 2= helpful, 3=essential). The average importance ratings of each specific behavior for traditional and community policing are provided in Appendix E.

Individual behaviors were aggregated to create overall mean importance ratings for the 11 trait categories. Table 4.7 lists the trait mean ratings separately for traditional and community policing. Traits in bold are considered "critical" (i.e., overall mean score of ≥2.40 and at least two underlying behaviors of ≥2.51).

Table 4.7
Average Trait Importance Ratings for Traditional and Community Law Enforcement

	Traditional Law Enforcement N=16		Community Policing N=17	
Trait	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Integrity	**2.86**	.12	**2.94**	.25
Emotional Maturity/Control	**2.69**	.17	**2.75**	.15
Dependability/Conscientiousness	**2.63**	.22	**2.72**	.20
Decision-Making/Judgment/Creativity	2.39	.29	**2.70**	.26
Thoroughness/Attention to Detail	2.37	.36	**2.46**	.37
Agreeableness	2.36	.38	**2.67**	.31
Assertiveness/Leadership/Influence	2.35	.26	**2.64**	.30
Adaptability/Flexibility	2.34	.44	**2.67**	.25
Interpersonal Sensitivity/Interest	2.26	.31	**2.53**	.24
Teamwork/Cooperation	2.24	.34	**2.63**	.28
Initiative	2.19	.43	2.33	.40

1=Not Required; 2=Helpful; 3=Essential (for effective performance in the position)

All ratings ranged between "helpful" and "essential," reinforcing the importance of the personality attributes reflected in these data. Differences in importance ratings between the two groups can be attributed to the impact of community policing on peace officers' psychological demands and requirements. Although Integrity, Emotional Control, and Conscientiousness were rated "Essential" for both types of policing, only community policing resulted in overall ratings of Essential for seven of the remaining attributes, including Judgment/Decision-Making, Adaptability, Agreeableness, Assertiveness/Influence, Teamwork/Cooperation, Interpersonal Skills, and Thoroughness.

The importance of these traits was verified in a later job analysis conducted by POST as part of a project to evaluate pre-offer personality measures of peace officer attributes (Berner, 2010). That analysis included the development of personality-related patrol officer competencies that were created and analyzed by a total of 175 subject matter experts, including patrol supervisors and field training officers, over the course of 29 workshops throughout the state. The resulting competencies included the ten POST Psychological Screening Dimensions. These competencies are described in Appendix G.

The 175 SMEs then rated the importance of each competence, indicated whether officers need to possess the competence before hire, whether officers differ on the competence and if those differences are related to important differences in overall job performance. The results of the analysis of these ratings are depicted in Table 4.8. Ratings ranged from "very important" to "critically important," providing further confirmatory evidence as to the importance of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions.

The majority of SMEs indicated that peace officer differences in each competence result in important differences in overall job performance. The majority of participants also indicated that every competence was necessary at point of hire—especially Integrity/Ethics, Decision-Making/Judgment and Social Competence—confirming the need to screen for these attributes rather than attempt to impart them in training or on the job once hired.

Table 4.8
Ratings of Personality-Related Patrol Officer Competencies

Competence	Importance*		Necessary at Job Entry? % Yes	Impact Performance? % Yes
	Mean	SD		
Integrity/Ethics	4.86	0.38	100.0%	62.9%
Assertiveness/Persuasiveness	4.77	0.46	61.7%	84.0%
Decision-Making and Judgment	4.77	0.46	94.3%	82.9%
Impulse Control/Attention to Safety	4.67	0.54	69.7%	82.9%
Emotional Regulation & Stress Tolerance	4.46	0.64	80.0%	72.0%
Conscientiousness/Dependability	4.37	0.66	84.0%	87.4%
Teamwork	4.25	0.72	73.1%	70.9%
Adaptability/Flexibility	4.23	0.71	61.1%	72.0%
Social Competence	4.17	0.67	93.7%	82.3%
Service Orientation**	3.75	0.74	87.4%	56.0%

** 5=Critically Important; 4=Very Important; 3=Important; 2=Of Some Importance; 1=Of Little Importance; 0=Not Important*

***Service Orientation was determined to be sufficiently addressed under Social Competence; therefore, it was not added to the already-established and validated Psychological Screening Dimensions.*

Phase 3: Focus Groups

A series of focus groups were held to validate the initial set of psychological attributes and identify underlying job-specific behaviors. Focus group participants included 19 law enforcement SMEs from agencies across California, representing organizational levels from line officer to captain (listed in Appendix H).

After reviewing information from the job analyses, the SMEs provided and discussed examples of effective and counterproductive behaviors related to the psychological competencies provided. The results of these meetings included refinements to the psychological categories and specific job-related behaviors underlying each competence.

Phase 4: Critical Incidents

The last phase of the job analysis involved the creation of "critical incidents." Not to be confused with the term as used in law enforcement (i.e., an event that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of an individual) (Kulbarsh, 2007), the critical incident method of job analysis asks job experts to recall specific incidents that illustrate especially effective or ineffective performance (Flanagan, 1954). Each "critical incident" consists of a description of a demanding or challenging situation encountered on the job, the action(s) taken to deal with the situation, and the resulting consequence or outcome. These critical incidents served to further establish the validity of the job analysis results, as well as to provide useful information to psychologists regarding the behavioral manifestations of the peace officer psychological dimensions.

Critical incidents were requested from a wide variety of subject matter expert groups, including the Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute and sheriffs and chiefs throughout the state. Officers represented all levels of law enforcement, from line officers to commanders and assistant chiefs. Incidents were also generated during critical incident workshops and by mail. All participants were trained to generate incidents that focused on a

specific observable behavior exhibited on the job in sufficient detail to convey the same image of the performance to all knowledgeable individuals.

A total of 265 critical incidents were collected. The incidents were then compiled into a questionnaire. A total of 16 SMEs completed the questionnaire by: (1) categorizing each incident by the psychological dimension(s) it best reflects; (2) rating the level of (in)effectiveness displayed by the incident, using a 5-point scale ranging from "Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive" to "Highly Effective/Productive" and (3) indicating the degree to which the incident is a useful illustration of that level of effectiveness (Poor, OK, or Good).

On average, the SMEs rated the usefulness of 238 (98%) of the original 265 incidents as "OK" to "Good." These 238 incidents were grouped into psychological attribute categories based on the SME ratings, and compiled into a second questionnaire for administration to 16 psychologists who served as the blue-ribbon oversight panel for this project (Appendix I). The behavioral categories themselves were modified slightly based on SME input. The incidents were appended with the average SME effectiveness rating.

For each incident, the psychologists were asked to indicate which psychological dimension(s) were best reflected in the behavioral example and to rate the usefulness of the example for psychological screening purposes on a 3-point scale (1=Poor, 2=OK, and 3=Very Useful). The 170 incidents that were awarded average ratings of 2.0 or higher were retained for the final version.

Final Products: Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions and Associated Critical Incidents

The ten (10) dimensions in the final set of the POST **Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions** include:

1. **Social Competence**
2. **Teamwork**
3. **Adaptability/Flexibility**
4. **Conscientiousness/Dependability**
5. **Impulse Control/Attention to Safety**
6. **Integrity/Ethics**
7. **Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance**
8. **Decision-Making/Judgment**
9. **Assertiveness/Persuasiveness**
10. **Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior**

The full set of dimensions is provided in Table 4.9. As indicated in that table, each dimension consists of (1) a behavior definition; (2) associated effective and counterproductive behaviors; and (3) critical incidents that were rated as useful to very useful, organized by SME (in)effectiveness ratings.[37]

The POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions were developed to serve multiple purposes. First, they provided a basis for the development of the Manual's examination and evaluation protocols. Second, the behavioral definitions and the specific examples of acceptable and unacceptable behavior underlying each dimension provide a vehicle for psychologists and hiring authorities to establish agency-specific risk thresholds and to discuss the suitability of individual peace officer candidates. A uniform taxonomy of peace officer psychological constructs also supports consistency in evaluations across psychologists and agencies, as well as serving as an organizing structure for information collected from tests, interview responses, and personal history information in support of determinations of psychological suitability (Wolf, 1999). The dimensions also served as an organizing structure for the aggregation of test data in support of the validation phase of the project, as described later in this chapter.

[37] Effectiveness ratings reflect the judgments of the SMEs when the critical incidents were initially rated in the early to mid 2000s. Judgments of SMEs today would likely result in different ratings.

Table 4.9
Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions and Critical Incidents

Dimension 1: Social Competence

Social Competence involves communicating with others in a tactful and respectful manner, and showing sensitivity and concern in one's daily interactions. Social Competence includes:

- **The ability to "read" people and an awareness of the impact of one's own words and behavior on others (Social Awareness);**
- **Interest and concern for the feelings of others (Empathy);**
- **Tact and impartiality in treating all members of society (Tolerance); and**
- **The ability and comfort in approaching individuals, and in confronting and reducing interpersonal conflict (Social-Self Confidence/Conflict Management).**

Positive Behaviors	• Reads peoples' motives and anticipates their reactions by picking up on verbal and behavioral cues; • Recognizes needs and concerns of others; • Resolves problems in ways that do not arouse unnecessary antagonism; • Calms emotional/angry people and defuses conflicts through mediation, negotiation and persuasion rather than force (when appropriate); • Recognizes the impact of one's own verbal and nonverbal communications on others (and makes sure both are consistent and appropriate); • Refrains from making remarks that could be interpreted as rude or condescending; • Interacts with all others in a courteous and respectful manner; • Listens to others patiently and attentively (within reason) to gather needed information, gain cooperation, etc., while, at the same time, staying focused on the task; • Is considerate when duties lead to physical or emotional pain/discomfort of others, including victims, witnesses and suspects; • Assists others when needed, even when some personal sacrifice is involved; • Communicates tactfully and effectively with individuals across the gamut of society, even when giving constructive criticism; • Provides service/renders aid or assistance in an unbiased fashion; • Aware of and sensitive to social, economic and cultural differences, including those associated with gender, sexual orientation, race and religion; • Sensitive and respectful when interacting with the elderly, disabled and those with special needs; and • Willingly provides aid and assistance to all individuals.
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Baits people; takes personal offense at comments, insults, or criticism; • Provokes suspects and others by officious bearing, gratuitous verbal challenge, or through physical contact; • Antagonizes community members and others; • Uses profanity and other inappropriate language; • Refuses to listen to explanations from members of the community and others; • Performs job duties in a way so as to minimize or avoid interactions with others; • Makes inappropriate comments to or about others regarding personal characteristics as well as derogatory comments about specific groups (racial, gender, sexual orientation, proficiency with the English language, immigrant status, HIV/AIDS infection, religion, transgender, social status); • Inability to recognize how one's own emotions/behavior affect situations and others; • Makes hasty, biased judgments based on physical appearance, race, gender, or other group membership characteristics; and • Avoids confrontations at all costs.
Effectiveness	**Social Competence Critical Incidents**
Very Effective	The officer stopped a car suspected of being in a robbery. He approached the car with caution and after determining that the occupants were not the robbers, he explained why they had been stopped and questioned, and thanked them for cooperating.
	An officer talked calmly to an elderly woman who was near hysterics after falling and fracturing her leg. He reassured her that her leg would heal quickly and had her calmed down in a few minutes, engaging her in normal conversation until the ambulance arrived.

Effectiveness	Social Competence Critical Incidents (cont.)
	An officer answering a D.O.A. (dead on arrival) call found a deceased 60-year old man and his 58-year old wife, who was in a very emotional state. While waiting for the coroner, he went to pick up a daughter (who had no transportation) and brought her back to comfort the mother.
	An officer was required to tell a mother that her son had been shot to death by two juveniles. After arriving at the home and telling the mother the bad news, the officer called a priest to come to the home and got a neighbor and friend to assist the grief-stricken mother.
	After several children in one neighborhood had been molested, the officer attended PTA meetings and briefed parents on how to prevent molestation. He also went to the schools and told the children, without scaring them, how to help in apprehending the molester. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	An elderly woman's purse containing no money, but irreplaceable pictures of her deceased husband and family, was stolen. The officer spent several hours searching for the purse, which he finally found and returned to the woman.
	After obtaining necessary information to file a dead on arrival report, the officer then assisted the emotionally upset family by contacting a funeral director and the immediate relatives to come and assist them.
	An elderly woman at the checkout stand of a grocery store is in a heated argument with the clerk over the bill, claiming that she already paid for an item that the clerk knows she didn't. The argument gets to the point where the woman is yelling and making a terrible disturbance, and then she punches the clerk. At this point, the police are called to help. They suspect that the woman has some kind of mental disorder, possibly Alzheimer's disease. As a result of the officers keeping an open mind, they were able to get the woman the medical help she needed. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
Average Effectiveness	When the officer arrived at the scene of a domestic, he found that the husband had assaulted his wife but that she didn't want him arrested. She wanted to leave with her small children, so the officer helped the woman dress her children while he kept the husband in a separate room. While the officer drove them to her parents' home, he advised her of the various agencies that could assist her with her marital problems.
Minimally Effective	Trainee responded to traffic accident with FTO, arriving before CHP. Trainee checked vehicle and found injured female inside. FTO went to vehicle to call for ambulance. Trainee believed female was badly hurt. Trainee yelled out to FTO "Get an ambulance quick, she's all fucked up."
	Officer Smith responds to a "possible" rape-just-occurred incident. The victim, a known prostitute, tells the officer she was raped and robbed by a client. Officer Smith, failing to set his prejudices aside, failed to conduct an impartial investigation. Had he done so, he would have developed sufficient information that would have led to an arrest, prevent further crimes by this suspect, and increase public trust.
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	Two officers are sent to a report of a rape. The first officer on the scene begins to establish a rapport with the victim, who is 13 years old and was raped by her stepfather. When the second officer arrives, he walks into the room with a "John Wayne" attitude and begins to take over the call. The officer is discourteous to the victim's mother and demands that she leave the room while the interview is going on, tells the victim to sit down on the couch and tells the first officer "I got it." The victim begins to cry and refuses to carry on her account of the rape. The victim's mother orders the officers out of the house.
	Officer Johnson, with another officer, responded to an assault with a deadly weapon call. While investigating the case, Officer Johnson told the victim that he could do nothing about her being assaulted and threatened and told her that the actions by the assaulter did not constitute assault. The two officers cleared the call and immediately went to lunch.

Dimension 2: Teamwork

Teamwork involves working effectively with others to accomplish goals, as well as subordinating personal interests for the good of the working group and the organization. It involves establishing and maintaining effective, cooperative working relationships with co-workers, supervisors, clients, representatives of other organizations, and others. Teamwork consists of:

- Sharing information and providing assistance and support to co-workers, supervisors, and others;
- Balancing personal ambitions with organizational/team goals;
- Performing one's fair share in a group effort;
- Collaborating effectively with others to accomplish work goals, as necessary; and
- Not allowing personal differences to affect working relationships.

Positive Behaviors	• Supports and recognizes the accomplishment of team members; • Willingly offers, initiates, and provides assistance to fellow officers; • Invites and welcomes input and assistance from the community and others; • Supports group efforts rather than competing for individual recognition; • Solicits input and assistance from community partners and others outside the agency to accomplish work goals; and • Forges partnerships to accomplish goals.
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Resents successes and accomplishments of team members; • Does not assist fellow officers or other team members; • Avoids asking others for assistance; • Alienates colleagues by dominating interactions and activities; and • Gossips, criticizes, and backstabs colleagues and coworkers.

Effectiveness	Teamwork Critical Incidents
Very Effective	A juvenile officer investigating a garage burglary near the city limits found evidence he believed would be valuable to officers in a nearby suburb. He called a juvenile officer in the suburb and gave him the information over the phone.
	An officer helped two other officers write a report of a felony arrest so that it contained all necessary information and was acceptable to the county attorney.
Average Effectiveness	When the officer received his days-off slip for the month, he called his partners and arranged the days off so that the days off were acceptable to all.
	An officer occasionally assigned to a certain beat noticed juveniles hanging around a vacated building. The officer passed this information on to the officers who were permanently assigned to the area.
	Upon arriving at the scene of a private alarm call, an officer agreed to jump from the squad car and chase two men--who were seen at the rear of the building--right into his partner, who had driven two blocks away at an alley exit. One suspect was apprehended and, shortly after, another squad caught the second. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
Minimally Effective	An officer is working a special detail, during which the officer is supposed to remain at a fixed post until event A occurs. When event A occurs, the officer is to leave the fixed post and assume another fixed post at a location two blocks away. Timing is critical in moving from the first fixed post to the second fixed post. The supervisor who is monitoring the event cannot locate the officer at the first fixed post and finds him 500 ft. away, engaged in a conversation in the crowd. The officer is instructed to resume his fixed post. At the completion of event A, when checking to see that all of the new fixed posts are manned, the supervisor is unable to find the officer. The supervisor goes to the original fixed post and finds the officer directing traffic, a task that was assigned to a different officer. The officer is told to report to his/her assigned post and desist in traffic control. The officer begins to argue with the supervisor. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	Officer Smith, at the very start of her assignments, would use up every hour of leave balances as she accrued them. At any given time, she would have only 8 hours accrued. In addition, she would openly argue with her supervisors regarding her job assignments. On numerous occasions she openly challenged her supervisors regarding their actions or assignments.

Effectiveness	Teamwork Critical Incidents (cont.)

Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	At a mother/son domestic, the officer stood by and watched his partner fight with the son. When the partner asked for help, the officer called for another squad.
	An officer actively tries to sidestep or pass calls for service, and takes his time responding to a call so that covering officers would be required to take any reports that were necessary. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	An officer working the desk during the day shift told people who called to report burglaries to call during mid-watch rather than taking the reports himself. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	When asked to assist in arresting a drunk, the officer simply walked away, even though the drunk was being obviously troublesome to his fellow partner.

Dimension 3: Adaptability/Flexibility

Adaptability/Flexibility involves the ability to change gears and easily adjust to the many different, sudden, and sometimes competing demands of the job. Adaptability/Flexibility consists of:

- **Appropriately shifting between various work roles, such as facilitator, rule enforcer, etc.;**
- **Adjusting to planned and unplanned work changes, including different types of incidents that must be handled one right after another;**
- **Prioritizing and working effectively on several very different tasks/projects at the same time;**
- **Uses appropriate judgment and discretion in applying regulations and policies; understands the difference between the letter and the spirit of rules and laws;**
- **Performs duties without constant supervision or instructions;**
- **Works in unstructured situations with minimal supervision;**
- **Adjusts to differing supervisory styles; and**
- **Can physically and mentally adjust to shift work.**

Positive Behaviors	• Easily changes gears in response to unpredictable or unexpected events and circumstances; • Willingly accepts and appropriately implements changes in policy, organizational practices and law (e.g., video cameras in car, racial profiling data collection); • Accepts and easily adapts to changes in work assignments; • Accepts and easily adjusts to changes in operations, goals, actions, modes of conduct or priorities to deal with changing situations; • Anticipates changes in work demands by locating and participating in assignments or training that will prepare self for these changes; • Selects a correct mode of operation for the situation: law enforcer, public servant, etc.; and • Makes sudden adjustments in use of force as appropriate.
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Needs directives to be in black and white; • Fails to exercise appropriate discretion in carrying out duties (for example, is a "misdemeanor cop" —everybody gets a ticket); • Never takes action; spends too much time on minor infractions—unable to set priorities; and • Is paralyzed by uncertainty or ambiguity.
Effectiveness	**Adaptability/Flexibility Critical Incidents**
Very Effective	An officer recently assigned to a new position received no instructions on what the job involved, so he read the job description and was able to handle all duties. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**

Dimension 4: Conscientiousness/Dependability

Conscientiousness/Dependability involves diligent, reliable, conscientious work patterns, and performing in a timely, logical manner in accordance with rules, regulations and organizational policies. Conscientiousness/Dependability includes:

- **Carrying assigned tasks through to successful and timely completion;**
- **Maintaining a punctual, reliable attendance record;**
- **Persevering in the face of obstacles, difficulties, long hours and other adverse working conditions;**
- **Staying organized;**
- **Carefully attending to details (e.g., typos, missing/incorrect information);**
- **Staying current on new rules, procedures, etc.;**
- **Maintaining accountability for one's work, and analyzing prior mistakes or problems to improve performance;**
- **Performing effectively under difficult and uncomfortable conditions;**
- **A promise made is a promise kept; and**
- **Continually works to achieve or restore trust with peers, supervisors and clients.**

Positive Behaviors	• Strives to meet deadlines and otherwise complete work in timely manner; • Stays current on new rules, procedures, and relevant case law; • Works overtime when necessary to meet organizational needs; • Initiates proper action without needing to wait for instruction; • Does more than just handle calls; productively uses unstructured time to identify and resolve problems on the beat, address community problems and otherwise meet agency goals; • Follows through and completes tasks within the expected timeframe; • Honors and follows through on commitments, even when it's inconvenient or unpleasant to do so; • Focuses on accomplishing the task rather than watching the clock; • Safeguards the property entrusted to them; • Makes sure the job is done correctly rather than just going through the motions; • Attends to all aspects of projects and activities to be sure they are completed; • Maintains knowledge of other agencies to provide referrals to community members as appropriate; • Completes accurate and timely reports; reports on work in progress as necessary; • Maintains skill and fitness levels; and • Arrives at appointments on time (or ahead of time whenever possible).
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Sneaks out before shift is over; • Fails to comply with instructions or orders; • Procrastinates; • Loses case information or other valuable information; • Causes unnecessary and inappropriate property damage while conducting searches or making arrests; • Coasts toward the end of the shift; • Poor attendance – takes time off from work unnecessarily; • Deliberately fails to complete assignments in order to accrue unnecessary overtime; • Takes excessive/extended breaks; • Wastes time "shooting the breeze"; • Misses scheduled court appearances or other important appointments; • Fails to properly prepare for court appearances; • Finds ways to avoid taking necessary training (e.g., range dates, CPT, physical training); • Fails to maintain department equipment; • Fails to properly report damage to equipment; • Conducts unauthorized personal business while on duty; • Gives up or cuts corners when faced with obstacles; and • Performs job duties in a way that requires the minimum amount of effort (e.g., discounts citizen complaints to avoid writing separate reports, ignores signs which might be present of crimes/problems unrelated to the reason for the call, investigates at the bare minimum level).

Effectiveness	Conscientiousness/Dependability Critical Incidents
Highly Effective/ Productive	The officer went to every late-night gas station in his area to alert the attendants about a group of hold-up men who had been hitting gas stations. He left a description of the men, a phone number to call and detailed instructions on what to do if the men were spotted. Because of his actions, the hold-up men were apprehended.
Very Effective	As a gang investigator, the officer became aware of a violent criminal who would escape prosecution by intimidating the victims and witnesses. When the scrutiny was too much, the criminal would go to another part of the country until things cooled off and then would return and start committing armed robbery, rape, and other crimes. The officer continued to monitor the suspect for 10 years, enlisting the aid of an FBI agent. Over the next 18 months, the two officers tracked the criminal. The agent arranged for other agents to use informants in an attempt to arrest the suspect. Finally, the suspect was located in Mexico. The Mexican police were brought in, and the suspect was arrested and returned to the United States for prosecution. **Secondary Dimension:** Teamwork
	When eight burglaries had occurred in a small area, the officer organized a neighborhood coffee party and provided tips on what to do, leading to the arrest of six young men.
	An officer was called to a domestic involving a man with a .38 caliber revolver and two companions trying to get an ADC check. Six hours later, when an armed robbery took place in another district by three men with a .38, he immediately provided detectives with names of suspects and a car description, leading to the arrests and recovery of the loot. **Secondary Dimension:** Teamwork
	An officer, after checking apartment house parking lots for car prowlers, would make a note of any apartment that didn't have good lighting and then tell the caretaker during the day.
	An officer listed the license numbers of all autos parked near a suspected house and gave the list to the morals squad. After the officer went off duty, a homicide occurred in the suspected house and the list of license numbers led to the arrest of the slayer.
	After an officer became aware that a dangerous intersection had no traffic control devices and that a high hedge was obstructing the view, he took it upon himself to contact the traffic engineers to have signs posted and the owner of the hedge to have it cut.
	After several owners of Chinese cafés had their homes burglarized while attending meetings at a private club they all belonged to, the officer personally visited all the café owners that had not been burglarized and advised them of the possibility.
	By determining usual time of theft, observing persons in the four block area where stolen cars were found, and then observing the parking lot from which cars were stolen, the officer was able to arrest a car thief in the act. **Secondary Dimension:** Decision-Making and Judgment
	A juvenile officer assigned to a school went to the neighboring stores and pointed out ways store owners could reduce the chance of shoplifting and possible burglaries.
	At the scene of a man with a gun call, the officer found a gun that he handled carefully to preserve any fingerprints.
	While investigating a burglary of a business, the officer noticed that there was generally poor security throughout the place. He contacted the owner and advised him on better security measures such as a silent alarm system.
	A uniform squad was to transport a man picked up in a narcotics raid. The officer searched the man prior to transporting, even after the arresting officer said he had already searched the man prior. The officer found a gun in the "searched" man's boot. **Secondary Dimension:** Decision-Making and Judgment
	The officer had responded to many calls to help an invalid who would fall and be unable to get up. Because the officer was concerned that the invalid would someday be hurt, he contacted the Welfare Department that provided care for the invalid. **Secondary Dimension:** Social Competence
	The officer picked up a boy for shoplifting food and found that the boy's father was an alcoholic and that their home was barren and unlivable. The officer notified the juvenile division and followed the case until the boy was placed in a foster home. **Secondary Dimension:** Social Competence

Effectiveness	Conscientiousness/Dependability Critical Incidents (cont.)
Average Effectiveness	After receiving the description of a missing 2-year-old, the officer immediately began checking area in a zigzag pattern and found the child six blocks from his home.
	A burglar was spotted on the roof of a building. The officer climbed up the building, down an adjoining wall, and chased the burglar about a mile before capturing him.
Minimally Effective	An officer called to a house burglary investigated and filed a report. He was told to redo the report, but instead he filled in the missing information. (The report was again returned and the officer was told to retype it.)
	A man flagged an officer down and asked if he could get a jumpstart since his car battery was dead. The officer said he wasn't allowed to and drove off.
	An off-duty officer was informed that children were digging into the side of a steep bank, but failed to make note of it and did not remember to report it for several days.
	Officer Jones responded to a radio call in which it was reported that a suspect had threatened a woman with a gun. A witness told Jones that the suspect had walked away, northbound on the west side of the street. The suspect fired two shots into the air. He then discarded a can of beer he had been drinking into the gutter as he walked away. Jones noted the suspect's description and route of travel but he did not attach importance to the report of the discarded beer can. Although he heard the complete statement of the witness, he was so focused on his questions that he failed to pick up an important fact the witness volunteered. As a result, the beer can with the suspect's fingerprints was not recovered.
	The officer was given a knife that appeared to have blood on it by a man who had found it laying in his yard. The officer put the knife in the glove compartment and forgot about it.
	At the scene of a burglary where many TV sets were taken, a neighbor told the officer that he had observed a truck at the scene earlier in the evening. The officer failed to get the neighbor's name and did not follow up the information.
	Officer Jones was an officer with approximately 5 years experience. After receiving a position of trust that allowed him significant ability to come and go as he pleased, he began coming to work at infrequent dates and times. His supervisor conducted an audit and determined that Officer Jones did in fact misuse his sick leave. Officer Jones had used twice as much sick leave as was accumulated in a year's time. The sick leave was taken in one or two day increments and with just a couple of exceptions, always took place on a Monday or Friday. Officer Jones had the flu some half dozen times, a headache just as many times, various forms of stomach pains and a litany of other maladies.
	An officer saw that the sidewalk next to a building that was being wrecked was not blocked off and that people might be hurt by debris, but he did nothing about it. **Secondary Dimension:** Decision-Making and Judgment
	Officer Davis arrested a burglar who was coming out of an electronics store and loading his pick-up truck with computers and VCRs. His observations, investigation and report were very well done and resulted in a felony filing against a career criminal. Unfortunately, Davis failed to note the court date on his personal planner. He failed to notify the deputy district attorney handling the case that he was going on an unscheduled vacation. As a result, the burglar walked and the officer received a five-day suspension because this was his third failure to appear in court in two years.
	A new officer encountered a disabled vehicle on the side of the roadway that contained a male driver and female passenger. The driver provided verbal identification, and dispatch advised that the driver's license was suspended. Dispatch also gave a physical description of the name provided, but it did not match the driver. The driver was told not to drive and he agreed. The driver said he was going to call a tow truck and the officer left the area. The officer never made contact with the female passenger, never checked on the vehicle registration, and never comprehended the discrepancy with the driver's license information. The officer was told to go back to the vehicle and re-contact the driver, but he had fled the area. The female was contacted a short distance away. She was found to have warrants for her arrest. She provided the true name for the male and he was found to have warrants and a parole hold for his arrest. The vehicle registration tabs turned out to be bogus. **Secondary Dimension:** Decision-Making and Judgment
	Two police officers were handling a ringing burglary alarm call in an industrial area. The front door was slightly ajar and a hazardous materials placard was posted on a wall next to the door. The officers cautiously entered the building and determined that the burglary suspects were gone and had taken miscellaneous items. The officers also determined that two containers of a liquid compound were leaking onto the interior floor of this building. The officers conducted a burglary investigation and secured the building before leaving, but failed to notify the Haz-Mat unit or the fire department of the potential danger. As a result of the officers' actions, many members of the public were exposed to potentially deadly substances. **Secondary Dimension:** Decision-Making and Judgment

Effectiveness	Conscientiousness/Dependability Critical Incidents (cont.)
Minimally Effective	During a graveyard shift, a patrol officer responded to a burglary alarm at a warehouse. While claiming that he searched the perimeter of the building and the fenced yard, the officer failed to notice the hole that was cut in the chain link fence. By failing to make this observation and not entering the yard, the officer failed to recognize the burglary that was actually in progress. He left the scene calling the incident a false alarm.
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	Officer Smith was dispatched to a rape call where the victim was hysterical and crying. Officer Smith raised his voice and told her if she did not quit crying he would leave and she could call back later. When she stopped, Officer Smith sat down and began taking a statement. According to witnesses he was rude, demeaning and condescending. Midway through the interview, Officer Smith pulled a candy bar from his pocket and began eating it in front of the victim. When presented with a number of items of evidence, Officer Smith did not retain them as evidence. After the interview, Officer Smith took the victim to the scene of the rape where she pointed out a number of evidentiary items. Officer Smith failed to retain these items as evidence as well. The report itself was extremely brief and failed to document items, situations and statements. The detectives had to reconstruct from the beginning due to its poor quality. **Secondary Dimension: Social Competence**
	After approximately one year on the streets as a patrol officer, a complaint was made that Officer Jones had made an arrest and the report had not been received by the district attorney for processing. Officer Jones quickly explained that he had written the report and had sent it through the appropriate channels. Ironically, at this time a report was received from the department's records division that showed that Officer Jones had over 125 reports that had not been received by the records division. An internal investigation was conducted and determined that Officer Jones had deliberately not written these reports. Officer Jones was disciplined and returned to a correctional facility as an officer.
	On a call to check a prowler, the officer just flashed his light around and did not leave the car to investigate.
	Soon after a supervisor admonished all shift officers about duty responsibilities, he located a unit parked in a secluded area, blacked out. He used radio activity to identify the car through a process of elimination. The supervisor could never get close enough to prove "sleeping on duty" but did observe for more than 60 minutes. At the end of watch the supervisor reviewed the officer's daily log and noted the officer falsely logged activity during that period of time the supervisor had observed his inactivity. **Secondary Dimension: Integrity/Ethics**
	The officer was tipped off to a burglary but got there too late because he took care of some personal business first.

Dimension 5: Impulse Control/Attention to Safety

Impulse Control/Attention to Safety involves taking proper precautions and avoiding impulsive and/or unnecessarily risky behavior to ensure the safety of oneself and others. It includes the ability and inclination to think before acting – to keep one's impetuous, knee-jerk reactions in check, and instead behave in conscious regard for the larger situation at hand. It also includes:

- **Driving and otherwise behaving within one's own limits;**
- **Taking proper precautions to maximally ensure safe performance;**
- **Thinking things through before acting (including considering consequences), rather than doing the first thing that comes to mind, yet takes decisive action when warranted;**
- **Careful use and maintenance of personal and agency/company equipment and materials;**
- **Safe driving practices during routine and high arousal activities; and**
- **Attention to and awareness of hazards.**

Positive Behaviors	• Keeps all equipment well maintained, including firearms, OC spray, edged weapons, vehicle, flashlight, baton, tactical vest, radio, cell phone, etc.; • Consistently possesses all issued equipment; • Doesn't take unnecessary risks such as speeding, taking on too many individuals without backup, etc.; • Takes proper precautions during and after vehicle pursuits, traffic stops, administering emergency assistance/first aid, etc.; • Responds optimally to deadly force situations; • Thinks before acting; • Complies with safety rules (wears seatbelt, uses helmet when biking, motorcyle-riding, etc.); • Recognizes the impact of personal injury on performance; and • Drives in control.

Dimension 5: Impulse Control/Attention to Safety

Counterproductive Behaviors	• Brandishes or is otherwise careless with firearms; • Disregards risk to self or others—exhibits "tombstone courage"; • Fails to properly search suspects for weapons during apprehension; • Drives recklessly and at excessive speeds; • Gets in avoidable/excessive traffic accidents; • Lives in the moment at the expense of accomplishing long-term objectives; • Takes unnecessary, foolhardy risks; • Reacts in a knee-jerk manner to emergency events (e.g., entering a "burglary-in-progress" alone rather than waiting for backup); • Acts without thinking; • Overreacts when challenged or criticized; • Involved in, and/or arrested for, off-duty incidents; • Speeds and drives recklessly off duty; and • Gets in off-duty altercations.
Effectiveness	**Impulse Control/Attention to Safety Critical Incidents**
Minimally Effective	An officer was patrolling near a business parking lot when he heard what he believed to be a gunshot. The officer pulled into the parking lot where he believed the gunshot was fired from. The officer saw a subject walking quickly through the parking lot. The officer allowed the subject to approach the driver's side of the patrol car while the officer remained inside the car. The officer made contact with the subject while remaining in the patrol car. After a brief conversation, the officer exited the patrol car to interview the subject further. The officer failed to do a pat-search of the subject who was obviously nervous. The officer released the subject after determining that the subject had not committed any crime. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	Called to a silent alarm at a nearby building, the officer immediately floored the car, turned on the red lights, and ran a series of stop signs and lights. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	A new officer conducted a traffic stop on a bicycle rider. The officer failed to observe bulges in the male's pockets that appeared to hide a large metal object. The officer failed to ask the male appropriate questions concerning why he was in this particular area. He did not ask to see identification, but took the male's name down verbally. The officer let the male leave the area without conducting a pat down search based on the bulges in the male's pockets. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	In an attempt to stop a car listed as stolen, an officer fired the shotgun at the car as the squad pulled up alongside it during a chase. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	Officers from two agencies were dispatched to a "crazy person" call at an apartment complex. When they arrived, an adult male suspect jumped from a second story window. Four officers surrounded the suspect. Two of the officers had "stun bag" shotguns. When one officer grabbed the suspect, another officer from the other agency fired a stun bag, striking the officer holding the suspect on the officer's hand. The bag caused a fracture to a finger. The suspect was taken into custody without further injuries.
	In his haste to be the first at the scene of a burglary in progress, an officer endangered other persons by running a red light without caution and with a siren.
	An officer put a traffic violator, without searching him, in the squad car after determining he was wanted. After booking him, the officer found a loaded .32 caliber automatic pistol in the back seat of the squad. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	An officer arrested and searched a robbery suspect and rode with him in the back seat without using handcuffs. The suspect was later searched in jail, where a spring-loaded pen capable of firing a .38 caliber bullet was found in his shirt pocket. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**

Dimension 6: Integrity/Ethics

Integrity/Ethics involves maintaining high standards of personal conduct. It consists of attributes such as honesty, impartiality, trustworthiness, and abiding laws, regulations, and procedures. It includes:

- **Not abusing the system or using one's position for personal gain;**
- **Not bending rules or otherwise trying to beat the system; and**
- **Not engaging in illegal or immoral activities – either on or off the job.**

Positive Behaviors	• Gives honest testimony; • Prepares truthful and accurate sworn affidavits; • Does not yield to temptations of bribes, favors, gratuities, or payoffs; • Refuses to share or release confidential information; • Confronts coworkers who engage in unethical/illegal conduct; • Takes action to prevent unethical/illegal conduct by others; and • Deals honestly (although tactfully) with community, coworkers, supervisors, etc.
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Shades the truth, omits facts, makes false or misleading statements, or otherwise engages in "creative writing"; • Lies, misrepresents and commits perjury; • Lies about his/her mistakes or oversights; • Uses the badge to solicit gratuities or favors, either on or off-duty; • Steals; • Tampers with evidence, slants reports and/or provides inaccurate testimony to meet personal needs; • Uses access to confidential information for self-serving purposes; • Uses bullying, flattery, trickery, and other devious methods when uncalled for by the situation; • Breaks/bends rules, believing that the end justifies the means; • Uses the position to receive sexual and/or monetary favors; • Fraudulently reports sick and/or annual leave; • Bends rules for personal gain or satisfaction; • Abuses privileges and benefits of the job (e.g., take-home car, overtime, court time); • Resorts to "street justice" rather than adhering to laws, agency policies, etc.; • Succumbs to peer pressure to adhere to "code of silence"; • Involved in the sale or distribution of illegal drugs; • Inappropriate professional boundary issues (e.g., relationships with victims, informants); • Engages in inappropriate sexual activity (e.g., prostitutes, sex with minors); and • Transgresses professional boundaries by initiating inappropriate personal relationships with victims and others.

Effectiveness	Integrity/Ethics Critical Incidents
Very Effective	An officer's partner suggested that they help themselves to the contents of an open warehouse. He refused, but the partner did so, anyway. The officer related the incident to the captain.
	An officer who was having financial problems was offered a $100 bribe by a drunk driver, but he immediately refused the money and added attempted bribery to the charges.
	The officer gave a businessman he knew a ride home, because the man was drunk. The next day the officer received an envelope containing $200 from the businessman. The officer returned the money and explained that he took the man home because he was a friend and expected nothing for it.
Average Effectiveness	An officer was offered a $50 payoff each week if he would ignore a prostitute. The investigator took the bribe, checked the money for partials, and turned it in with a complete report to his superior.
	A man offered to pay the officer if he wouldn't enforce prostitution laws so tightly in his area. The officer refused, sent a memo to the Morals Division and observed the man even closer in the future.

Effectiveness	Integrity/Ethics Critical Incidents (cont.)
Minimally Effective	It comes to the attention of a supervisor that an officer has been using his departmental computer to access sex-related web sites on the Internet. The officer tells the supervisor that he was not on duty when he did it and that no one else was around, so he really thought he was not doing anything wrong. Other officers use the computer for some personal business such as e-mail and finding information on vacation spots and car purchases. The officer really doesn't believe that there is any difference between what he did and what others do all the time.
	A senior officer and a rookie officer respond to a burglar alarm at a theater. They find an open door, conduct a search and determine it was probably an oversight by the theater staff. While waiting for the owner to arrive, the senior officer takes popcorn from the machine and begins eating. He tells the rookie officer to help himself as the "owner doesn't mind." The rookie follows the advice of the senior officer and takes some popcorn.
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	A patrol deputy has been written up twice in one year for damaging vehicles. During a routine call, the deputy backs into a marker pole, causing minor vehicle damage. The deputy fails to report the damage as required by department policy.
	In a hotel room, a police officer arrests the suspect in a stolen credit card case. The suspect is wearing an expensive watch. There are other expensive items in the room. The officer thinks that the watch will be covered by insurance, so he makes sure the receipt is destroyed and takes the watch for himself. Besides, there is a long list of reasons for believing that the watch will make up for the debt the department and society owes the officer.
	A juvenile officer is called to a school to handle a fight between two very tough 15-year-old girls. After the initial crisis, Officer Williams befriends the tougher of the two girls and tries to help her by listening to her sad story of life at home, taking on a counseling role. One afternoon, Officer Williams offers to drive the girl home and she invites him in to see the terrible environment she lives in. With no one home, sitting on the couch, the officer kisses the girl on the lips. As a result of this incident, the girl's mother made a complaint with the police department. **Secondary Dimension: Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior**
	Officer Jim was assigned to train and assist new deputies assigned to the courthouse, including Officer Clair, a new female officer. Shortly after she was assigned to another training officer, Officer Jim began visiting her in the courthouse inmate holding tank when prisoners were not present. Ultimately, some type of relationship developed. Shortly thereafter a complaint was filed that Officer Clair had been performing acts of oral sex upon Officer Jim. Officer Jim had maintained that the sexual acts were strictly by mutual consent, but Officer Clair maintained that she performed the acts because Officer Jim was a supervisor.
	An officer working a graveyard shift stops in a city parking structure and sleeps for about 30 minutes. The officer missed a radio call, resulting in another officer needing to respond to the call. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	An officer had a significant amount to drink at a local bar. On the way home, he rear-ended another car. Upon exiting his vehicle, he was described by several witnesses as being highly intoxicated. After determining that no one was hurt, he entered his vehicle and sped off before the local law enforcement agency arrived; he did not contact them until the next day. During the investigation he denied having been drunk, contrary to several witness statements. He produced a hand written note indicating that he intended to give the accident victim his name, etc., but forgot when he left the area. He offered several reasons why he had to leave the area, none of which could be sustained or supported. **Secondary Dimension: Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior**
	The officer was in a café drinking coffee, even though he had told dispatcher he was still at an accident.
	A man and his wife were arrested for public intoxication and drunk driving and brought to the main jail. Both yelled obscenities and physically resisted officers' attempts to move either one of them within the facility. Ultimately, both had to be placed in restraint chairs due to their behavior. After booking the wife, the booking officer entered her cell. After several minutes of discussion he left and proceeded to the cell where the husband was restrained. In the presence of several officers, the officer told the husband that his wife had performed an act of oral sex on him (the officer). When the husband became enraged, the officer laughed and further taunted the husband, describing the act in more detail. Ultimately, the officer's actions were reported to his supervisor. When asked why he had felt it necessary to taunt the husband, he indicated that he wanted to be perceived as part of the team and felt that these actions would ingratiate him with the other officers.
	While the officer was in a store buying a pair of gloves, a call to search for a lost child was received. The officer's partner went into the store to tell the officer they had a call and the officer said he would be right out. However, it was another 15 minutes before he came out. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**

Effectiveness	Integrity/Ethics Critical Incidents (cont.)
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	While working a graveyard shift, an officer received a call of a burglary alarm. The officer had been sleeping and was unwilling to leave the spot his patrol unit was in. The officer copied the call. Although he radioed to have been en-route and to have arrived, in fact, the officer never left his original spot. The officer cleared the call as, "checked – false alarm."
	It was rumored that an officer was using methamphetamine. Ultimately an informant came forward and it was determined that the officer was using and possessing the drug. A search of the officer's locker revealed a small quantity of methamphetamine. The officer determined who the informant was and left a threatening message on the informant's message machine. **Secondary Dimension: Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior**
	Officers assigned to walk through a shopping area to prevent shoplifting and stickups were found playing cards in the squad, instead of patrolling. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	Two officers walked into a bar and one officer asked for a Christmas bottle for each. When his partner said, "Put mine back, I don't want it," this officer took both bottles.
	Answering a call to D.O.A., an officer told the bystanders in the apartment building to go back to their rooms, that he would handle everything. His partner asked why he was searching the apartment, and the officer replied, "You never know what you can find, especially money."
	Officer Berry had less than three years in a law enforcement organization and was assigned to a correctional institution as a sworn officer. During this time she was observed spending an inordinate amount of time with one specific inmate—talking to him in an overly friendly manner and using him to run errands or do things that would allow the inmate to be released from his cell. Shortly after the inmate's release, he was arrested for armed robbery with a firearm which was determined to be an agency weapon assigned to Officer Berry. Further investigation revealed that Officer Berry had allowed the released inmate to move into her residence where they were romantically involved. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	An officer, checking a man slumped over the wheel of his car, found the man was drunk. The officer went through the drunk's pockets and offered half to his partner.
	While on patrol, a deputy trainee makes a traffic stop and contacts the driver who has been drinking. Although he has made two previous DUI arrests, he lacked confidence during the investigations. During the traffic stop, the trainee lies and tells the FTO he has never conducted a DUI investigation.
	When the officer found he did not have enough evidence to strongly support an arrest, he fabricated information to make his case better.
	A new officer is seen "cruising" in an area of prostitution activity at night. The prostitutes begin to complain to vice officers about an "undercover" who keeps rousting them at night and asking for favors.

Dimension 7: Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance involves the ability to maintain composure and stay in control, particularly during time-critical emergency events and other stressful situations. It includes taking the negative aspects of the job in stride and maintaining an even temperament, as well as accepting criticism rather than becoming overly defensive or allowing it to hamper job performance. It includes:

- **Acceptance/ownership of personal limitations and mistakes;**
- **Ability to perform under difficult, threatening situations;**
- **Maintaining positive self-image under adverse circumstances;**
- **Maintaining even-tempered composure and demeanor; and**
- **Proper use of force.**

Positive Behaviors	• Accepts responsibility for actions and mistakes; does not routinely make excuses or blame others for own shortcomings; • Even tempered; • Uses constructive criticism to improve performance; • Makes timely, responsible decisions and actions in dangerous/crisis situations; • Can perform in the face of personal threat, where people are capable of life-threatening violence; • Stays calm in the face of verbal abuse from others; • Demonstrates emotional resilience by bouncing back from negative situations; • Accepts that system injustices and inequities are beyond their control, rather than letting them impact their emotional state and job performance; • Proper escalation and de-escalation of force; using force only when necessary, and then just the amount needed to apprehend a suspect, search the property or residence, etc.; • Handles the negative aspects of the job relatively well, without extreme negativity/cynicism; and • Curbs personal aversions (e.g., child molesters) from interfering with professional job performance.
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Never acknowledges or admits to shortcomings or mistakes; • Experiences performance-impairing mood swings; • Becomes excessively defensive or otherwise overreacts when challenged or criticized; • Consistently blames others (or circumstances) for mistakes made; • Worries excessively and enters into new situations with considerable apprehension; • Overly suspicious and distrusting in dealing with others; • Denies impact of stress-inducing incidents; • Commonly behaves with hostility and anger; • Suffers reactions to job stress, both near-term (anxiety, worry) and long-term (e.g., physical symptoms, burnout, substance abuse); • Overly self-critical of one's job performance; • Is "always right"-- not open to others' ideas, suggestions, etc.; • Argues at the drop of a hat; • Badmouths the agency and associated organizations; • Unable to cope with stress; worries excessively or suffers other signs of anxiety; • Unnecessarily confrontational and aggressive; • Comes "unglued," freezes, or otherwise performs ineffectively when feeling overloaded or stressed; • Antagonistic toward fellow officers; e.g., uses abusive, condescending language; disrespectful; • Disrupts/undermines authority (fails to successfully carry out directives; shows signs of contempt by eye rolling, excessive exhaling, etc.); • Excessive, unrestrained use of force; • Allows personal problems and stressors to bleed into behavior on the job; and • Fails to deescalate at conclusion of pursuit.

Effectiveness	Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance Critical Incidents
Very Effective	In a fight with a traffic violator, the violator knocked one officer down, took his revolver, and shot six shots at the officer's partner, hitting him four times. The wounded officer pulled his revolver and drew a bead on the violator, who then threw the empty gun down and raised his hands. The wounded officer did not fire, but instead kept the violator covered until he was in custody. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	During a minor violation traffic stop, the driver became verbally abusive toward the officer, claiming the officer was profiling him. The officer calmly explained his actions and advised the driver what was going to happen. The officer talked with the driver while conducting a DL warrant check. The driver of the car apologized to the officer at the end of the contact. **Secondary Dimension: Social Competence**
	An officer stopped a car for a traffic violation and the driver assaulted the officer with obscenities and verbal abuse. The officer wrote the tag and calmly explained why the man got the tag and how he could handle it, still amid a barrage of obscenities.
	Without losing his temper, an officer directing traffic explained to an irate motorist why he could not turn, why the traffic was so heavy, and how to reach his destination. **Secondary Dimension: Social Competence**
	Several patrol cars responded to a "man with a knife, possible mentally ill" call. Man was contained by deputies but kept them at bay by wildly swinging the knife. Lead deputy slowly advanced on the man breathing terms such as, "we don't want to hurt you; don't force us to do this; you can choose how this ends." Suspect dropped the knife and was arrested without injury to anyone. He was transported to a mental hospital for observation. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
Average Effectiveness	Officer calmly convinced a man who was pointing a rifle at him to hand it over rather than shooting the man when he had the chance. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
Minimally Effective	An officer receives a radio call of a multi-vehicle, major injury traffic collision. The officer must respond, code 3, about 10 miles away in heavy 5:00 p.m. commute traffic. The code-3 response is slow, dangerous and frustrating. The officer is among the first emergency responders. There are seven vehicles involved in this high-speed collision; the scene is spread over 300 yards and looks like a small plane crash. The officer goes to the most damaged car first to check on the occupants. When the officer looks into the car he sees the female passenger in the right front has literally disintegrated from the impact of the collision. The driver is alive, but unconscious. To the officer's horror he also sees two children, an infant and a toddler, in the back seat. The toddler is obviously dead. The infant is severely injured. The officer is, for a time, completely overwhelmed by what he sees. He cannot distinguish what to do first and experiences confusion while people at the scene are looking to him for direction and leadership.
	An officer was working on a low-priority project. Another officer had come to him complaining that equipment was not working properly and requested his assistance. The officer became agitated at the request. Seconds later the officer's supervisor came to his office and requested a report that the officer had just completed. The report was needed immediately, by a very high ranking individual within the organization. The officer became even more agitated, and animated. He began speaking quickly and began accusing the high-ranking administrator of interfering with his ability to do his job. His supervisor had to place his hand on the officer's shoulder to calm him down. The supervisor then prioritized the items to be done and had the officer complete them.
	A young man with a revolver holds up a parking lot attendant. As soon as the call is broadcast, eight patrol units respond to the area searching for the suspect. One officer spots him, gets out of his vehicle and begins a foot pursuit. The officer is in good physical shape and quickly closes in on the suspect inside a fire station. Seeing the revolver in the suspect's hand, the officer draws his pistol and aims at the suspect at the same time that he is yelling commands to stop. As if in slow motion, the suspect runs into a 6'4", 230-lb. firefighter and is knocked to the ground; the revolver slides across the smooth fire station floor and comes to rest under a wheeled tool chest. After the suspect is subdued and handcuffed, the pursuing officer goes over to the suspect and grabs him by the throat and screams, "Don't you know that I almost killed you!" For the next few seconds, he continues to scream and choke the suspect as the other officers stand and watch.
	A narcotic investigator conducted a multiple day investigation that resulted in his obtaining a search warrant for a residence inside which narcotics were suspected to be. Upon service of the warrant, several officers entered the residence and confronted multiple suspects. It was determined that suspects had successfully flushed most of the narcotics. The lead investigator became frustrated and took off his ballistic helmet and threw it against the living room wall.

Effectiveness	Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance Critical Incidents (cont.)
Minimally Effective	Officer who is having trouble on the FTO program keeps a detailed notebook and writes down negative things that officer sees or hears other officers do, especially other FTO's. In counseling/remediation sessions, officer brings up deficiencies of other officers and compares their behavior/actions to hers. Officer makes allegation of bias against her by her FTO's.
	During the training program, the officer trainee would become upset with himself for making simple mistakes. The trainee would strike himself in the face (very hard) and say, "That was a stupid mistake." The trainee was ultimately let go from the training program.
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	A new officer became so stressed over the criticism by his training officer that little criticisms began to overwhelm him. He started displaying signs of stress, i.e., muscle rigidity, sweating, and disorientation.
	During final week in FTO program, an officer receives a final bad evaluation. After signing the evaluation, the officer goes out in police parking lot (nighttime) and throws a tantrum, cursing, swearing, punching the air with fists, blaming others and alleging being treated unfairly.
	While his partner was trying to coax a girl who had severely cut her arm to go to the hospital, the officer began yelling at her that if she didn't go he'd book her.
	During a traffic stop in a residential neighborhood at night, a bystander threw a tire iron at an officer, hitting him on the leg. A bystander had been standing in front of an open garage door. The officer ran after the suspect, but the suspect escaped by climbing over a fence. The officer went into the garage and used a tool to scratch up a pool table.
	An officer was involved in a pursuit of a vehicle whose driver was wanted on criminal charges. The pursuit was at extreme high rates of speed over some distance, often narrowly missing innocent vehicles or endangering the community. Several times the suspect driver narrowly missed a patrol officer or appeared to deliberately try to run the officer off the road. Finally, the pursuit ended without injury. The officer leaned down and, in an almost screaming voice, began swearing at the suspect, using the "F" word several times. Finishing, the officer turned and walked away. As he passed the prone suspect, the left side of the officer's left foot was observed to strike the suspect in the face.
	An officer was questioned by his FTO about his reason for conducting a pedestrian contact. The officer became argumentative and took a defensive posture, even after legal opinions from a source book proved his mistake.
	A new officer is young, single, "hyper" personality who talks very fast. Officer starts having minor traffic accidents in a short period of time, with speed as the primary collision factor. Officer is sent to remedial driver training 2 times. Officer was always making excuses for actions; feels he is being singled out by management.
	Two officers who work in adjoining districts respond to a domestic violence call together. It becomes apparent that the male half of the call needs to be transported to jail. While the officers are attempting to take the suspect into custody, a fight ensues. One of the officers backs away from the struggle and begins to cry, leaving the second officer to take the resisting subject into custody alone.
	A deputy was patrolling a 2-block area looking for a victim that may have been hit with a baseball bat. A block from the general area, he saw the red lights of a fire truck. Thinking EMT personnel had found the victim, he drove there. As he drove up people were screaming and pointing over the fence. The deputy froze. He did not know what to do next. He could not operate the radio, determine where he was, deal with screaming people or EMT personnel or direct incoming personnel. In addition, he could not compare incidents and determine that the accident was unrelated to his baseball bat call.
	A new officer was sent to a gang fight at a local park. When he arrived, there were subjects running from the police and other gang members were still in the area, needing to be detained. The officer froze near his patrol vehicle and did not assist any officers, nor did he attempt to apprehend any fleeing gang members.
	A deputy was working in the correction division. He was very quiet and reserved, and hesitant to get into any type of confrontation with inmates. An incident occurred where a resisting inmate had to be taken down and restrained. The deputy was very hesitant to get involved with the officers. When he did help, he completely overreacted and started beating inmates. He had to be physically restrained by other officers.
	An officer, who is a lateral officer from another department, is having problems in FTO program. Officer is very sociable, chatty, and asks many personal questions regarding other officers in department. Makes many excuses for poor performance and attributes same to personality differences with her FTOs rather than her demonstrated performance.
	While an officer was writing out a traffic citation for speeding, a young man walking by asked the officer what he was doing. The officer replied, "None of your goddam business what I'm doing" and told the young man to "get his ass in gear and get along."

Effectiveness	Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance Critical Incidents (cont.)
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	An officer went through a stress training class. In one scenario, he encountered a van and was killed (ambushed). One year later, the officer encountered a van along side of a road, very similar to scenario. Officer kept repeating that if he approached the van, he would be killed and froze on the spot.
	While taking a very hostile and belligerent man to jail, the officer purposely threw him against the wall.
	After four officers had subdued a violent mental patient, the officer stood over him, threatening to club him with a nightstick and thus throwing the patient into another fit of rage.
	The officer jumped on and knocked down the boy in a boy/girl domestic, because he spoke obscenely to the girl as he left.
	A new deputy in the FTO program has been counseled for his lack of initiative on several occasions. Following a poor evaluation, the deputy has difficulty driving the patrol car under normal conditions that he previously did not have a problem with.
	An officer called to help arrest a felon began grabbing people out of the crowd that had gathered when he was called obscene names by the crowd. He aggravated a tense situation that resulted in arrests and damage to squads. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	A new trainee was told to arrest a male subject who failed to appear at jail to turn himself in per court order. The trainee broke down crying, stating he felt like an asshole for having to arrest subject. He couldn't do it.
	A man stopped after being chased at high speed. Even though the situation was in hand, an officer from a second squad that pulled up began beating the man.

Dimension 8: Decision-Making/Judgment

Decision-Making/Judgment involves common sense, "street smarts," and the ability to make sound decisions, demonstrated by the ability to size up situations quickly to determine and take the appropriate action. It also involves the ability to sift through information to glean that which is important, and, once identified, to use that information effectively. It includes:

- **Thinking on one's feet, using practical judgment and efficient problem solving;**
- **Prioritizing competing demands;**
- **Developing creative and innovative solutions to problems;**
- **Basing decisions on the collection and consideration of important information; and**
- **Applying deductive and inductive reasoning, as necessary.**

Positive Behaviors	• Gathers and critically evaluates important information before deciding on a course of action; • Knows when to confront—and when to back away from—potentially volatile situations; • Makes timely, sound decisions on the spot, if necessary, even in situations where information is incomplete and/or conflicting; • Can step into a tense situation involving several people and figure out what probably led up to that point in time, as well as what is likely to happen as the situation unfolds; • Expediently sizes up situations and identifies the underlying problem(s); • Generates new, creative/innovative ideas and solutions to situations and problems when necessary/advantageous; • Applies lessons learned from past mistakes/experiences when faced with similar problems; • Can identify similarities and differences between situations confronted on a regular basis; • Uses a methodical, step-by-step approach to solve complex problems, as appropriate; • Comprehends and retains a good deal of factual information, and is able to recall information pertaining to community concerns, laws, codes, etc.; and • Selects an approach that is lawful as well as optimal for the situation.
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Succumbs to "analysis paralysis:" inability to make decisions when options are not clear-cut or obvious; • Unable or unwilling to make "midcourse corrections" on initial course of action when presented with new information or when circumstances change; • Naive, overly trusting, easily duped; • Has tunnel vision; does not see the big picture when analyzing information; and • Fails to identify patterns and implications when analyzing information.

Effectiveness	Decision-Making/Judgment Critical Incidents
Very Effective	At an unlocked County Children's Shelter for 300 W&I juveniles, the juveniles are constantly leaving the facility, causing the officers/dispatchers to take missing children reports and causing problems for the surrounding neighborhood; they loiter, cause vandalism, disturbances, theft, and sometimes are victimized. The beat officer became tired of chasing the juveniles around the neighborhood. She thought about the causes for the kids leaving, and what would inspire them to stay. She decided to offer a "make-up" class for the girls. The only requirement was that they could not escape from the shelter if they wanted to attend the weekly classes. The girls wanted to attend the class, so they stopped running away. The boys stayed because they wanted to be with the girls. The runaway rate dropped to zero for a while.
	At a propane gas tank leak, the officer requested cars to block specific intersections. He then shut down two nearby companies and began evacuating the area, all before receiving orders from his supervisor.
	Call of 5150 male under influence of meth. Officers respond and confront subject in field. Subject pulls knife and threatens to kill self or officers. He repeatedly advances toward or walks away from officers with knife. Officer effectively dealt with subject's mood swings with his verbal, psych, and physical skills. Supervisor ultimately shot subject in chest with beanbag round, dropping subject immediately to ground. Officers were able to cuff subject and make scene safe.
	When the officer saw the criminal he and his partner had been tailing was about to shoot his partner, he yelled the criminal's name, which fouled his shot, saving the partner's life.
	When the officer spotted a stolen car, he requested other squads' help in apprehension to avoid a high-speed chase on his own. The auto was stopped and suspects arrested.
	Two one-man cars responded to a family disturbance involving a violent drunk. The drunk had armed himself with a broken beer bottle and began advancing on one deputy in a threatening manner. Second deputy approached drunk from the rear and used his baton to break the beer bottle, rendering it useless as a weapon. The drunk was arrested with neither injury to him nor to the involved deputies.
	An officer entered a burning apartment building and went through the smoke-filled halls awakening residents and helping the elderly to safety until he was relieved by the fire department.
	Arriving at a house with two burning firebombs on the front porch, the officer evacuated the house, contacted the fire department, and extinguished the flames with dirt
	To arrest a man without a fight at a domestic, the officer explained that by law he had to arrest the man, that he would call more officers if need be, and that the man might get hurt if he put up a fight. **Secondary Dimension: Assertiveness/Persuasiveness**
	Responding to a call about a burning car, an officer, noticing a fire near the gas tank, evacuated the area of bystanders and contacted the fire department.
	The officer remembered seeing a car that matched the description of one used in a robbery. He found the car where he had seen it and tailed its occupants until other squads arrived to effect the arrest. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	A squad car responded to a shooting incident at a house. The officer stopped his partner from running in the front door and advised him to proceed slowly by looking in windows, etc.
	The officer asked the Park Board to set up a football team at a neighborhood park for youngsters who were just hanging around a drive in.
	After finding footprints leading up to a wall of a warehouse, but no prints leading away, an officer called for a dog and a key for the warehouse. A burglar who had scaled the wall and entered through a ventilator shaft was found inside.
Average Effectiveness	Officer Brown was dispatched to a "man under the train" call at the downtown subway station. Officer Brown arrived on scene immediately as he was on routine patrol at that station. There, he saw a man lying beneath the train. The train car had severed the man's legs, but the man was conscious. Officer Brown requested a code 3 fire and paramedic response. He also requested that electrical power be turned off as it posed an additional threat to the victim and arriving fire/paramedic personnel. Officer Brown then began collecting witnesses to the incident.
	The officer, pulling into a gas station late at night, observed men leaving the station but he did not see the station attendant who was usually in sight. He requested assistance, pursued the men, and arrested them for robbery.

Effectiveness	Decision-Making/Judgment Critical Incidents (cont.)
Minimally Effective	A trainee was responding to a carjacking in progress. This was his first code-3 run with his current FTO. Trainee came to intersection with traffic backup for about 50 yards--trainee attempted to go over center divider into oncoming traffic. (Oncomers would not be able to see the unit approach the intersection.) FTO had to intervene to stop him. Trainee then became upset at FTO for not letting him go code 3. **Secondary Dimension: Impulse Control/Attention to Safety**
	A new officer, in training, is instructed by the Field Training Officer to take enforcement action on all vehicle stops. This officer has made vehicle stops during the two weeks prior, but has not taken any enforcement action. During the next vehicle stop, the driver of the vehicle is driving on a suspended license and makes an illegal turn. The officer returns to the FTO and recommends that they let the man go with a warning, since he has small children at home.
	An officer makes a traffic stop and arrests the driver for outstanding warrants. While transporting the suspect to jail, the officer hears a vehicle pursuit being broadcast in his general vicinity. The officer, with the prisoner in the car, joins in the pursuit.
	Citizens reported a group of subjects were dealing drugs in a residential area. The officer arrived on scene and made contact with six subjects. The officer asked for identification. Two of the subjects said that their identificati**on** *was inside* of their cars. The officer allowed the two subjects to go to their car and get their ID. While the subjects were walking to their cars, the officers recognized the possible dangers and followed the two subjects. While following the two subjects, the officer turned his back on the other four subjects and walked away from them. The officer recognized that he could not keep an eye on all parties and began to panic, not knowing what to do. **Secondary Dimension: Impulse Control/Attention to Safety**
	A young man with a medical disability has had two prior minor traffic collisions. On the third collision the officer determines that there may be reason to fill out a report that calls for a hearing at the Department of Motor Vehicles. The father of the young man is in the car and pleads with the officer not to fill out the report knowing that a revocation of the license would dramatically affect the life of his son. The officer feels sorry about the son's condition and decides not to write the report. As a consequence, the young man is involved in yet another collision and an innocent child is seriously injured.
	Citizen reported a child abuse was occurring involving a 13-year-old who he knew had a mental disorder and needed to be watched continuously. The officer began to investigate the complaint. The officer determined that child abuse was in fact being committed. The officer left the mentally handicapped child alone and out of his sight while talking with child protective services. The child ran out of the back door and was trying to climb over a rear fence when other officers arrived and stopped the child.
	While interviewing a suspect arrested based on information supplied by an informant, the officer revealed the identity of the informant to the suspect.
	During an investigation of a child custody dispute, a new officer: (1) failed to talk to the parties involved separately; (2) let the parties tell their sides in a narrative format but did not ask any follow-up questions; (3) did not inquire about court orders, and did not explain the law. Therefore, only the facts that the parties wanted to give were made known. Since the parties were not interviewed separately, each knew what the other side was going to say and could craft their statements around each other. As it turned out, there was an old court order that the officer never found out about. As a result the officer almost allowed the children to leave with an unsuitable parent. She did not explain the law about violations of court orders, child concealment laws, and general harassment and disturbance guidelines. **Secondary Dimension: Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	A "code 3/officer needs emergency assistance" was broadcast. The new officer was on a shoplifter-in-custody call. He heard the call but thought that since he was on another call he was committed to that particular call. The officer had to be told to clear the shoplifter call and proceed to the officer needs assistance call. He then drove in a casual manner from the shopping center. He had to be told to drive code 3 and about the seriousness of the situation.
	The new officer heard a radio request for back up by another nearby officer. The officer could not find the location. He took his time and did not communicate his location or ask for directions over the radio. Although he was the closest unit to respond, he was the last to arrive at the requesting officer's location. As a result, the new officer's lack of timely response, ineffective radio and location awareness skills and poor decision-making skills in a critical back-up request caused other officers' lives to be unnecessarily exposed to increased danger. **Secondary Dimensions: Teamwork and Conscientiousness/Dependability**
	An officer is watching the fare gates at the local subway station. At that time, he sees a juvenile slide under the fare gate to exit the subway system (a crime of fare evasion). The officer pursues the juvenile to street level and the juvenile begins to skate away on the skateboard. The officer yells to the juvenile to stop. Thinking quickly, the officer draws his straight baton and throws it at the juvenile. The juvenile avoids the baton and crashes off the skateboard into the street. The officer arrests the juvenile.

Effectiveness	Decision-Making/Judgment Critical Incidents (cont.)
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	A burglar who was being transported to jail asked how the officer had known he had broken in. The officer explained all about silent alarms—how they worked, how to spot them, etc.—educating him for his next job.
	Officer Jones was an 18-month officer assigned to the main jail who was known as an aggressive officer with a personality that saw things as being black or white. His enforcement of the jail rules resulted in a number of grievances from the inmates regarding absolute, rigid enforcement of rules. Many times Officer Jones's enforcement was done with no regard to common sense or understanding of the long-term repercussions of the decision. When "critiqued" regarding his decisions, Officer Jones would refer to the Department General Orders or the Jail Operations Orders and weaker sergeants were known to back down from him for fear of contravening the "rules." In one such incident, Officer Jones had removed a very large, muscular double-homicide suspect from his cell on the pretext of counseling him. Officer Jones was aware of a written rule allowing officers to remove individuals from their cells for the purpose of discussion or counseling. A non-written rule was in effect that when this individual was away from his cell he was to have a supervisor present at all times, but the written rules made no mention of a supervisor's presence. A supervisor happened to be on the scene as Officer Jones was yelling at the inmate and, in essence, intimidating him. The supervisor quickly de-escalated the situation and after much discussion convinced the inmate to return to his cell. When questioned about this, the officer immediately quoted the Jail Operations Manual giving him the authority to "counsel" the inmate. Since the other rule was not in writing, he felt no necessity to contact a supervisor. **Secondary Dimension: Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance**
	A new officer detains a suspicious person and asks him if he can perform a protective pat search. The person responds, "No." The officer freezes, and cannot remember search and seizure laws or recall any reason to search this individual anyway.
	Officer applied unnecessary physical force before verbal control methods were exhausted.
	Without waiting for cover cars, the officer kicked down the door of an apartment where an armed hold-up man was hiding.
	When a traffic violator would not stop though pursued by the officers with the lights and siren on, one officer fired a warning shot. **Secondary Dimension: Impulse Control/Attention to Safety**
	Officer drove sometimes in a reckless manner that caused him to crash the police car a total of six (6) times. These accidents were deemed "preventable." The cause of most of these accidents was lack of attention to his surroundings. **Secondary Dimension: Impulse Control/Attention to Safety**

Dimension 9: Assertiveness/Persuasiveness

Assertiveness/Persuasiveness involves unhesitatingly taking control of situations in a calm and appropriately assertive manner, even under dangerous or adverse conditions. It includes the ability to:

- **Confront individuals when appropriate;**
- **Act assertively and without hesitation;**
- **Not be easily intimidated;**
- **Use force, including deadly force, when necessary;**
- **Assert ideas and persuade others to adopt desired course of action;**
- **Command respect; and**
- **Emanate professional pride and demeanor.**

Note: Extreme dominance and overaggression are not part of this dimension; rather, they are included as anger control in Emotional Regulation and Stress Tolerance (Dimension 7), and overbearing insensitivity in Social Competence (Dimension 1).

Dimension 9: Assertiveness/Persuasiveness	
Positive Behaviors	• Takes effective, expedient action in crisis situations; • Unhesitatingly intervenes in situations when necessary or warranted; • Confronts problems, even in potentially volatile situations; doesn't back away unless tactically necessary; • Able to persuade/mediate disputes and conflicts; • Able to use voice commands to control conflict, speaking calmly, clearly and authoritatively; • Can appropriately take control in group situations, coordinating resources, etc.; • Judicious and discrete in the exercise of peace officer powers; and • Confronts fellow officers who abuse authority or engage in other inappropriate acts.
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Delays acting in crisis, time-critical situations until every fact is known and a total picture of the situation is formed; • Displays submissiveness and insecurity when confronting challenging or threatening situations; • Is hesitant to exert influence in uncomfortable/stressful situations; • Overbearingly takes over control of situations, thereby escalating tensions and risks; • Avoids interpersonal conflict at all costs; • Fails to take action when required or requested; and • Overly concerned with the negative reactions of others.

Effectiveness	Assertiveness/Persuasiveness Critical Incidents
Very Effective	While watching a parade, an old man collapsed. An officer rushed up, pushed the crowd back, gave mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and saved the man's life. **Secondary Dimension: Decision-Making and Judgment**
	The officer immediately rushed to his partner's assistance when a man jumped his partner after getting out of his car.
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	Trainee and FTO respond to a burglary alarm at a jewelry store. They arrive within 10 seconds and find the front door unlocked and open. After a perimeter is set, FTO and trainee start to enter the store and search for suspects. Trainee starts to enter the store with her/his weapon holstered. FTO tells trainee to unholster his/her weapon because they will be searching for possible burglars. Trainee and FTO enter the store, and trainee has weapon pointed down and close to his/her body in a non-shooting position. FTO discusses with trainee following the search of the store. Trainee states he fears for their safety, as someone might be able to overpower them, take their gun and shoot them.
	A new officer was reluctant to initiate traffic stops and pedestrian contacts. He felt uncomfortable in enforcement situations when he had to issue citations or make arrests, because he felt for the violator.
	An officer responds to a report of drunk male in street. He walks up to male and tells him he is under arrest and stands there. Drunk subject notices officer not doing anything, so turns and runs. Officer chases and catches up with subject. Officer stands there and doesn't try to place under arrest, so subject runs again. Officer catches up with subject again who turns and takes fighting stance. Citizen comes to officer's aid and they both wrestle subject to ground. Officer is able to take subject into custody.
	FTO and trainee respond to disturbance call with multiple subjects in street. Trainee gets out of vehicle with FTO. Several subjects are arguing in the street. Trainee stands there with notebook in hand, doesn't move. FTO advises trainee to handle situation. Trainee just freezes. **Secondary Dimension: Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance**
	Two officers were sent to a domestic violence call. They located the suspect (husband) driving in the area. They followed him and initiated a car stop. As one officer approached the suspect, he began to run. The officer caught up with him and the suspect resisted the arrest. They fell to the ground and began to fight. The other new officer stood about 10 feet away and failed to help take the suspect into custody.

Dimension 10: Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior	
Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior involves avoiding participation in behavior that is inappropriate, self-damaging, and can adversely impact organizational functioning. This includes alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, sale of drugs, and gambling.	
Counterproductive Behaviors	• Abuses alcohol and legally prescribed drugs (e.g., pain killers, steroids); • Uses illegal drugs; • Misses work due to alcohol use; • Drinks alcohol on duty; • Arrives at work intoxicated/smelling of alcohol or hung-over; • Involved in and/or arrested for off-duty incidents; • History of DUI arrests; • Gambles to the point of causing harm to oneself; • Engages in self-destructive coping behaviors; and • Commits domestic violence.
Effectiveness	**Avoiding Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior Critical Incidents**
Minimally Effective	After a long day at the office, the boss invites office staff to nearest bar for martinis. The staff consumes several martinis with the boss, then leaves the bar and drives home, even though still under influence of alcohol consumed earlier.
Grossly Ineffective, Disruptive and/or Counterproductive	After a 3 - 4 year career, officer is sued, along with other officers and the department, in federal court for Civil Rights violation after pursuing a reckless driver who crashes his vehicle and is paralyzed. Officer begins to drink heavily, fights with partner officer in bar room when off duty and ultimately is terminated (or resigns). **Secondary Dimension: Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance**

Methodological and Statistical Limitations of Research on Psychological Prediction of Police Performance

The POST job analysis provided compelling, content-based evidence of the importance of the psychological dimensions for peace officer performance. However, as described earlier, these results are not always borne out by evidence from empirical validation research. The incongruent and at times contradictory results of this body of research can be attributed in large part to conceptual, methodological and psychometric impediments and statistical artifacts. As noted in the *Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures* (APA, 2018a), "a predictor cannot correlate with a criterion unless there is some conceptual relationship between their respective constructs. Theoretically unrelated constructs may, however, correlate empirically with each other as a result of (a) the constructs having been measured with the same measurement method and/or (b) the constructs and/or measurement methods sharing the same extraneous contaminants" (p. 9). Thus, the most common methodological and statistical limitations plaguing single-study research include the following:

Variable Construct Naming

As discussed earlier, test publishers and researchers often operationalize constructs and test scales differently from one another. There are instances where the same labels are used to name different constructs, and different labels are given to the same constructs. As a result, there is no assurance that two scales with similar labels or definitions are measuring the same construct.

Focus on Tests vs. Constructs

A significant amount of research has focused on how specific tests perform per se, rather than on the validity of the constructs underlying the test scales. This is especially true of the many studies that seek to identify an optimum combination of scales of a particular test for predicting performance criteria.

Limited Sample Sizes

Many studies are limited by small sample sizes, reducing the likelihood of obtaining accurate results or consistent findings across single studies. Smaller sample sizes result in effect-size estimates that vary significantly across studies and less precise estimates of the reliabilities of scores on both the criteria and predictors. The risk of capitalization on chance also increases when multiple predictors and/or complex analyses are used on comparatively small samples.

Range Restriction

A validity coefficient represents the covariation between a predictor and a criterion. Restriction in the range of scores on either or both of these variables reduces the magnitude and significance of the validity coefficients. Studies on the psychological prediction of peace officer behavior have suffered from such restriction in range. This is understandable, as pre-selection factors (e.g., minimum qualifying standards, such as high school diploma or GED, no felony convictions, no recent illegal drug use) remove ineligible candidates from the hiring pool. Even more candidates are screened out during earlier phases of the hiring process, particularly the oral interview, background investigation, and/or medical evaluation, thereby restricting the range of scores to those primarily healthy candidates who remain in the hiring pool (Costello, Schneider, & Schoenfeld, 1993; Sellbom, Fischler, & Ben-Porath, 2007).

The elimination of candidates found psychologically unsuitable from the candidate pool results in further range restriction in the criterion, since no job performance data can be collected on those individuals. Besides hampering the ability to detect significant relationships, this can lead to erroneous interpretations of subclinical elevations, failure to recognize and interpret meaningful subclinical scores, and/or over-reliance on validity scales measuring socially desirable responding (where there is no range restriction) as a basis for determining psychological unsuitability. Using statistical formulas derived from Hunter and Schmidt (2004), it is possible to correct for (i.e., disattenuate) range-restricted correlations—a procedure introduced by Sellbom and colleagues (2007) for correcting range-restricted correlations between MMPI scores and post-hire performance measures of police officers, and which has now become routine in studies of the association between test scores obtained after a conditional offer of employment and various post-employment variables (e.g., Roberts, Tarescavage, Ben-Porath, & Roberts, 2018; Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015; Tarescavage, Corey, Gupton, & Ben-Porath, 2015).

Methodological Constraints

The choice of a methodology and, in particular, how variables are measured, can impact the likelihood of detecting significant relationships. For example, dichotomizing the criterion (e.g., into officers who have had traffic accidents and those who have not) truncates the range of scores, resulting in range restriction. Conversely, contrasted group designs can artificially maximize the likelihood that a significant result will be found.

Low Base Rates

A base rate represents the behavior's actual rate of occurrence in the population of interest. For example, the base rate of police brutality indicates the number of times police use excessive force compared to the overall number of times the police encounter members of the public. Prediction is most accurate when the base rate of an occurrence approaches 50%; lower base rates make it increasingly difficult to accurately predict that behavior. Most acts of counterproductive job behavior have an extremely low base rate; for example, the base rate of peace officer integrity violations is estimated to be 5% or lower (Cuttler & Muchinsky, 2006). Predicting these psychologically relevant but infrequent behaviors is extremely difficult.

Criteria

Relative to the choice of predictors, comparatively little attention has been paid to what is being predicted, resulting in criterion measures ranging from subjective measures of job

performance—both positive and negative—to outcome measures such as absenteeism, awards, citizens' complaints, etc. Not infrequently, criteria appear to have been chosen for their convenience rather than their relevance to the psychological constructs being examined, the particular focus of the research itself, or the psychometric properties (for example, reliability[38]) of the measures chosen.

POST Meta-Analysis

The goal of the POST meta-analysis was to summarize the large volume of research on psychological predictors of peace officer behaviors and aggregate the data from across these studies to assess the empirical support for the POST Dimensions as constructs for predicting a variety of peace officer performance criteria. Rather than validate or endorse specific psychological instruments, the meta-analysis focused instead on providing evidence for the psychological constructs assessed by those measures.

Meta-analysis is a statistical procedure that aggregates results across single studies in order to derive an estimate of the "true" correlation between two constructs (e.g., a predictor and a criterion); that is, when the correlation is not affected by statistical artifacts such as sampling error, unreliability in the criterion, and range restriction. The results of a meta-analysis include "rho" (ρ), the estimated population value (i.e., true correlation also referred to as the operational validity) of the predictor-criterion relationship being estimated by the cumulation of multiple studies, and various indices estimating the variability around that population estimate.

The validity of a meta-analysis depends on a literature search that is both comprehensive and representative. Accordingly, the POST study began with a comprehensive literature search to locate all studies reporting a correlation, or any information that could be converted into a correlation (e.g., t-values), between personality scales and work-related variables for police officers (e.g., job performance, supervisory ratings of interpersonal skills, productivity, promotions, counterproductive behaviors). The search of relevant computerized databases (PsychLit, Social Sciences Index, and Dissertation Abstracts) was supplemented by a manual search of relevant journals. To avoid distortion of results by relying on published sources, personality test publishers and authors were asked to provide technical reports containing relevant data. Several unpublished, proprietary data files were also made available under the condition that they be kept confidential.

Coding the studies involved extracting correlations and reliability information. If the primary studies did not report the necessary statistics or provide information about their study design and other potentially important variables, the authors of the original studies were contacted to obtain the necessary information and in some instances to obtain their original databases.

Over 120 pieces of information were coded from the collected studies, including:

- Predictors
- Criteria
- Validities
- Reliabilities
- Study design characteristics
- Potential moderators
- Sample characteristics
- Range restriction information

Over 1,700 studies were reviewed. Studies were excluded from the database if they (1) failed to report the size of insignificant correlations, (2) reported only median correlations, or (3) reported only statistics other than correlations and the missing information could not be obtained from the study's author(s).

The resulting database consisted of 229 independent studies/databases, yielding over 6,000 validity coefficients. The database included studies published through 2001; the majority of the studies were published in the 1980s and 1990s. Sources of data were predominately scholarly journals (51.3%), dissertations (34.5%), and technical reports (9.2%). A large proportion of studies reported data from more than one sample—the average number of samples in a given study was 1.54. Furthermore, for each sample, multiple criterion-related validity coefficients were reported, representing different predictor scale-criterion combinations (average = 18.78 coefficients per study).

[38] See Viswesvaran, Ones, and Schmidt (1996).

Predictors

To maintain consistency with the larger body of scientific literature, predictor variables were organized by linking individual written test scales to the POST Dimensions, which were themselves categorized according to the Five-Factor dimensions of personality. Many individual test scales represented combinations of two or more of the Big Five (for example, a "self-control" scale contains items related to both Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability); therefore, categorizing any one personality scale or attribute into a single Big Five factor was not feasible. To remedy this problem, a working taxonomy developed by Hough and Ones (2001) was used to organize the POST Dimensions into the Big Five. The Hough and Ones working taxonomy provides a set of "compound" personality attributes, most of which are a combination of Big Five factors (Ones & Viswesvaran, 2001). For example, the personality attribute of "Integrity" includes aspects of Emotional Stability, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (Ones, 1993). Table 4.10 displays the categorization of the POST Dimensions into the compound personality trait schema. Individual scale scores for each personality test that served as predictor data for the meta-analysis were organized according to these categories.

Table 4.10

Categorization of Scale Score Data Based on POST Psychological Screening Dimensions and Big Five Compound Traits

POST Psychological Dimension	Big Five Variables*	Compound Trait Name
Social Competence	A Nurturance	Nurturance
	EX+ A+	Warmth
	ES+ A+	Trust
	OE+ A+	Tolerance
	A+ C+	Lack of Aggression
Teamwork	A	Agreeableness
Adaptability/Flexibility	OE Complexity	Complexity
	OE+C-	Non-traditionalism
	EX+C-	Autonomy
Conscientiousness/Dependability	C	Conscientiousness
	C Dependability	Dependability
	C Achievement	Achievement
	C Order	Order
	C Persistence	Persistence
	EX+ C+	Ambition
Impulse Control	C Impulse Control	Impulse Control
Integrity/Ethics	ES+A+C+	Socialization
Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance	ES	Emotional Stability
	ES Self Esteem	Self-Esteem
	ES Low Anxiety	Low Anxiety
	ES Even Tempered	Even Tempered
	ES+C+	Self-Control
Decision-making/Judgment	OE Creative/Innovation	Creative/Innovation
	OE Intellect	Intellect
Assertiveness/Persuasiveness	EX Dominance	Dominance
	EX Activity	Activity
	ES+EX+C+	Fair and Stable Leadership
Substance Abuse/Other Risk-Taking Behavior	EX+OE+C-	Thrill Seeking
	ES-Ex+C-	Self-Destructive Autonomy

**A = Agreeableness; C = Conscientiousness; Ex = Extraversion; Es = Emotional Stability; OE = Openness to Experience; + = positive amount of attribute; - = negative amount of attribute*

Criteria

To assess the usefulness of the POST Dimensions for predicting different peace officer behaviors, performance and outcome criteria were organized into meaningful and practical categories. Table 4.11 provides a detailed list of specific criterion indices underlying each category of performance.

Analysis

The POST meta-analysis was conducted according to the procedures described in Hunter and Schmidt (1990). Corrections for statistical artifacts were computed using artifact distributions, relying on published literature for predictor (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2001) and criterion unreliability distributions (Ones et al., 1993; Salgado, 2002). Meta-analytic validity estimates were corrected for range restriction in the predictor and/or criterion and for criterion unreliability where possible. Estimates of standard deviations were corrected for sampling error, range restriction, and unreliability in the predictor and criterion.

Table 4.11
POST Meta-Analysis Performance Criteria

Job Performance		
Overall	Overall Job Performance	Supervisory ratings; effective behavior; composite effectiveness; performance evaluation rating; "success" as a police officer; field performance; job proficiency
	Training Performance	Final training grade; instructor's ratings; academy performance; academic average; GPA; examination scores
Facets of Performance	Task Performance	Performance on traffic enforcement; station duties; special duty assignments; accident scene duties; court preparation & testimony; crime scene duties; handling disturbances; patrol duties; apprehension & arrest; investigating and interviewing; keeping records, reports, paperwork; patrol; driving; emergency incident management; controlling stress situations; emergency medical care; use of police protective equipment; enforcement tactics/high risk and/or felony stops; suspect interview interrogation; report writing; firearms use; equipment use
	Interpersonal Performance	Relations with citizens; citizen interactions; relations with co-workers; control of conflict; Interpersonal relations with departmental employees, allied agencies, community groups and violators; appropriate assertiveness; social sensitivity; customer service skills; approachability; public relations; directing others; perceptiveness, cooperation, tolerance; responsiveness to supervision; dealing with public
	Teamwork	Working with others; teamwork; working with fellow officers
Outcomes of Performance	Awards/Commendations	Awards; commendations; personal accomplishments; formal written commendations; number of awards received; appreciative letters; positive reports
Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWB)		
General CWB	Counterproductive Work Behaviors	Unethical behavior; favoritism/discrimination; firearms misuse; theft; excessive, unnecessary force; impulsive behavior problems; inappropriate aggressive interactions with others; negligence; delinquency; violent behavior; anger management problems; integrity problems; conduct mistakes; misuse of official vehicles; damage or destruction of official property; neglect of duty; inappropriate sexual behavior, harassment; insubordination; failure to comply with department regulations
Facets of CWB	Withdrawal Behaviors (Absenteeism and Lateness)	Absences; sick days; lateness; withdrawal behaviors
	Substance Abuse	Alcohol abuse; substance abuse; illegal drug use
Outcomes of CWB	Citizen Complaints	Complaints received; complaints sustained; citizen complaints; complaint letters; grounded complaints
	Disciplinary Actions	Disciplinary actions; reprimands; negative reports; assignment to restricted duty; number of corrective interviews; negative actions; suspensions; disciplinary days; disciplinary memos

Results

Appendix J presents the complete set of meta-analysis results across all predictors and all criteria. What follows is a discussion of results for each criterion and predictor category.

Results by Criteria: Job Performance and Counterproductive Work Behaviors

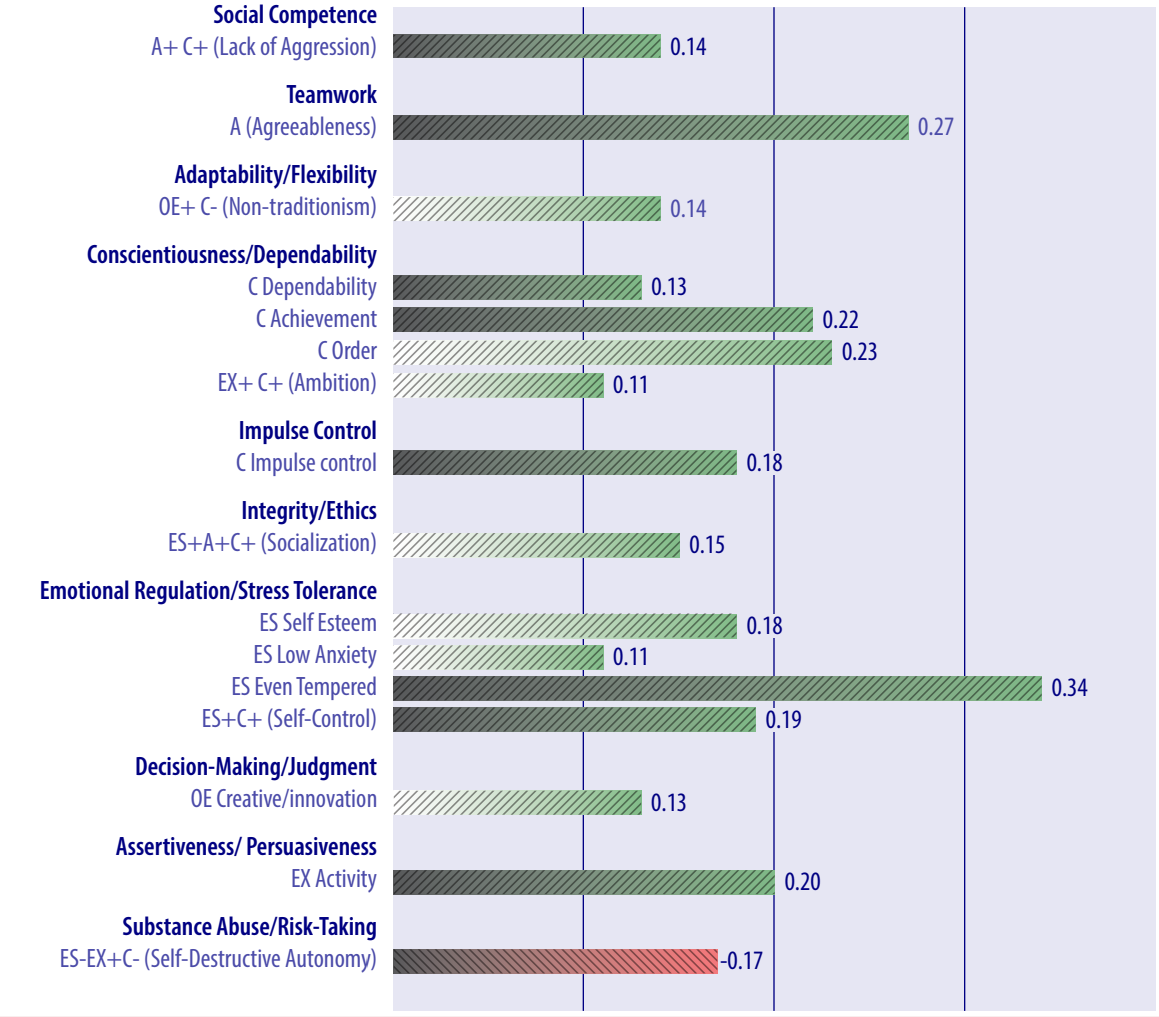
For each category of criteria, validity estimates that are significant and that generalize across studies, are displayed graphically in Figures 4.1 through 4.9. Positive correlations between the predictors and criteria are displayed in green; negative correlations are depicted in red. Validity estimates that were found to generalize across studies are depicted as green/black and red/black; estimates that are notable but that do not generalize are depicted as green/white and red/white.

Job Performance

Overall Job Performance (Figure 4.1): Overall Job Performance was predicted by scales underlying Social Competence, Teamwork, Conscientiousness, Impulse Control, Emotional Regulation, Assertiveness/ Persuasiveness and Avoiding Substance Abuse and Risk-Taking Behavior. The primary Big Five factors represented in these correlations are Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Agreeableness. As discussed earlier, these three factors have been seen as representing an overall "Integrity" construct (Ones & Viswesvaran, 2001), a direct indicator of a construct labeled Socialization (Digman, 1997) and more recently, Stability (DeYoung et al., 2007). The correlation of .22 between Achievement and Overall Job Performance is consistent with the .23 between these two variables found for the population as a whole. In this regard, peace officer candidates are no different from other occupations in that Conscientiousness, and especially the Achievement facet of Conscientiousness, appears to be an important, generalizable determinant of overall job performance.

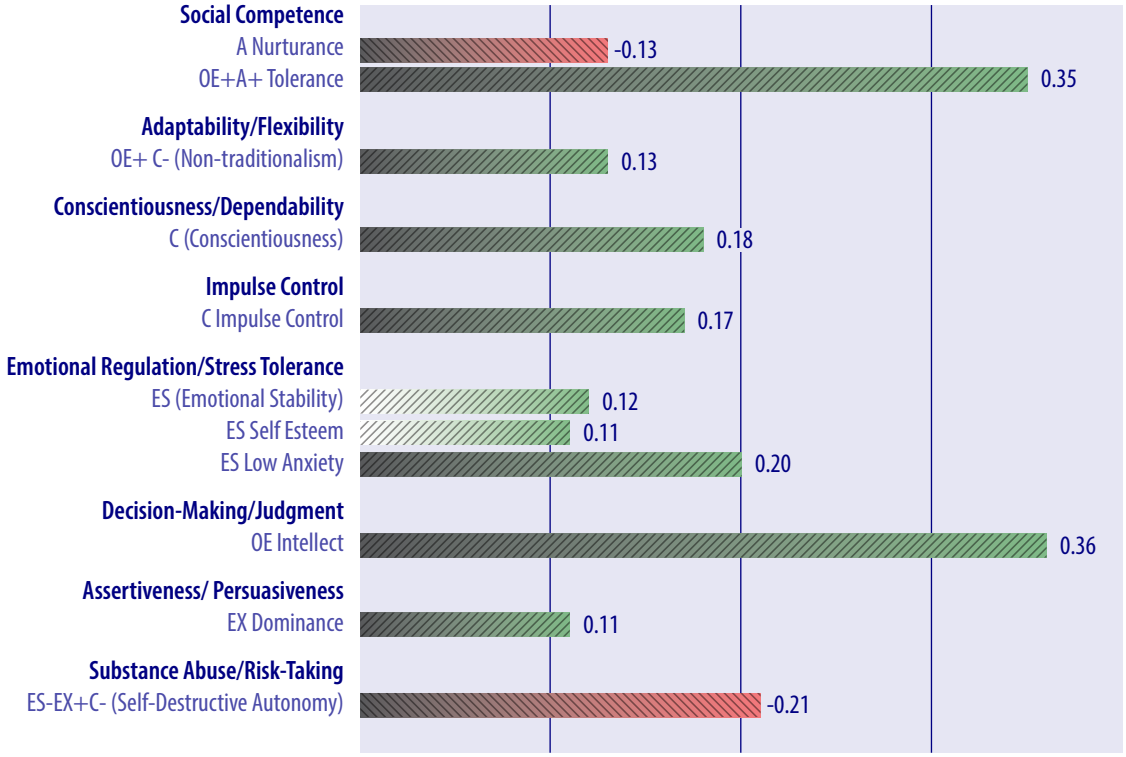
Figure 4.1

Predicting Job Performance



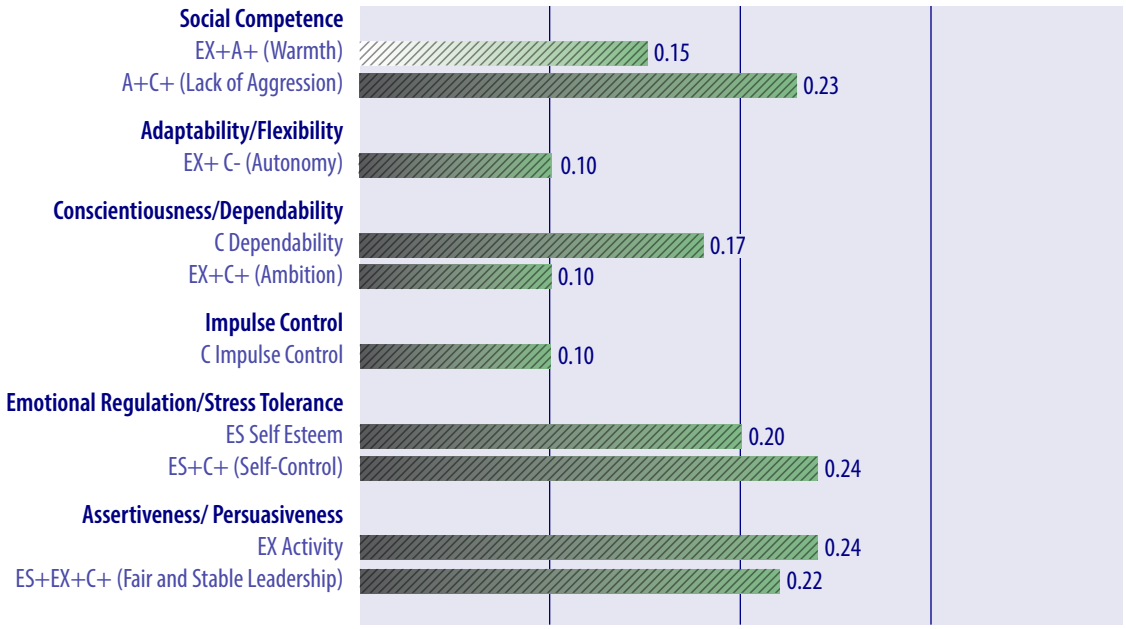
***Training Performance* (Figure 4.2):** Training performance was best predicted by Decision-Making/Judgment—an understandable result given the cognitive component underlying this construct. Interestingly, one component of Social Competence (Tolerance) was positively predictive, yet another component, Nurturance, was predictive in the opposite direction (meaning that scoring higher on this scale resulted in lower training ratings). The Openness component associated with Tolerance, but not Agreeableness, is a likely explanation for this finding (Openness is a key ingredient of the decision-making and judgment competence). The positive, generalizable relationship between Non-Traditionalism and training performance is also likely due to the involvement of the Openness construct, especially given that Conscientiousness is also positively related to training performance (Non-Traditionalism is a compound of high Openness and low Conscientiousness). Emotional Stability, Impulse Control and Substance Abuse/Risk-Taking all yielded sizable, generalizable validities with training performance.

Figure 4.2
Predicting Training Performance



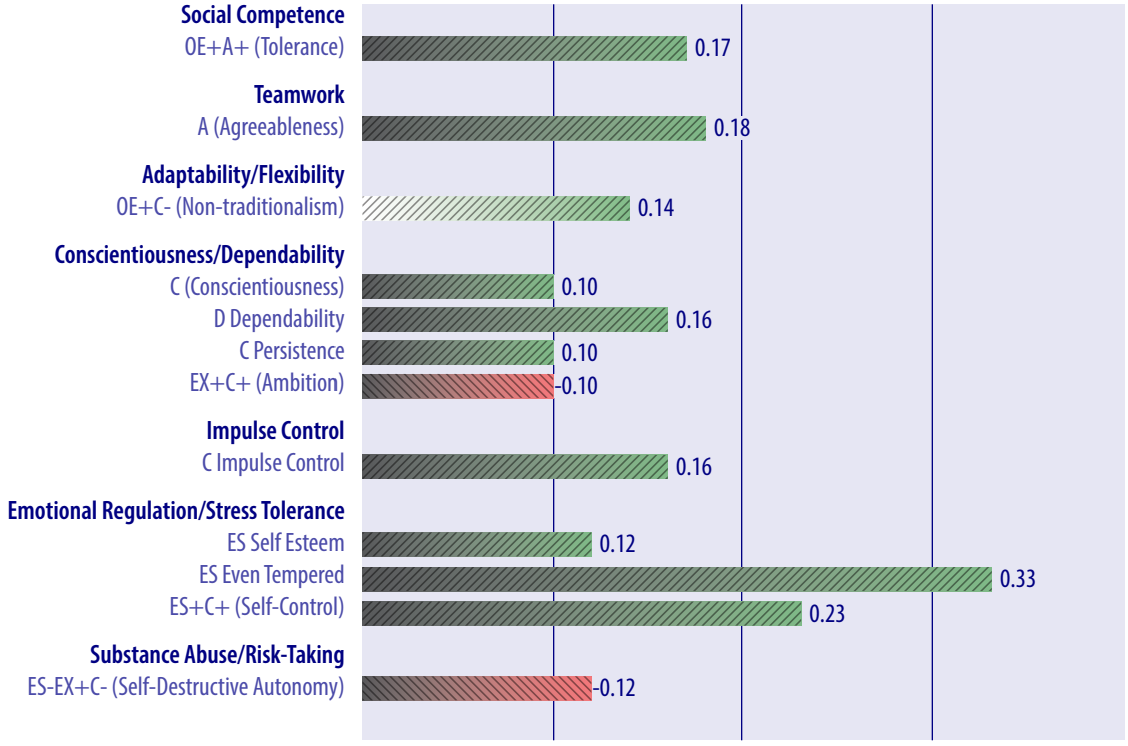
Task Performance (Figure 4.3): Ratings of Task Performance were best predicted by measures of Emotional Control and Assertiveness/Persuasiveness. In this regard, traits of Self-Control and Activity were potent. Impulse Control, the Lack of Aggression facet of Social Competence, the Dependability and Ambition facets of Conscientiousness, and the Autonomy facet of Adaptability/Flexibility were also predictive of Task Performance.

Figure 4.3
Predicting Task Performance



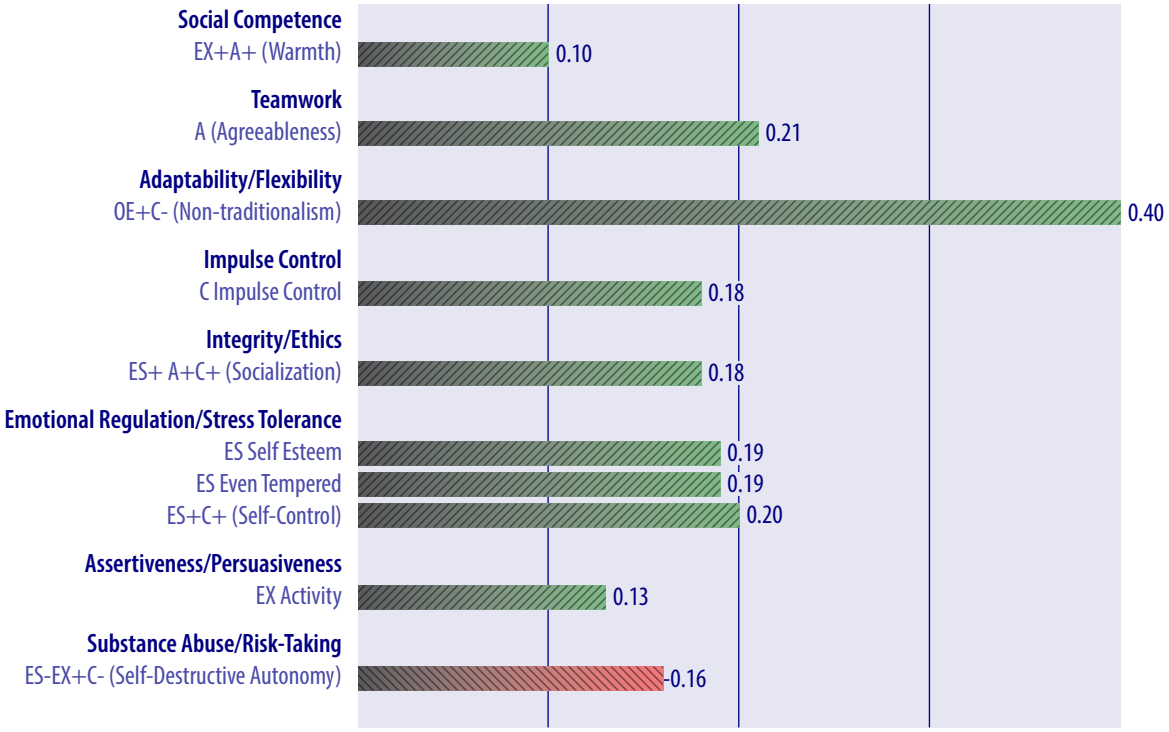
Interpersonal Performance (Figure 4.4): Interpersonal Performance was predicted by a steady pattern of sizable, generalizable validities across the majority of POST Dimensions. Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Teamwork, Social Competence (Tolerance), Impulse Control, and Substance Abuse were all found to be predictive of Interpersonal Performance. Interestingly, one aspect of Conscientiousness (Ambition) was negatively predictive, indicating that the more ambitious officers tended to have poorer interpersonal performance ratings. However, a large number of studies consistently indicated that other traits involving Conscientiousness—including Dependability, Persistence, and Impulse Control—are positively predictive of Interpersonal Performance.

Figure 4.4
Predicting Interpersonal Performance



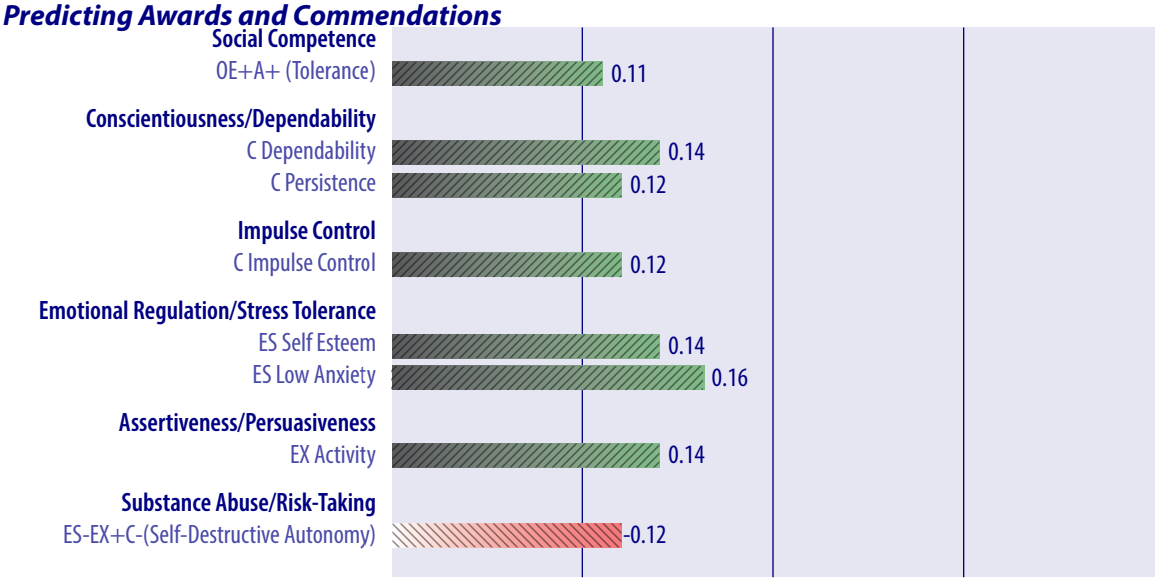
Teamwork (Figure 4.5): Teamwork predicted Teamwork, as did a host of other POST Dimensions, including Emotional Stability, Adaptability/Flexibility, Impulse Control, Integrity, Assertiveness and Persuasiveness, and Substance Abuse. Interestingly, only one facet of Social Competence (Warmth) was predictive of Teamwork ratings. A very large number of studies support the usefulness of the Integrity/Ethics trait of Socialization as an important, generalizable predictor of Teamwork.

Figure 4.5
Predicting Teamwork



Awards and Commendations (Figure 4.6): Awards and Commendations are outcomes of performance and thus one step removed from actual behavior. Therefore, it was expected that relationships with personality variables would be weaker. Nonetheless, attainment of Awards and Commendations was predicted by Conscientiousness (Dependability and Persistence), Impulse Control and Assertiveness/Persuasiveness (Activity), indicating that rule-following behavior and determination are necessary for receiving recognition for positive work behaviors. Emotional Stability, low Anxiety, and low Substance Abuse & Risk-Taking Behavior also proved notable, reflecting a strong emotional self-regulatory mechanism underlying this criterion.

Figure 4.6
Predicting Awards and Commendations

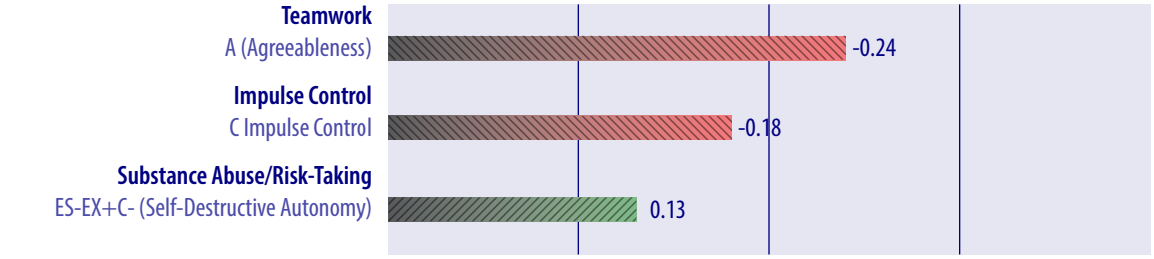


Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB)

In general, there were fewer sizable, generalizable validities for the Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) criterion as compared to job performance criteria. This is likely due to lower base rates for these criteria (i.e., some counterproductive behaviors are infrequent), and the difficulty in observing these behaviors and outcomes [some counterproductive behaviors (e.g., theft) are not traced to specific individuals.

Counterproductive Work Behaviors (Figure 4.7): Globally, only Teamwork and Impulse Control predicted overall Counterproductive Work Behaviors. Those relationships were generalizable. The relationship between the control of impulsive or risky behavior and this criterion is intuitive.

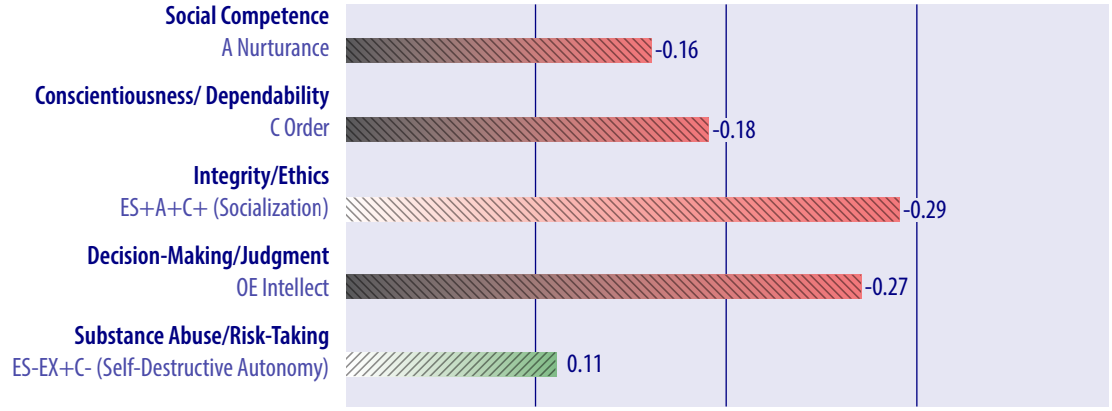
Figure 4.7
Predicting Counterproductive Work Behaviors



Withdrawal (Figure 4.8): Withdrawal behaviors were best predicted by Integrity/Ethics; however, this relationship was not generalizable. Decision-Making/Judgment similarly predicted Withdrawal Behaviors, perhaps reflecting a tendency for those who are more often late or absent to report sick or fail to fully consider the consequences of their behavior.[39] However, this relationship was based on a few studies and a limited overall sample.

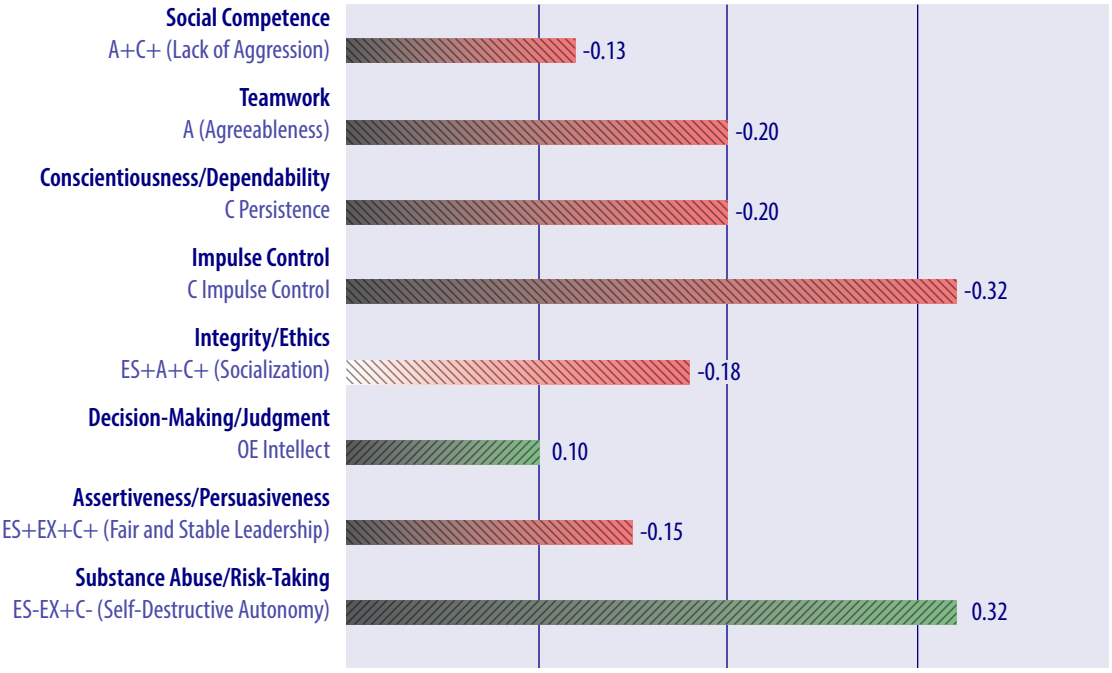
[39] See Dilchert, Ones, Davis, & Rostrow, 2007.

Figure 4.8
Predicting Withdrawal Behaviors



Substance Abuse (Figure 4.9): Substance Abuse was the CWB with the greatest number of generalizable validities with POST Dimensions. Quite intuitively, it was best predicted by Substance Abuse/Risk-Taking and Impulse Control. Teamwork, Decision-Making/ Judgment, and an aspect of Conscientiousness (Persistence) and Social Competence (Lack of Aggression) were also predictive of Substance Abuse behavior.

Figure 4.9
Predicting Substance Abuse Behaviors



Citizen Complaints/Disciplinary Actions: Overall, no sizable and generalizable validities were found for either the Citizen Complaints or the Disciplinary Action criteria. In the one case where this was not true, the number of studies and the pooled sample size was too limited to enable any firm conclusions. Problems in the way these criteria were operationalized across different agencies and settings, small sample sizes, and the low frequency nature of these outcome criteria may be in good part responsible for the lack of findings.

Results by Predictors (POST Psychological Screening Dimensions)
Tables 4.12 through 4.21 display the notable validity estimates for each predictor (i.e., POST Psychological Screening Dimensions) category.

Social Competence (Table 4.12)
Social Competence scales were found to predict criteria underlying both job performance and counterproductive work behaviors. The Tolerance facet of Social Competence predicted Training performance, Interpersonal Performance, and Awards/Commendations, while Lack of Aggression predicted Overall Job Performance, Task Performance, and Substance Abuse. Interestingly, Nurturance proved to be negatively predictive of both Training Performance and Withdrawal Behavior (higher scores predicting greater absenteeism and tardiness).

Table 4.12
Social Competence Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
A Nurturance	Training performance (-) Withdrawal behaviors(-)
EX+ A+ (Warmth)	Task performance Teamwork
ES+ A+ (Trust)	
OE+ A+ (Tolerance)	Training performance Interpersonal performance Awards & Commendations
A+ C+ (Lack of Aggression)	Overall job performance Task performance Substance abuse (-)

Teamwork (Table 4.13)
Not surprisingly, Teamwork predicted Teamwork. Teamwork also predicted Overall Job Performance, Interpersonal Performance, and two CWBs: Avoiding Counterproductive Behaviors and Substance Abuse.

Table 4.13
Teamwork Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
A (Agreeableness)	Overall job performance Interpersonal performance Teamwork Counterproductive behaviors (-) Substance abuse (-)

Adaptability/Flexibility (Table 4.14)
The highest correlation across all validity coefficients was between the Adaptability/Flexibility scale of "Non-Traditionalism" (which includes aspects of Big Five factors of high Openness to Experience and low Conscientiousness) and Teamwork. The Adaptability/Flexibility facet "Autonomy" predicted Task Performance.

Table 4.14
Adaptability/Flexibility Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
OE+C- (Non-Traditionalism)	Overall job performance Training performance Interpersonal performance Teamwork
EX+ C- (Autonomy)	Task performance

Conscientiousness/Dependability (Table 4.15)
Consistent with the larger literature, scales underlying Conscientiousness (in particular, Dependability, Order, and Persistence) were predictive of most Job Performance criteria, especially Interpersonal Performance, Overall Job Performance, Task Performance, and Awards & Commendations.

Table 4.15
Conscientiousness/Dependability Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
C (Conscientiousness)	Training performance Interpersonal performance
C Dependability	Overall job performance Interpersonal performance Task performance Awards & Commendations
C Achievement	Overall job performance
C Order	Overall job performance Training performance Interpersonal performance Awards & Commendations Withdrawal behaviors (-)
C Persistence	Interpersonal performance Awards & Commendations Avoiding substance abuse (-)
EX+ C+ (Ambition)	Task performance Interpersonal performance (-)

Impulse Control (Table 4.16)
Impulse Control turned out to be one of the most powerful predictors, yielding significant generalizable validities with every Job Performance criterion, as well as with Counterproductive Work Behaviors and Substance Abuse.

Table 4.16
Impulse Control Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
C Impulse Control	Overall job performance Training performance Task performance Interpersonal performance Teamwork Awards & Commendations Counterproductive behaviors (-) Substance abuse (-)

Integrity/Ethics (Table 4.17)
The only significant generalized validity coefficient found for Integrity was with Teamwork. Problems in sample size and the way this dimension was operationalized may well be responsible for the lack of significant validities for this very important construct and performance criterion.

Table 4.17
Integrity/Ethics Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
ES+A+C+ (Socialization)	Overall job performance Teamwork Awards & Commendations Withdrawal behaviors (-) Substance abuse (-)

Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance (Table 4.18)
Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance displayed a strong pattern of significant, generalized validities with every Job Performance criterion. Interestingly, Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance failed to yield significant relationships with any Counterproductive Work Behavior criterion.

Table 4.18
Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
ES Emotional Stability	Training performance
ES Self Esteem	Overall job performance Training performance Interpersonal performance Awards & Commendations
ES Low Anxiety	Overall job performance Training performance Awards & Commendations
ES Even Tempered	Overall job performance Interpersonal performance Teamwork
ES+C+ Self Control	Overall job performance Task performance Interpersonal performance Teamwork

Decision-Making/Judgment (Table 4.19)
Decision-Making/Judgment yielded few generalized validities. The facet Intellect was significantly related to Training Performance, possibly due to the high cognitive requirements of the academy. Intellect was also positively related to two CWB criteria: Withdrawal and Substance Abuse; however, the direction of the correlation with Substance Abuse actually indicated that those with higher Intellect scores were more likely to engage in substance abuse.

Table 4.19
Decision-Making/Judgment Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
OE Creative/Innovation	Overall job performance
OE Intellect	Training performance Withdrawal behaviors (-) Substance abuse

Assertiveness/Persuasiveness (Table 4.20)
Some facet of Assertiveness/Persuasiveness was predictive of almost every Job Performance criterion, yet no significant validities were found with any CWB criterion.

Table 4.20
Assertiveness/Persuasiveness Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
EX Dominance	Training performance
EX Activity	Overall job performance Task performance Teamwork Awards & Commendations
ES+EX+C+ (Fair & Stable Leadership)	Task performance

Substance Abuse/Risk-Taking (Table 4.21)
Self-Destructive Autonomy (a combination of low Emotional Stability, high Extroversion and low Conscientiousness) was predictive of virtually all criteria, both job performance and counterproductive behaviors. The significant validities were in the expected direction; that is, high Self-Destructive Autonomy scores were related to lower job performance scores and higher counterproductivity scores.

Table 4.21
Substance Abuse/Risk-Taking Scales

Compound Trait	Criteria
EX+OE+C- (Thrill Seeking)	
ES-EX+C- (Self-Destructive Autonomy)	Overall job performance (-) Training performance (-) Interpersonal performance (-) Teamwork (-) Awards & Commendations (-) Counter productive behaviors Withdrawal behaviors Substance abuse

Summary
The overall results indicate that personality scales can be useful for predicting a broad range of peace officer job behaviors and criteria. Although different dimensions predicted different criteria, there was criterion-related validity evidence for all ten POST Dimensions. Job performance criteria were found to be more predictable than counterproductive work behaviors, most likely due to the fact that CWBs are less frequently occurring behaviors (i.e., they have lower base rates).

The broadest spectrum of job criteria was best predicted by Impulse Control, Self-Destructive Autonomy (Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior) and Agreeableness (Teamwork). This was followed by Tolerance and (Lack of) Aggression (Social Competence), Dependability and Persistence (Conscientiousness), Self-Esteem and Self-Control (Emotional Regulation/ Stress Tolerance), Intellect (Decision-Making & Judgment) and Activity (Assertiveness/ Persuasiveness). These results comport with findings in the general literature that indicate that the Big Five constructs of Conscientiousness, Social Competence and Emotional Stability are the most predictive of job-relevant behavior across all occupations.

Study Limitations

The results of the meta-analysis provide overall criterion-related evidence for the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions and the commonly used tests that measure them. However, despite the comprehensive scope of this research, the results were constrained by the studies that were available and any weaknesses therein, which could account for the relatively limited number of significant validities—and a few that were in the counterintuitive direction. Specific study limitations include: (1) a small number of studies and sample sizes underlying many of the validity coefficients; (2) second-order sampling error as a result of reliance on the available studies; (3) weak operationalization of the criteria and low base rates for infrequently occurring criteria—especially for measures of counterproductivity; (4) test scales that are deficient and/or contaminated measures of the construct they purport to measure; and (5) predictors and/or criteria were not similarly, normatively distributed.

Conclusions

The results of the POST job analysis and meta-analysis described here provide convincing evidence that each of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions reflect integral constructs underlying and responsible for peace officer job performance. The meta-analysis results further reinforce the importance of each of the POST Dimensions and their unique contribution to the prediction of various job performance and counterproductive work behaviors and outcomes. The lesson here is that when selecting tests or interpreting scale scores, it is imperative to evaluate not only the validity of a specific test or scale (i.e., evidence that it actually measures what it purports to measure), but also its effectiveness in predicting the job behaviors and outcomes of interest. In combination with the requirements of California Government Code § 1031(f), the POST Dimensions equate to the "criterion standard" (i.e., "the statutory, regulatory, or administrative standard by which the suitability of a candidate … is assessed" (Corey & Zelig, 2020, p. xix) for qualifying a peace officer candidate. This criterion standard is the foundation upon which decisions about test selection, test use, interview construction, data integration, and suitability determinations are based (APA, 2018b).

The purpose of the POST meta-analysis was to determine the criterion-related validity of the POST Dimensions rather than the validity of specific instruments or measures. Responsibility for providing validity evidence on specific instruments rests with practitioners, research collaborators, and test publishers. Such evidence should include proof that test scales measure what they say they measure. For the purposes of peace officer psychological screening, that proof should include evidence of a relationship between the test's scales and the constructs embedded in the POST Dimensions, as well as other peace officer work behaviors and outcomes of interest.[40] A discussion of evaluating test publisher information is included in Chapter 6: Written Psychological Tests.

Regardless of the evidence supporting the use of a particular written test, the results of this meta-analysis reinforce the need to interpret test results in combination with information gleaned from the clinical interview, personal history information, relevant health records, and other information. Guidelines on integrating these data to reach a judgment are provided in Chapter 9: Reaching a Determination Through Data Integration.

[40] For examples of validation research organized around the POST Peace Officer Psychological Screening Dimensions, see Sellbom, Corey, & Ben-Porath (2020); Tarescavage, Brewster, et al. (2015); Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath (2015); and Tarescavage, Corey, Gupton, & Ben-Porath (2015).

Evaluation Process and Procedures 5

This chapter provides an overview of the psychological evaluation process and procedures required by POST regulations. It begins with a discussion of the hiring authority's responsibilities in the process, followed by the procedural steps that the screening psychologist follows in carrying out the psychological evaluation.

Agency Responsibilities

Pre-Evaluation Considerations

Several considerations that are unique to each hiring agency may lead to otherwise avoidable problems if not identified in advance of the psychological evaluation. These pre-evaluation considerations include:

1. *Will the psychologist require any logistical or administrative support from the hiring agency (e.g., administration of testing)?*
2. *Do other considerations, such as academy start date and timing of the medical evaluation, impose a deadline for reaching a suitability determination and providing a written report?*
3. *Does the psychologist know the hiring agency's chain of command, including to whom the written report should be directed and the names and contact information to discuss background and other candidate issues or to resolve problems?*
4. *Are any particular tests or other assessment methods required by the hiring agency or civil service commission rules?*
5. *Does the hiring agency want its candidates evaluated against additional job-relevant selection criteria beyond those required by Commission Regulation 1955(d)(2) (e.g., multicultural competency, communication skills, cognitive functioning)?*
6. *Does the hiring agency have any restrictions or requirements for the psychological report over and above those required by POST?*
7. *What means of secure digital communication are available and preferred (e.g., secure fax, encryption)?*
8. *How does the hiring agency want candidate requests for feedback to be handled? What information is to be shared with the candidate and by whom?*
9. *How will post-hire outcome results be reported back to the evaluator to help refine future assessments and suitability determinations?*
10. *For contracted psychologists, have financial arrangements (e.g., cost of the evaluation, invoicing, terms of payment, costs for a late cancellation or no-show, costs for post-evaluation feedback) been arranged?*
11. *What is the hiring authority's second opinion/appeal process?*

Answering these questions early on will reduce frustration and inefficiency, which in turn will enhance the ability of the psychologist to conduct evaluations that meet the needs of the hiring agency.

Discussing Limitations and Expectations

Despite research demonstrating the validity of psychological evaluations in predicting future outcomes, hiring agencies must be aware that psychological screening serves to reduce but not eliminate negative or adverse outcomes. There is no perfect predictor of future behavior or way to prevent all ineffective or counterproductive behavior of police officers. Added to the limitations of even the most sophisticated psychological screening program at the start of a peace officer's career are the psychological and emotional changes that take place once entering it (Violanti et al., 2017). As noted in the Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015):

> *Law enforcement officers are subject to more stress than the general population owing to the nature of their jobs. In addition to working with difficult—even hostile—individuals, responding to tragic events, and sometimes coming under fire themselves, they suffer from the effects of everyday stressors—the most acute of which often come from their agencies, because of confusing messages or non-supportive management; and their families, who do not fully understand the pressures the officers face on the job. (p. 63)*

Because of these continuous stressors and their effects on officers over the course of their careers, the Task Force recommended that "mental and physical health check-ups should be conducted on an ongoing basis" (p. 64). Relying solely on a single mental health assessment of a peace officer before they are hired, trained, enculturated, and exposed to the ubiquitous risks faced by all peace officers—"death by 1,000 cuts" (Kirschman, Kamena, & Fay, 2014, p. 53)—is unlikely to satisfy the objectives of California Government Code § 1031(f); namely, the continuous freedom "from any physical, emotional, or mental condition that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer." After all, the provisions of this statute are not limited only to peace officer selection—a point aptly made by the California Court of Appeal for the Third District in *Sager v. County of Yuba* when it wrote, "… the section 1031 standards must also be maintained throughout a peace officer's career. Section 1031 reflects a minimum set of standards for allowing a new recruit to become a peace officer and it would be illogical to conclude the Legislature believed those standards disappeared once an officer began working" (p. 14). Note, too, that the EEOC's *Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations of Employees under the ADA (2000)* states that periodic medical examinations of employees in positions affecting public safety are permissible "in limited circumstances" if they "are narrowly tailored to address specific job-related concerns."[41]

Providing the Psychologist with Job Information and Risk Management Considerations

The job of a peace officer can vary both within and across agencies. As a consequence, the emphasis placed on various psychological characteristics may vary as well. For example, screening for officers who will need to operate autonomously may require increased emphasis on attributes known to be associated with successful performance in jobs requiring discretion (e.g., Conscientiousness, Decision-Making & Judgment), while officers who will interact with citizens in an urban setting may require an emphasis on Social Competence and, in particular, multicultural sensitivity. It is unlikely that agency-specific job information will change frequently and when it does, hiring agencies must provide this information to their screening psychologists.

The screening psychologist and the hiring authority should review the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions together. The positive and negative behaviors included with each dimension provide a starting point for fleshing out the needs and concerns of the employer and a basis for discussing any unique characteristics and work demands that may require additional screening criteria, such as cognitive functioning (e.g., memory, recognition, information processing) and multicultural competence (i.e., understanding of and sensitivity toward race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, class status, education, religion, and other cultural factors).

[41] See https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-disability-related-inquiries-and-medical-examinations-employees#N_30_

Agencies should be encouraged to work in collaboration with their communities to identify additional traits, characteristics, and competencies desired in peace officers who serve in those communities. A year after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown by a Ferguson, Missouri police officer and the national protests that followed, the *President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (2015) observed that "recent events around the country … have underscored the need for and importance of lasting collaborative relationships between local police and the public" (p. 111). Protests occurring across the United States in 2020 drove home this point in startling clarity. The POST Psychological Screening Dimensions provide a potentially constructive starting place for community members and their local law enforcement agencies to collaborate in identifying other elements of the "criterion standard" (APA, 2018b; Corey & Zelig, 2020) for selecting its officers.

Screening Psychologist Responsibilities

Acquisition of Relevant Health Records

POST Commission Regulation 1955(e)(5) requires that the candidate's psychological records be requested when warranted. A history of mental health treatment, including psychopharmacological treatment (e.g., antidepressants, anxiolytics, mood stabilizers, stimulants), or a history of mental health evaluations (e.g., for purposes of a disability claim), are all examples of circumstances where requesting records associated with treatment or evaluation may be warranted.

Deciding whether to acquire records can depend upon the recency of the treatment or evaluation, the duration of treatment, its concomitance with other documented or self-reported adaptation problems, the nature of the treatment or evaluation, the diagnosis that necessitated the treatment, and/or other factors that may normalize, mitigate or aggravate the significance of the intervention or evaluation. For example, brief marital counseling a decade ago in the absence of evidence of serious conflict in the marriage is unlikely to warrant the acquisition of treatment records. In contrast, a prescription for lithium, even several years ago, has the potential to reveal a serious mental health condition associated with the common uses of that medication.[42]

An evaluation for purposes of a military service-connected disability award for PTSD a decade ago may not be relevant in the absence of contemporary evidence of anxiety symptoms, assuming an appropriate assessment focused on this self-report. Alternatively, such records would likely be relevant if the claim was within the past two years and/or there is evidence of recent or ongoing symptoms of PTSD. Chapter 7: Personal History Information, contains a more thorough discussion of circumstances giving rise to the need for obtaining psychological or medical records, as well as various methods for obtaining this information efficiently and with the minimum intrusion on personal privacy.

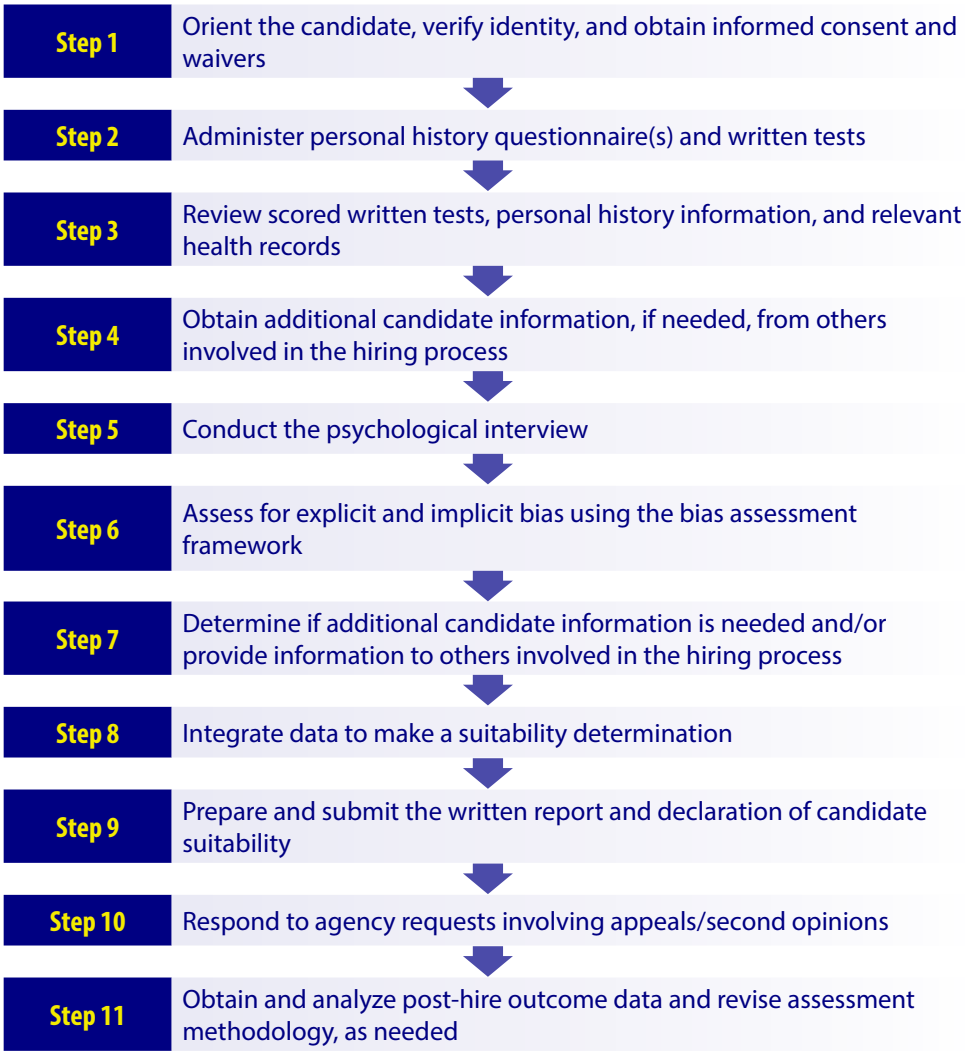
Obtaining these health records prior to the evaluation enables a discussion of the records during the interview, facilitates a more targeted assessment, and reduces the likelihood of a delay in reaching a suitability determination. This will require that the psychologist provide the hiring agency with clear guidelines concerning the time period and/or types of records that will be required, and that the hiring agency communicates these to candidates when a conditional offer is made. Alternatively, the hiring agency can facilitate communication between the

[42] The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine maintains a subscription-access document *(ACOEM Guidance for the Medical Evaluation of Law Enforcement Officers)* listing a wide range of medications and their potential effects on a law enforcement officer's ability to safely perform job functions or the risk of sudden incapacitation. Drugs are identified as *acceptable* (unlikely to adversely impact performance or job functions), *temporary* (may have an adverse effect at the beginning of treatment), *shift* (known to have effects of short duration that may adversely impact performance and, therefore, are best taken while off duty), *restricted* (known to have an effect that will very likely adversely impact safety or performance), or *diagnosis* (the diagnosis for which the medication is prescribed, rather than the medication itself, may require restriction). Available at https://www.leoguidance.org/

candidate and psychologist in advance of the evaluation so that the need for additional information can be determined. Appendix K offers a sample Mental Health Treatment and Evaluation Report. Chapter 7: Personal History Information provides additional information on gathering psychological records and other relevant medical records.

Psychological Evaluation Steps
The procedures or "steps" required by statute, regulation and professional standards for conducting the psychological evaluation of a peace officer are as follows:

Figure 5.1
Psychological Evaluation Steps



The sequence of these steps is largely determined by regulation or practical necessity. For example, Commission Regulation 1955(e)(4) requires that the psychological interview occur subsequent to a review and evaluation of the results of the written tests and the candidate's personal history information, thus necessitating that written instruments be administered, scored and reviewed prior to the interview.

Step 1: Orient the Candidate, Verify Identity, and Obtain Informed Consent and Waivers

Orienting the candidate. The candidate's orientation to the evaluation process—at least that portion of it under the psychologist's control—begins when the candidate arrives for the testing and interview. Providing a thorough description of the assessment process helps to establish a professional climate and increases the likelihood that it will be sustained.

Describing the assessment process and written materials has two purposes: First, it helps reduce the likelihood of confusion, misunderstandings and simple error that can generate complaints and/or undermine the reliability of the assessment; second, a candidate must be fully knowledgeable about the nature and intended uses of the assessment before giving informed consent (Fisher, 2008).

False assumptions abound in contexts that are unfamiliar to one party and routine to another. Psychologists often assume, for example, that candidates will expect the assessment to take the better part of a day, that they understand they will not be able to use their cell phones while taking written tests, or that their children cannot be left unattended in the waiting room while they complete the evaluation. In turn, candidates who have never undergone a psychological evaluation often imagine that it will consist simply of a conversation with a psychologist—perhaps on a couch—and that the entire process will take no more than an hour. Explaining the assessment process at the outset will pay dividends in terms of reduced stress and disruption on the candidate and psychologist alike. Whether the description is provided orally, in writing, or both, it should anticipate and address the following questions:[43]

1. *How long will the evaluation take? How much of that time involves written testing vs. interview?*
2. *Can the candidate be accompanied during any portion of the evaluation?*
3. *What is the procedure for taking breaks? Where are the restrooms?*
4. *Can the candidate use a cell phone during the evaluation? How about texting?*[44]
5. *Can the candidate eat or drink while completing the written assessment materials? Will there be a meal break?*
6. *Is the candidate allowed to listen to music, consult a dictionary, or talk to other candidates in the testing room?*
7. *What should the candidate do if they have questions or face a problem while completing the written testing?*
8. *What is the sequence of events throughout the course of the assessment?*
9. *Will there be a delay between written testing and the interview? If so, how long?*

Verifying the candidate's identity. A simple method for confirming identity is to view the candidate's driver license, passport or other valid photo identification. To maintain the integrity of the record, a photocopy of the identification may be kept with the candidate's evaluation file.

Obtaining informed consent. Informed consent is not required when "(1) testing is mandated by law or governmental regulations; [or] (2) informed consent is implied because testing is conducted as a routine educational, institutional, or organizational activity (e.g., when participants voluntarily agree to assessment when applying for a job)."[45] However, obtaining the candidate's written informed consent not only conforms to the broad ethical standard requiring psychologists to give an appropriate explanation and seek the person's assent (APA, 2017); it also serves to protect the psychologist and the department from accusations of privacy invasions or other acts of unfairness. Whether conceptualized as consent, assent or disclosure, providing a candidate with information about key facts concerning the evaluation costs nothing and may prevent unnecessary complaints (Gold & Shuman, 2009).

[43] Instructions specific to the written assessments are discussed at Step 2.

[44] Nearly all cell phones are equipped with a digital camera that can be used to record images of the test materials in violation of test security and copyright law. It is usually best to instruct candidates to keep their cell phones turned off or on silent mode throughout the evaluation and to not take them out except during breaks and only when outside the office.

[45] APA EPPCC Standard 9.03, Informed Consent in Assessments.

According to prevailing standards of practice, the following information should be presented to candidates prior to the evaluation:[46]

1. A description of the nature and scope of the evaluation.
2. The limits of confidentiality, including any information that may be disclosed to the employer without the candidate's authorization.
3. The fact that the evaluation will include consideration of candidate information from other sources, including but not limited to the background investigation and detection-of-deception methods (e.g., polygraph, voice stress analysis).
4. The party or parties who will receive the written report, and whether or not the candidate will have access to the report and underlying records.
5. The potential outcomes and intended uses of the evaluation, including its possible use in future research.
6. Freedom to decline to participate or to terminate the evaluation at any point, and the potential consequences of doing so.
7. Whether or not the candidate will be provided with an explanation of the assessment results.

Best practice is to document candidates' informed consent with their signature on the disclosure form (Appendix L), thereby providing a record of what candidates were told and their agreement to proceed under those terms. During the course of the evaluation, the psychologist may need to revisit and clarify important aspects of the informed consent or disclosure document, such as the limits of confidentiality, the purpose of the examination, and the potential outcomes, if the candidate appears to be confused or unclear about them (Corey & Zelig, 2020).

Remote Assessment Tip

When atypical circumstances necessitate conducting remote assessments with the use of a synchronous (live) teleconference platform, state law requires disclosure of certain information to the examinee. See POST Bulletin 2020-18 (Appendix O).

GINA Admonishment. The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and their agents—including evaluating psychologists—from requesting or requiring "genetic information" of an individual or family members during any stage of hiring and employment. Genetic information includes family medical history; therefore, illegal questions under GINA would include inquiries about psychological and other medical conditions of parents or other family members, including family history of substance use disorders. Genetic information that is acquired inadvertently—as when a candidate discloses it without solicitation—is generally exempted from penalties; however, acquisition of genetic information in response to medical information requests are generally not deemed "inadvertent" unless the employee or applicant is advised in advance to withhold genetic information. The following admonishment from the EEOC should be provided to all candidates prior to the evaluation:

> *The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting, or requiring, genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we are asking that you not provide any genetic information when responding to this request for medical information. "Genetic information," as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.*

[46] See Corey & Borum (2013) and IACP Preemployment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines (2020).

Use of this warning creates a "safe harbor" for employers and their agents who receive genetic information in response to a request for health-related information.

Obtaining a waiver. At the onset of the background investigation, candidates waive their right to inspect and review information gathered during the course of the investigation. Some agencies extend this agreement to include the waiver of rights to sue, recognizing that civil litigation cannot proceed without discovery, and discovery will necessarily breach the promise to protect the identity of sources that is so central to quality background investigations. Courts have held these waivers to be enforceable when (a) the agreement to waive their right(s) is voluntary, deliberate and informed (*County of Riverside,* 2002; Stroman, 1989), (b) they waive the advantage of a law intended solely for their benefit as opposed to the benefit of society,[47] and (c) they do not waive a right to claims that are remedial in nature (e.g., Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; *Nilsson v. County of Mesa*, 2007).

Psychologists should consult with the background investigator regarding any waiver agreements that the candidate may already have entered into that apply to the psychological evaluation as well. Blanket waivers of all procedural rights and claims may not be enforceable inasmuch as enforceability depends in part on evidence that the waiving party understood the consequences of the waiver—something that is difficult to show when the waived rights are not specifically enumerated. It is therefore important that waiver agreements be developed with the involvement or consent of the hiring agency's legal counsel.

A sample informed consent form, which includes the GINA admonishment and the waiver, is provided in Appendix L.

Step 2: Administer Personal History Questionnaire(s) and Written Tests

Personal history information and written assessment instruments are both required components of the psychological evaluation. Personal history information includes the candidate's relevant personal, occupational, and developmental history. This information, which is discussed in Chapter 7: Personal History Information, must include the candidate's background investigation report and can be supplemented with a questionnaire specifically designed for psychological screening.

Auxiliary staff may administer written psychological tests if consistent with the test publisher's requirements and the psychologist retains responsibility for training and supervising that staff. It is the responsibility of the psychologist to ensure that a standardized process is followed. Two aspects of the standardized process require particular attention: the testing conditions and the test instructions.

Testing conditions. Administration of written testing in a quiet, comfortable environment, free of unnecessary distraction, is imperative for standardized testing (Ben-Porath & Tellegen, 2020a; Corey & Ben-Porath, 2020). It is not appropriate to administer tests to candidates seated on chairs in busy hallways, to send candidates home with the test with instructions to return it, or to permit candidates to complete the test in a non-proctored internet session. According to the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014) Standard 6.4: "Noise, disruption in the testing area, extremes of temperature, poor lighting, inadequate work space, illegible materials, and malfunctioning computers are among the conditions that should be avoided in testing situations." Administering tests under these and other non-standardized conditions is outside the standard of practice and provides the candidate with a strong basis for an appeal or complaint.

> ***Remote Assessment Tip***
>
> *Paying attention to testing conditions is especially important when atypical conditions require the remote administration of psychological tests. Issues such as examinee identity, coaching, test security, task engagement, distractions, and loss of connectivity, among others,*

[47] California Civil Code §3513.

require careful consideration and planning. See POST Bulletin 2020-18 (Appendix O) for more information.[48]

Test instructions. Adherence to standardized procedures associated with specific assessment instruments is a necessary condition for valid interpretation of the test results (Wolfe-Christensen & Callahan, 2008). Modifying or supplementing the test publisher's standardized instructions jeopardizes test reliability and therefore validity. Some believe that altering the standard test instructions can enhance validity by prompting more candid responses and reducing underreporting/positive response bias (Schmit et al., 1995). However, if so-called "centering instructions" are provided, the resulting scores can only be compared to norms derived from others who completed the test with those same altered instructions, thereby rendering a candidate's protocol uninterpretable against the very literature base that establishes its valid use.

It is perfectly acceptable to provide general instructions, not connected with any individual test, that admonish the candidate to be candid. Statements given prior to written testing in conjunction with a general orientation, such as, "You are instructed to be honest throughout the assessment," may discourage generalized underreporting while still leaving a candidate's approach to a particular test shaped only by the test's standard instructions (e.g., "Remember to give your own opinion of yourself").[49]

Step 3: Review Scored Written Tests, Personal History Information, and Relevant Health Records

Procedures for the review of written test responses must comport with POST requirements covering scoring, use of appropriate norm groups, timing, and the interpretation and verification of results. Each of these requirements is discussed below.

Scoring Key. POST requires that written instruments be interpreted using appropriate scoring keys. An appropriate scoring key is one that is current, i.e., continues to be published and supported by the test publisher or distributor. Psychologists must score a test using an authorized scoring key for which permission or license has been granted from the test publisher or distributor. The use of "bootlegged," black market, or personally developed scoring programs may violate a test publisher's copyright, the user's licensing agreement with the publisher or distributor, federal copyright law, and Commission regulations.

Norms. For a test interpretation to be valid, responses must be analyzed against comparable test data derived from a relevant norm group.[50] For example, the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-III is used for evaluating emotional, behavioral, or interpersonal difficulties, but the available published norm groups consist only of an adult inpatient and outpatient clinical sample and an inmate correctional sample. A peace officer candidate is likely to score quite differently from these comparison group samples; therefore, the meaning of the score differences cannot be inferred from validation research since the peace officer candidate does not share the characteristics that render the comparison groups cohesive. In contrast, psychological tests that, in addition to the normative sample used to validate the test, also have a suitably large and diverse comparison group of peace officer candidates provide an important basis for detecting and interpreting meaningful differences (Corey & Ben-Porath, 2022; Inwald, 1984).

Timing. Written testing must be scored and reviewed before proceeding to the interview. However, this does not preclude the post-interview administration of supplementary written

[48] *See Corey & Ben-Porath (2020) for practical guidance on remote test administration. https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2020-36012-001.pdf*

[49] MMPI-3 test instructions (Ben-Porath & Tellegen, 2020a).

[50] See Chapter 6: Written Psychological Tests for a discussion of appropriate norm groups.

testing that may be necessary for reasons discovered during the interview. Such cases would be atypical and would necessarily be justified by their specific facts. Administration of supplemental testing after the interview would necessitate a follow-up interview, in light of the POST requirement that the interview "shall be administered to each peace officer candidate **subsequent to a review and evaluation of the results of the written assessments"** [Commission Regulation 1955(e)(4), emphasis added].

Interpretation. Interpreting individual test results with the use of appropriate norms and comparison groups and evaluating these results in the context of personal history allows the psychologist to generate hypotheses about a candidate based on construct-related inferences from test scores as well as findings about the empirical correlates associated with the scores.

Verification. The regulatory admonishment that *"the evaluator shall verify and interpret the individual results"* [Commission Regulation 1955(e)(2)] underscores the psychologist's responsibility for ensuring that test results inform rather than dictate their judgment. Screening psychologists should not resort to the role of an "instrument pilot," navigating through the evaluation *solely* by the use of test scores and computer-generated interpretative statements. As useful and important as written tests and their validated correlates and inferences are to an assessment of current psychological functioning and future risk, data from all sources of information should be considered and no single test score or risk rating should be considered dispositive "unless clinically justified" [Commission Regulation 1955(f)(1)].

Psychologists may appropriately give weight to consistent predictive patterns found in validated measures of job relevant constructs; however, it is the psychologist's responsibility to weigh findings from all data sources—written tests, clinical interview, and personal history (including self-reported history, background investigation, detection-of-deception methods, and psychologically relevant health records)—before reaching a suitability determination.

The psychologist also is responsible for assuring that any computer-generated interpretive statement associated with a candidate's test protocol is conceptually and/or empirically grounded. This is facilitated by interpretive reports that annotate the source for each statement; however, annotation does not absolve the psychologist of the responsibility for identifying the empirical basis of any interpretive statement or risk rating used in forming a suitability judgment (Flens, 2005). See also *Lindsey v. Costco Wholesale Corporation* (2016).

Even when relying on scale scores without the aid of computer-generated risk ratings and/or interpretations, a rationale must be established for basing an inference or conclusion on a particular scale score. Test interpretation must be based on interpretive decision rules and grounded in empirical research which can be logically applied and clearly articulated (Bow et al., 2005).

Review of Personal History Information. Background investigation reports and other personal history questionnaires must be obtained and reviewed prior to the clinical interview. This permits the interview to be used to its maximum advantage: to clarify personal history in the context of findings from psychological testing. Reliance on personal history information, including background investigation findings obtained by the hiring agency, is foundational to an assessment of bias. See Step 6 for further discussion of how personal history information is used in the Bias Assessment Framework.

Review of Relevant Health Records. Psychological and medical records must be requested and reviewed when warranted. As previously discussed, it is preferable for these records to be obtained prior to the evaluation so that the information can be discussed with the candidate at the time of the interview.

Step 4: Obtain Additional Candidate Information, if Needed, From Others Involved in the Hiring Process

It may be necessary to consult with the background investigator and others involved in the

hiring process to clarify information included in the background investigation narrative report. This may include, for example, a review of negative employment history, personal references, social media information, and/or neighborhood checks and a need to understand the reliability of the various sources, or how the hiring authority reconciled discrepant information. These pre-assessment communications can assist in the formulation of particular lines of inquiry in the interview, as well as to ensure that any residual, individualized concerns about the candidate are optimally addressed in the evaluation. The sharing of information among the screening psychologist, screening physician and background investigator is required when it is relevant to their respective evaluations.[51]

Step 5: Conduct the Psychological Interview

Chapter 8: The Psychological Screening Interview provides detailed information on the conduct of the interview, including guidelines on content, manner, topics, and administrative requirements. As discussed there, "sufficient interview time (must) be allotted to address all issues arising from the reviewed information and other issues that may arise during the interview" [Commission Regulation 1955(e)(4)]. The length or duration of the interview should be based on the amount of time necessary to meet its objectives, which include but are not limited to:

1. Addressing any remaining questions the candidate may have regarding consent and authorization;
2. Clarifying and supplementing responses to written tests and other questionnaires, inventories or personal history statements; and
3. Observing or assessing job-relevant or clinically significant behavior.

The amount of time required for the interview depends in part on the complexity of the case, the competing hypotheses generated by written test findings and personal history information, and the number and nature of discrepancies discovered among data sources (particularly discrepancies in the candidate's self-reports at various stages of the assessment process).

Step 6: Assess for Explicit and Implicit Bias Using the Bias Assessment Framework

The psychological suitability standard for California peace officers requires the absence of any *"emotional, or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer"* [GC § 1031(f)]. When evaluating a peace officer candidate for explicit and implicit bias against persons or groups with these actual or perceived characteristics, the required Bias Assessment Framework (see Table 5.1) provides a foundational, evidence-based structure.

As the name implies, the Bias Assessment Framework (Framework) is a general schema for ensuring that the major components or "targeted constructs" of bias—namely, biased behaviors, biased attitudes, and bias-relevant traits and attributes—are assessed and integrated into the final determination of a peace officer candidate's psychological suitability. In Appendix P of this Manual, *The Use of Measures of Explicit and Implicit Bias for Predicting Discrimination,* internationally esteemed bias and prejudice researchers Calvin K. Lai, Ph.D. (Washington University in St. Louis) and John F. Dovidio, Ph.D. (Yale University), both of whom served as members of the subject matter expert panel that developed the Framework, explain why selecting peace officers with low levels of preexisting prejudice (or bias) "may be particularly important for preventing discrimination (i.e., unfair treatment or behaviors directed toward people on the basis of their group membership) in policing."

As Lai and Dovidio point out, higher levels of both ***explicit bias*** (an attitude or belief about a group and its members that people know they hold and are willing to express) and ***implicit***

[51] See Commission Regulation 1953(g)(3) (pertaining to the background investigation), 1954(e)(5) (pertaining to the medical evaluation) and 1955(f)(6) (pertaining to the psychological evaluation).

bias (feelings or beliefs about a group and its members that are less controllable, less conscious, and/or faster or more efficient to retrieve from memory than explicit bias) reliably, but only weakly or moderately, predict discrimination, although studies demonstrating this relationship have not been conducted in personnel selection contexts. Furthermore, Lai and Dovidio pointedly note that intervention or training efforts to reduce prejudice in an enduring way after hiring have not been shown to be effective for creating sustained change, thereby underscoring the importance of selecting peace officers with low levels of bias. They also are careful to point out that the assessment of bias at the individual level is fraught with error (Connor & Evers, 2020; Lai & Wilson, 2020).

Kahneman, Sibony, and Sunstein (2021) describe error-prone individual measures in personnel selection as "noisy," and they propose a "decision hygiene" strategy to reduce the noise and improve reliability. The first step recommended by Kahneman and his colleagues is to "decompose" the construct of interest into its essential components. Then, as much as possible, they advise measuring each component separately and, finally, delaying holistic judgments until after all components have been assessed.

The Bias Assessment Framework (Table 5.1) was designed to facilitate this three-pronged method of structured professional judgment. It requires that the screening psychologist independently evaluate three targeted constructs: (1) biased behaviors, (2) biased attitudes, and, in the absence of clearly disqualifying behaviors and attitudes, then also (3) bias-relevant traits and attributes. The schema requires also that the evaluator assess both "aggravating or facilitative" evidence (that is, findings that would likely increase the probability of the candidate engaging in future discriminatory or prejudicial behavior) and "mitigating or protective" evidence (findings that reduce the likelihood of acting in discriminatory ways). However, it leaves to the discretion of the screening psychologist which data sources to rely on when assessing these constructs. For example, when evaluating biased behaviors, the evaluator may place greatest weight on a documented history of biased behaviors, but in the absence of such findings, greater weight may be placed on interview findings related to biased behaviors.

Similarly, biased attitudes are not directly assessed by means of background and personal history, but the assessment of such attitudes may be informed by the use of published measures of biased attitudes and/or interview findings. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 8, the interview can be an effective source of information about biased attitudes, particularly when inquiring about beliefs contained in various published measures of biased attitudes (e.g., Social Dominance Orientation, Right-Wing Authoritarianism).

When the aggregate evidence indicates that a candidate's history of biased behaviors and/or attitudes is more likely than not to result in discriminatory behavior as a peace officer, other information is not needed for assessing the bias of a peace officer candidate. However,

> *when direct evidence of explicit or implicit bias is unavailable, ambiguous, or relatively weak, it may be useful to consider related factors such as neutral or favorable intergroup contact, motivations to respond without prejudice, perceptions of social norms about prejudice, and executive functions. These factors also generally contribute to more equitable behavior and fair treatment of others, and thus can mitigate tendencies to act in discriminatory ways even when some evidence of bias is detected.* (Table 5-1, footnote 3)

It is important to underscore that considering other "bias-relevant traits and attributes" that may temper and inhibit the expression of bias in discriminatory ways is never appropriate when there is sufficient evidence of biased behaviors or attitudes without adequate mitigating findings. Table 5-2 contains an illustrative, non-exhaustive list of biased behaviors, as well as a non-exhaustive list of potentially mitigating findings. In the absence of such findings, however, or when such evidence is weak or ambiguous, the assessment of other bias-relevant traits and attributes can provide important information about the candidate's potential capacity and motivation to act in non-discriminatory ways.

Factors that have been shown in the research literature to ***increase*** the potential for biases being expressed in behaviorally discriminatory ways include the following bias-relevant traits and attributes:

- **trait cynicism** (i.e., opinions conveying a highly negative view of human nature; see Costa et al., 1986; Hickman et al., 2004)
- **misanthropy** (i.e., perceptions of others as hostile and threatening, general suspiciousness, and cynicism regarding the motives of others; see Davis, 2015; Sullivan & Adelson, 1054; Ybarra & Stephan, 1996)
- **disinhibited or antagonizing external tendencies** (e.g., impulsivity, disconstraint, antisocial behavior; see Garofalo et al., 2021; Sellbom, Kremyar, & Wygant, 2021)
- **interpersonal intolerance** (e.g., rigidity, closed-mindedness, antipathy, or unreflective responding toward a group or its members; see Verkuyten, Adelman, & Yogeeswaran, 2020; see also Ehsan et al., 2021)
- **low empathy** (particularly vis-à-vis persons outside one's own identity group; see Mekawi, Bresin, & Hunter, 2016; McFarland, 2010; Önal et al., 2021), and **other personality traits and symptoms** shown in the police literature to be associated with post-hire counterproductive behavior involving mistreatment of others (see, e.g., Roberts et al., 2018; Sellbom, Fischler, Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015, 2016; Tarescavage, Fischler et al., 2015).

In contrast, bias-relevant traits and attributes shown in published research studies to ***decrease*** the behavioral expression of bias in some contexts include:

- **high theory of mind** (i.e., the ability to recognize and anticipate others' intentions, beliefs and desires; see Carlson, Koenig, & Harms, 2013; Kaneko et al., 2021; Wellman & Liu, 2004; see also Mulvey et al., 2021)
- **high cognitive or executive control** (i.e., the capacity to constrain thought processes and behavior to reach goal-relevant ends, resulting from processes including planning and monitoring behavior; coordinating behavior in complex, novel, or ambiguous situations; selectively activating information that facilitates one's goal while actively inhibiting information that interferes; and overriding impulsive or automatic responses when they clash with goals; Payne, 2005; see also Amodio et al., 2004; Correll et al., 2014; Ito et al., 2015; Klauer et al., 2010; Mann & Ferguson, 2015; Petty, Briñol, & DeMarree, 2007; Siegal, Dougherty, & Huber, 2012)
- **favorable or neutral experience(s) with members of other groups** (i.e., intergroup contact; see Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, 2008; see also Butz & Plant, 2011; Galinsky et al., 2000)
- **motivations to respond without prejudice** (Butz & Plant, 2009; Chen et al., 2014, Plant & Devine, 1998)
- **perspective taking** (i.e., actively contemplating others' psychological experiences, particularly among persons outside one's own identity group; Todd et al., 2011;
- **accountability to social norms** (i.e., the implicit or explicit expectation that one may be called on to justify one's beliefs, feelings, and actions to others; Lerner & Tetlock, 1999; see also Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002)

Table 5.1
Bias Assessment Framework

Intended uses: (a) to guide background investigators to bias-relevant areas of inquiry for inclusion in the background investigation report reviewed by the screening psychologist; and (b) to guide screening psychologists in the collection and evidence-based use of bias-related information derived from sources of information identified in POST Commission Regulation 1955(e).

Targeted Construct	Data Sources					
	Background and Personal History		Written Instruments		Psychological Interview	
	Aggravating or Facilitative	Mitigating or Protective	Aggravating or Facilitative	Mitigating or Protective	Aggravating or Facilitative	Mitigating or Protective
Biased Behaviors	History of biased behaviors[1]	Evidence of mitigating or protective factors subsequent to biased behavior	Responses to written self-report questionnaire pertaining to a history of biased behaviors[2]	Not directly assessed	Interview questions pertaining to a history of biased behaviors	Interview questions pertaining to behaviors contrary to bias or that mitigate a history of biased behaviors
Biased Attitudes	Not directly assessed	Not directly assessed	*Published measures of biased attitudes are available but have not been validated for use in personnel selection. They may be useful in the context of the psychological interview.*	*Published measures of biased attitudes are available but have not been validated for use in personnel selection. They may be useful in the context of the psychological interview.*	Interview-based assessment of biased attitudes	Interview-based assessment of attitudes in opposition to the targeted bias
Bias-Relevant Traits & Attributes[3]	Indicators of aggravating or facilitative traits or attributes	Indicators of mitigating or protective traits or attributes	Indicators of aggravating or facilitative traits or attributes	Indicators of mitigating or protective traits or attributes	Indicators of aggravating or facilitative traits or attributes	Indicators of mitigating or protective traits or attributes

[1] Background investigations should include a broad range of diverse informants including workplace (e.g., supervisors, co-workers), family members, neighbors, close personal relationships, social and family friends, teachers, military colleagues, and other relationship contexts.

[2] Psychological evaluators are required to assess each of the targeted constructs, but the data sources used for the assessments are at the discretion of each evaluator. For example, when the background investigation and psychological interview adequately assess biased behaviors and biased attitudes, respectively, written assessments of those constructs may not contribute incrementally to the assessment.

[3] When there is clear and direct evidence of unmitigated biased behaviors or attitudes, other factors are not relevant for assessing the bias of a peace officer candidate. However, when direct evidence of explicit or implicit bias is unavailable, ambiguous, or relatively weak, it may be useful to consider related factors such as neutral or favorable intergroup contact, motivations to respond without prejudice, perceptions of social norms about prejudice, and executive function. These factors also generally contribute to more equitable behavior and fair treatment of others, and thus can mitigate tendencies to act in discriminatory ways even when some evidence of bias is detected.

Table 5.2
Non-exhaustive List of Biased Behaviors

Targeted Construct	Examples of Aggravating or Facilitative Factors	Examples of Mitigating or Protective Factors
Biased Behaviors	1. Use of slurs or epithets targeting a person or group because of one or more actual or perceived characteristics involving disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation, or because of association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics 2. Acts of violence, harassment or discrimination targeting a person or group because of one or more actual or perceived characteristics involving disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation, or because of association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics 3. History of disciplinary actions, reprimands, or other formal consequences (e.g., at school, work, military) for biased behavior against a person or group because of one or more actual or perceived characteristics involving disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation, or because of association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics 4. Statements, postings on social media sites or in forums, and other behaviors indicating bias, social group dominance/ supremacy, or espousing intolerance of or hostile action against a person or group because of one or more actual or perceived characteristics involving disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation, or because of association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics 5. Affiliation and engagement with a hate group, participation in hate group activities, or public expressions of hate[1] 6. Voluntary and ongoing association with persons who hold membership in a hate group, participate in hate group activities, or engage in public expressions of hate.	1. Evidence that the candidate made a prompt, good-faith effort to make restitution[2] 2. Evidence that the offense is so minor, or so much time has passed, or it happened under such unique conditions that it is unlikely to reflect a stable bias 3. Evidence that the candidate has matured or rehabilitated 4. The information, evidence or report was of from a questionably reliable source 5. In the case of voluntary and ongoing association with persons who openly espouse bias, mitigating evidence may be that the association is warranted by one or more important social, familial or occupational ties and the candidate does not share the bias

[1] "Hate group" means an organization that supports, advocates for, threatens, or practices genocide or the commission of hate crimes as defined in Section 422.5 of the Penal Code. "Participation in any hate group activity" means active and direct involvement in, or coordination or facilitation of, any hate crime by hate group members. "Public expression of hate" means any statement or expression to another person, including any statement or expression made in an online forum that is accessible to another person, that specifically advocates for, explicitly supports, or explicitly threatens to commit genocide or any hate crime that explicitly supports any hate. Further definitions regarding hate group affiliation, activity, or advocacy of public expressions of hate are defined in the California Law Enforcement Accountability Reform (CLEAR) Act (Penal Code section 13680 et seq). Affiliation with a hate group or hate group member may also include the public display of any tattoo, uniform, insignia, flag, or logo that indicates support for the genocide of, or violence toward, any group of persons based upon race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.

[2] Items 1-4 are adapted from mitigation criteria published in the National Security Adjudicative Guidelines. (2017). See https://www.dni.gov/files/NCSC/documents/Regulations/SEAD-4-Adjudicative-Guidelines-U.pdf

Step 7: Determine if Additional Candidate Information is Needed and/or Provide Information to Others Involved in the Hiring Process

There are several circumstances in which post-interview consultation with others in or working on behalf of the hiring agency may be advisable or necessary. These include:

Risk Management Information. Psychologists may need to seek information from the hiring authority concerning specific "risk management considerations" when making a psychological suitability determination. Questions may arise concerning an agency's tolerance for the risk associated with detected trait deficits or problematic behavior patterns. Post-assessment communications between the hiring authority and the psychologist can help resolve these questions.

Personal History Information from Others Involved in the Hiring Process. During the course of the psychological evaluation, gaps or discrepancies in the candidate's accounts of their occupational or personal history, including incidents involving potential acts of bias, may require clarification from the background investigator. As discussed earlier, background investigators may be asked to interview others, conduct follow-up interviews, confirm the disposition of an investigation by another agency, check the narrative of a police report, obtain the account of an incident involving a former domestic partner, or clarify information provided by a previous employer.

Personal history information discovered during the psychological evaluation that was not disclosed by the candidate during the background investigation, or that is materially discrepant from the information reported during the background investigation, should be communicated to the hiring authority. This is especially important when the oversight or discrepancy raises concerns regarding the candidate's moral character [GC § 1031(d)] or potential biases. The hiring agency may conduct a discrepancy interview or otherwise investigate the new information, including conducting additional third-party interviews. The background investigation is not over until a final, unconditional offer of employment is made.

Psychologists may learn of medical information that should be communicated to or discussed with the screening physician (or vice versa). Per POST requirements, information should be shared with evaluators, as appropriate, either directly or relayed through the hiring authority.

HIPAA and other privacy laws restrict communication of confidential or private health information. Screening psychologists are agents of the hiring authority regardless of whether they are agency employees or contractors. As such, especially with signed waivers in hand, they can lawfully communicate with background investigators, screening physicians, and others involved in the hiring process, provided the information being communicated is relevant to their respective determinations of candidate suitability. Some agencies conduct hiring meetings during which the screening psychologist, background investigator, hiring administrator, and other involved parties exchange and discuss information prior to a final offer of employment.[52]

Step 8: Integrate Data to Make a Suitability Determination

The focus at this step in the evaluation process is on a single, ultimate question: *Does the candidate meet the minimum statutory, regulatory, and agency-specific criteria for psychological suitability?* Chapter 9: Reaching a Determination Through Data Integration discusses the issues and considerations involved in this integration task. Two regulations are emphasized here:

- Commission Regulation 1955(e) requires that five sources of information be considered and integrated into a determination of the candidate's psychological suitability:
    7. Job Information

[52] See Chapter 10: Evaluation Reporting Requirements, Guidelines, and Second Opinions for further information.

8. Written Assessments
9. Personal History Information
10. Psychological Interview
11. Psychological Records, as warranted

- Commission Regulation 1955(f)(1) requires that data from all of these sources be considered when making a suitability determination; "the evaluator's determination shall not be based on one single data source unless clinically justified."

Step 9: Prepare and Submit the Written Report and Declaration of Candidate Suitability

Commission Regulation 1955(f)(2) requires that the evaluator provide the department with "fndings from the bias assessment … and identify the sources relied upon for (the) fndings, including information obtained through the background investigation." Regulation 1955(f)(3) further requires the evaluator to provide the POST Psychological Suitability Declaration (POST 2-364) (Appendix N), which identifies that the psychologist has conducted the evaluation in accordance with POST requirements and that suitability was determined based on the results and findings of the evaluation.

Beyond the information specified above, the written report should include any information *"which is necessary and appropriate, such as the candidate's job-relevant functional limitations, reasonable accommodation requirements, and the nature and seriousness of the potential risks posed by the candidate"* [Commission Regulation 1955(f)(5)].

The hiring agency may expand, constrict or precisely delineate the "necessary and appropriate" content of a written report. The hiring agency and psychologist should agree to the amount and type of information to be included beyond the minimum POST-mandated content.

Reports that include a detailed recitation of the candidate's non-job-relevant developmental and family history (among other private and intimate facts) may not only be unnecessary but may also risk breaching the APA ethical standard requiring psychologists to restrict written and oral reports to "only information germane to the purpose for which the communication is made" [Standard 4.04(a)]. While it is lawful (and in many cases appropriate) to inform the hiring authority of a diagnosis when candidates are found to be unsuitable due to a mental or emotional condition, the focus of the narrative report should be on translating findings into meaningful, understandable language for the hiring authority, free of overly technical jargon.

Too much truncation is just as problematic. The written report is the principal means of communicating the rationale and evidence underlying the determination of unsuitability. Evaluators who anticipate appeals and prepare written reports that clearly articulate the basis for the decision help the hiring authority to resolve discrepant opinions.

It is useful for reports to discuss the relevant psychological findings, citing the source(s) supporting those findings, and linking them to the POST Dimensions, bias assessment, job demands and the work environment. However, it remains the prerogative of the hiring agency to determine the amount and kind of information to be included in the written report beyond the POST-required elements.

Some psychologists prefer to report suitability on a continuum ranging from highly unqualified to highly qualified. Although rating increments between unsuitable and suitable are allowable, POST requires that all candidates appointed as peace officers be deemed psychologically suitable by a qualified evaluator *prior to appointment* [Commission Regulation 1955(f)(3)]. Equivocal assessments do not suffice for such a determination.

Psychological narrative reports and other information deemed medical must be separated from the POST-mandated report, maintained in a secure and separate file from the candidate's background file, and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know. POST only

inspects the declaration contained in the background investigation file to ensure that it includes the required information as described above. Therefore, inspections to determine compliance with POST selection requirements are limited to candidates who are appointed as peace officers.

Although POST does not inspect the files of candidates who were psychologically disqualified, those candidates have recourse with the California CRD and the federal EEOC if they believe that they were the subject of unlawful discrimination. Compliance officers from these regulatory agencies can lawfully access all relevant records, medical and otherwise. It therefore behooves the psychologist to take and maintain detailed notes and records.[53]

Step 10: Respond to Agency Requests Involving Appeals/Second Opinions

Commission Regulation 1955(g) imports a requirement of the California CRD that gives all candidates who are medically (including psychologically) disqualified the right to submit an independent medical opinion for consideration before a final determination of disqualification is made [2 CCR § 11071(b)(2)]. Although the hiring authority is not obligated to notify the disqualified candidate of this right, it should never state or imply that there is no recourse to the initial disqualification.

Once notified that a candidate is seeking a second opinion, the agency must make available to the second-opinion evaluator the peace officer duties, powers, demands, and working conditions and the requirements specified in Commission Regulation 1955. Other information, such as specific procedures or findings from the initial evaluation, can also be shared with the second opinion evaluator at the discretion of the hiring agency and consistent with local personnel policies and/or rules.[54] The hiring authority can provide a service both to the candidate and itself by directing the candidate to the POST website of peace officer psychological evaluators, since the hiring authority can only rely on a suitability determination made by an evaluator who meets the requirements of Commission Regulation 1955(a).

Candidate Feedback. Although there is a general ethical standard in psychology to provide an individual with an explanation of assessment results, there is an explicit exception when "the nature of the relationship precludes provision of an explanation of results [such as in preemployment or security screenings], and this fact has been clearly explained to the person being assessed in advance" (APA EPPCC Standard 9.10). There also are no laws or regulations requiring feedback to candidates.

While it may seem fair and equitable to give detailed feedback, doing so with disqualified candidates may (a) undermine the independence of the second-opinion process,[55] (b) place the psychologist in an irreconcilable dual relationship, and (c) breach the confidentiality of the background investigation. Each of these is discussed below.

> ***Undermining the second-opinion process.*** Informing disqualified candidates of the detailed reasons leading to an adverse decision may influence how they present themselves during the testing or interview of a second-opinion or other subsequent evaluation. That notwithstanding, the decision as to how much information is provided to a candidate, and by whom, belongs to the hiring authority in consultation with legal counsel.

[53] In January 2020, GC Section 12960(e) extended the time period for filing an employment discrimination claim from one to three years. Psychologists should work closely with their departments to determine appropriate records retention.

[54] When conducting psychological screening evaluations of peace officer candidates for state civil service, candidates who are withheld or withdrawn from certification due to the evaluation may appeal and, with their written authorization, the psychological screening records will be forwarded to the qualified outside professional conducting the second-opinion evaluation. See GC § 18931 and 2 CCR § 599.977.

[55] FEHA Regulation 2 CCR § 11071(b)(2) states, "Where the results of such medical or psychological examination would result in disqualification, an applicant or employee may submit independent medical opinions for consideration before a final determination on disqualification is made."

Dual relationship. Psychologists serve as an agent of the hiring agency. It is the hiring agency, not the candidate, who is the client. The obligation to the client agency requires the adoption of a perspective and orientation of objectivity, devoid of advocacy for the candidate. Given the high stakes involved in the psychological evaluation, psychologists must treat information provided by candidates with detachment and, at times, even skepticism. This role may be compromised if a psychologist is simultaneously serving the interests of the hiring agency and the candidate. Psychologists are prohibited by ethical standards from engaging in multiple relationships that "could reasonably be expected to impair the psychologist's objectivity, competence, or effectiveness in performing their functions as a psychologist, or otherwise risks exploitation or harm to the person with whom the professional relationship exists" [APA EPPCC Standard 3.05(a)].

Breach of confidentiality. Information provided by references and other collateral sources during the background investigation is protected, and employment information disclosed by an employer to a requesting law enforcement agency is confidential [GC § 1031.1(e)]. When integrating background information with other data sources to make a determination of psychological suitability, this protected information becomes inextricably tied with the decision. The risk may be impermissibly high that, when giving feedback to a candidate about the results of the assessment, the psychologist will reveal portions of the protected and confidential information.

Step 11: Obtain and Analyze Post-Hire Outcome Data and Revise Assessment Methodology, As Needed

Whether predicting natural disasters or human behavior, predictive accuracy can improve only when the data used to make the prediction are analyzed against measures of the outcomes they were designed to predict. This is especially true for predictions based even in part on clinical judgment (Grove & Meehl, 1996; Highhouse, 2002). The more cases used to generate this feedback, the better (Meehl, 1954). While this feedback can consist of sophisticated analyses, even a "post-mortem" analysis of a single case can help a psychologist discover what information he or she may have missed or how relevant information may have been improperly weighted.

Whenever the selection of a peace officer proves to have been a poor decision, the best practice is for all persons involved in the selection, training and supervision of the officer to evaluate what data might have contributed to better prediction and therefore might help to refine future prediction. For the psychologist, a formalized process of feedback at pre-established points in time (e.g., failed or completed probation, termination, resignation in lieu of termination, resignation while under investigation) may facilitate this analysis. Establishing expectations for feedback and the mechanism for achieving it is an important pre-evaluation activity that can provide long-term dividends to the public, the hiring agency and the screening psychologist.

Detecting statistically significant relationships between predictor and criterion variables—the science of validation—requires knowledge about research design and quantitative analyses, and access to modern statistical tools and large data sets. It may be advisable for psychologists to collaborate with test authors, test publishers, or university-based researchers in order to carry out the analyses needed to evaluate and refine their assessment methodologies. Research collaboration is simplified by maintaining assessment data in an appropriately coded (e.g., demographics, agency, position) and accessible format.

Written Psychological Tests 6

Commission Regulation 1955(e)(2) requires that the written assessment battery for evaluating peace officer candidates consist of a minimum of two written psychological instruments: one designed to identify patterns of abnormal behavior, the other designed to assess normal behavior. Both instruments must have evidence of their relevance for evaluating peace officer suitability, and together the instruments must provide information about a candidate's: (1) freedom from emotional and/or mental conditions that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer [GC § 1031(f)], and (2) psychological suitability per the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions [Commission Regulation 1955(a)].

This chapter provides guidance for evaluating tests for their potential use in the assessment battery. The guidance here is drawn from the leading authoritative sources, including the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (Standards, 2014), the *Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures* (APA, 2018a), the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (EEOC, 1978), and the IACP *Preemployment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines* (2020). The POST *Pre-Offer Personality Testing Resource Guide and Technical Report* (2010) and the *Department of Labor Tests and Assessments: An Employer's Guide to Good Practices* (1999) were also used as resources for this chapter.

Following this guidance, a list of the more commonly-used tests is provided, with links to more detailed information provided by test publishers. Psychologists are encouraged to review this information against the criteria and considerations discussed here in their evaluation and selection of written tests that are psychometrically sound and substantively suitable.

Test Information Resources

Tests must have available a technical manual or related documentation that provides clear and complete information regarding how the test was developed, the purposes for which the test can appropriately be used, the criteria the test has been demonstrated to predict, the precision of the scores, and evidence of validity, reliability, and other psychometric considerations as described below. It must also contain complete instructions for test administration, scoring and interpretation.

Technical manuals vary in terms of the amount and quality of information they provide, and these variations may reflect the adequacy of the research supporting the test's use. Well-respected tests will have independent studies to back up their research claims, which should be reviewed as well. Independently published critical test reviews can also provide additional, balanced information on test purpose and performance. The *Mental Measurements Yearbook* (MMY), published by the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements, includes nearly all commercially available psychological tests published for use with English-speaking people and provides a detailed review of each test by an expert in the field of testing. *Tests in Print* (TIP), another Buros Institute publication, includes the same basic information about a test that is included in the MMY but does not contain reviews. A third resource, *Test Critiques*, also provides practical and straightforward test reviews.

Test Selection Considerations

There are a number of questions to research when selecting a written assessment instrument for use in a peace officer evaluation battery. They include:[56]

1. *Is the instrument commercially available?*
2. *Is a comprehensive technical manual or equivalent documentation available?*
3. *Are adequate levels of reliability demonstrated?*
4. *Have adequate levels of validity been demonstrated?*
5. *Has the validity evidence been peer reviewed?*
6. *Does the validity evidence support the test's use for the intended purpose, setting and population?*
7. *Does the user have the qualifications necessary to use the instrument?*
8. *Are the constructs measured by the instrument directly relevant to the evaluation criteria?*
9. *Does the instrument include measures of test-taking approach?*

Test Purpose

The technical manual should clearly describe the construct(s) that the test is purported to assess, and those constructs should reflect some if not all of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions. The manual should include information sufficient to indicate the correspondence between the test scales and the POST Dimensions.

There should be documentation that explains how scale scores are intended to be interpreted and used. The intended use(s) must align with the stated purpose of the psychological evaluation; namely, screening out psychologically unsuitable candidates. A test well-suited for selecting-in individuals who are good performers may be inappropriate for screening-out individuals for whom the risk of problematic behavior is deemed too high. A prediction that an individual is at low risk for engaging in pathological behavior does not imply a prediction that they will exhibit high levels of job performance.

Test users should be wary of vendors that overpromise, either in terms of the number of constructs their test measures relative to the number of items per scale, or unrealistic claims of being able to foretell behavior that defies accurate prediction (such as extreme forms of counterproductive behavior that are difficult if not impossible to predict, given their low frequency or measurement challenges).[57] The more grandiose the claim, the more evidence should be provided justifying the claim.

Reading Level

The reading level of the test should not exceed that of the education required for the position as established at the statewide level (high school diploma, GED or equivalent) or a higher level required by the agency.

Reference Group

Information should be available on the characteristics of the reference (normative) group that was used to develop the test and on which the scoring procedures and score interpretation guidelines are based. The reference group (or a suitable comparison group) should be sufficiently similar to peace officer candidates with respect to such demographics as age, gender, education, and ethnicity. At a minimum, there should be a substantial research base for interpretation with normal range populations. Preferably, one or more reference groups should consist of job applicants in general and peace officer applicants in particular.

[56] Adapted from Ackerman (2010); Melton, Petrila, Poythress, & Slobogin (2007); and Otto, Edens, & Barcus (2000).

[57] One example is the prediction of racial bias. A claim that a test can validly predict this construct would require evidence that it correlates with a post-hire, job-relevant criterion measure of racial bias or is able to accurately classify an individual as racially biased. See Oswald et al. (2013) for a discussion of the challenges predicting interracial and interethnic bias and discrimination using a well-researched instrument, the Implicit Association Test (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998).

Test Updates and Continued Evaluation

Test publishers should indicate when the test was last updated and the purpose of that update (e.g., updated language and/or norms, new legal requirements or scientific developments). Continued research on the test and its use in psychological screening—especially of peace officers—should be provided if available.

Test Developer Qualifications

The educational background and work experience of those who participated in the test development, when available, should demonstrate expertise in both the specific content of the test as well as in test development and test validation (U.S. DOL, 1999).

Psychometric Considerations

Scale reliability reflects the degree to which scale scores are free of measurement error. Measurement error, in turn, reflects the expected degree of inconsistency between scores produced by a measurement procedure and replications of it (Farr & Tippins, 2010). Reliable assessment tools produce consistent, repeatable information.

There are several types of reliability estimates. The acceptable level of reliability will differ depending on the type of test and the reliability estimate used. Test-retest reliability estimates the reliability of scale scores by comparing the results of two test administrations separated by a relatively brief time period. If test-retest reliability is reported, the technical manual should specify the interval between administrations.

Internal consistency reliability reflects the congruity of responses across all items on a test and/or test scale. The more homogeneous the content domain, the higher the internal consistency estimate. There are several different types of internal consistency reliability estimates; each type of estimate is appropriate under certain circumstances. The test information should provide a rationale supporting the use of a particular estimate. For tests that purport to measure multiple constructs, separate internal consistency estimates should be provided for each construct measured.

For scales measuring one specific construct, minimally acceptable internal consistency reliability coefficients typically range between .70-.79, while coefficients of .90+ indicate excellent reliability. Test-retest reliability can be the more appropriate measure for tests that measure multiple constructs; acceptable levels also range between .70-.79. The technical manual and any independent reviews can help determine if the scales demonstrate acceptable reliability. Note that the number of items on a scale directly impacts internal consistency reliability estimates; very lengthy scales can spuriously inflate reliability coefficients.

The reliability of a test is also reflected in the *standard error of measurement* (SEM). The SEM provides an estimate of the margin of error surrounding an individual's estimated true score. SEMs are directly related to test reliability; smaller SEMs indicate more accurate measurement. Because the SEM reflects both the reliability estimate and sample variance, the accuracy of different tests and scales can be judged by comparing their respective SEMs, provided that they are reported using a common standard metric (e.g., T scores).

Information should also be available on sources of *random measurement error* that are relevant for the test and the manner in which reliability studies were conducted. This information should indicate the conditions under which the data were obtained and the characteristics of the group used in gathering reliability information to allow comparisons with the target group (i.e., peace officer candidates).

Validity is the degree to which the accumulated test evidence supports the ability to make correct inferences about an individual from scale scores. The use of test scores for which there is ample evidence of validity does not guarantee accurate decision-making; however, use of poorly validated measures virtually precludes good decision-making (Bornstein, 2011). Tests themselves are neither valid nor invalid—only the interpretations or inferences attributed to test scores can be validated. A test should have sufficient evidence of validity for the intended use and support for the inferences to be made from test scores.

Traditionally, three aspects of validity—content, criterion-related and construct—have been studied. *Content validity* involves evidence that the content of the test canvasses the content domain of the targeted construct. In the context of personnel selection, this is based on the demonstrated correspondence between the attributes measured by the test and those necessary for job performance, as defined by a detailed job analysis. *Criterion-related validity* is reflected by empirical evidence that scale scores predict job performance or other criteria reflecting the targeted, job-related construct. Finally, *construct validity* is demonstrated if the scales can be shown to measure the constructs they purport to measure, based on evidence from a variety of sources, which may include a demonstration that scale scores correlate with scores on other tests of the same construct, differ from scores on measures of other constructs, and otherwise follow similar patterns of results as expected from other measures of the same construct.

These different validation strategies are now seen as various ways of accruing validity evidence rather than different types of validity per se. All such evidence should provide support for interpreting the meaning of test scores and the inferences that can be drawn from them. Each inference may require a different type of evidence, depending on a number of factors.[58] It is the responsibility of test users to evaluate the evidence provided by the test publisher and in the scientific literature to ensure that it is appropriate for their intended use. If the intended use differs from the purpose designated by the test publisher, the test user is responsible for ensuring that there is adequate validity for the alternative application.

Evaluation Criteria and Considerations

The key inferences to be supported in peace officer psychological screening concern statements about future job-relevant behavior. While there are multiple routes for gathering evidence to support predictive inference, the factors and considerations described below apply to any empirical research (Putka & Sackett, 2010).

Validation Research

Well-regarded tests have multiple validation studies to support their use, as described in the technical manual, independent research reports and other published literature. Prospective test users should review the explanations of how these validation studies were conducted; in particular, the following factors should be evaluated.

Validation Sample. The characteristics of the test validation sample should be evaluated for their relevance to peace officer candidates. Validation studies generally have greater relevance to peace officer psychological screening when they involve peace officer or other public safety candidates or employees, and the tests were administered under conditions similar to those in which the test is intended to be used (e.g., preemployment, post-offer).[59]

Sample Size. An adequate sample size is essential for ensuring accurate, replicable results. As a rule of thumb, there should be at least 30-50 individuals in the smallest subgroup for the purposes of descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations). Predictive validities generally require an even larger total sample size to achieve statistical significance.

[58] A detailed discussion of these factors is included in *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014) (www.apa.org/science/standards.html).

[59] See Detrick and Chibnall (2014) for discussion of the impact of context on personality test scores.

Research Design. The research design itself must be evaluated for its relevance to the research question. Generally speaking, when evaluating the validity of test scores for predicting a continuous-variable criterion, the full range of obtained scores should be included in statistical analyses. In contrast, an extreme group experimental design (whereby only individuals with extremely high or low scores are included in the sample) can bias results by either missing effects that are actually present and/or producing effects that are in fact statistical artifacts (Cohen, 1983).

Criteria. The criteria included in the validation study should comport with both the test purpose and the purpose of the psychological evaluation and "should be representative of important work behaviors, outcomes, or relevant organizational expectations regarding individual employee behavior or team performance" (APA, 2018a, p. 29). For example, if the test purports to predict counterproductive behavior, the criteria should include counterproductive acts, as opposed to indices of average to superior performance such as commendations, promotions, etc. Test publishers should specify for which criteria the test exhibits exceptionally good or poor validity.

Validity Coefficients. Unlike reliability coefficients, validity coefficients rarely exceed .40. Validity coefficients of .21 to .35 are typical, but this is dependent upon scales, criteria and other specific features of an individual test. The validation report should provide more than just the statistically significant correlations. The report should also describe how capitalization on chance was controlled through cross-validation, shrinkage computations, or other psychometric means. In addition, any statistical adjustments, such as corrections for range restriction in predictors or criteria, should be reported. When evaluating validity coefficients, it is important to keep in mind that range restriction resulting from a wide range of pre-selection factors (e.g., background investigation, civil service testing, pre-offer personality testing) has the effect of attenuating correlations between test scores and the dependent variables being studied. Because the validation sample normally excludes subjects who fail psychological evaluations or other selection components, the validity coefficients are based on a narrower range of scores than would be seen if all applicants were tested, hired and studied. As noted earlier, statistical corrections for range restriction (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004) are often used to "disattenuate" the validity coefficients and provide a more accurate estimate of true validity (e.g., Sellbom et al., 2007; Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015).

Effect Size. Two variables or factors may have a significant relationship with one another, but the significance value (often expressed as a p-value) says nothing about the magnitude or strength of the relationship. An effect size statistic complements inferential statistics such as p-values and reflects the magnitude or strength of the relationship.

Predictive Power/Classification Accuracy. Another way of demonstrating the predictive power of a test is its ability to correctly classify candidates as successful or unsuccessful. Predictive power is a function of the total number of accurate classifications (true positives and true negatives) vs. inaccurate classifications (false positives and false negatives).

Before accepting test publisher claims of high predictive power, the base rate of occurrence of the targeted outcome must be considered. Prediction is most accurate when the base rate of occurrence is close to 50%; predicting low frequency behaviors or outcomes (such as integrity violations in peace officers, which hover around 5%) is far more challenging. Not uncommonly, a test can have a reported high degree of accuracy in identifying true positives (e.g., candidates who, based on test results, are correctly identified as psychologically unsuitable), but will be worse or no better than chance in its prediction of false positives (e.g., candidates who, based on test results, are incorrectly labeled as psychologically unsuitable). Therefore, before accepting claims of high accuracy in identifying negative performers, data on false positives and false negatives should be considered (Cuttler, 2011).

Test Norms and Cut Scores. Norm and comparison groups of inadequate size or that significantly differ from the target group may limit the usefulness of test scores. Specific cut-off scores or expectancy tables should have a statistically supported rationale for their use and an explanation of how they were established.

Separate norms based on gender, ethnicity, and other protected classes were once a common way to adjust for any group-based differences in test scores. However, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 prohibits group-based score adjustments, different cut-off scores for different groups of test takers, and alteration of employment-related test results based on the demographics of the test takers.

Legal Considerations

Test users are wise to conduct independent research to determine whether any successful legal challenges have been mounted against the written instruments in their battery. Test publishers are a valuable source of information about legal challenges, although they may not be at liberty to report such information if the challenge resulted in a confidential settlement. Tests as a whole, as well as individual items, should be carefully evaluated for their compliance with equal employment laws, including the Civil Rights Act, ADA, FEHA, and GINA. These considerations are discussed in Chapter 2: Legal, Regulatory and Professional Requirements.

Additional Tests

Other tests may be added to those required to satisfy the POST requirements, especially if agency-specific job requirements are not adequately assessed by the mandatory minimum battery. For example, additional tests may be needed to assess particular skills (e.g., reading, report writing), competencies (e.g., related to leadership or multicultural awareness), or cognitive abilities (e.g., memory, multitasking, reasoning). Any additional tests must be chosen on the basis of their demonstrated validity in the context of peace officer selection if they are to be considered when making a suitability determination.

Given the open-ended format of *projective tests*, as well as the subjectivity required in their interpretation and the dearth of peer-reviewed research demonstrating their reliability and validity in preemployment evaluations of peace officers, they are poorly suited as components of a peace officer candidate screening battery (Workowski & Pallone, 1999). At best, these measures can be used as hypothesis generators; as such, their use should be limited to providing probes for questioning in the interview or follow-up to traditional, empirically validated measures. This is also true for written personality tests that are designed and intended for training and coaching purposes, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

Before adding an assessment instrument to the minimum battery, the evaluator should consider the empirical evidence of its incremental validity—that is, whether its addition leads to an increase in validity, and whether the increase (if any) justifies the additional costs in time and other resources. Garb (2003) conducted an analysis of the results of a variety of studies on incremental validity. He concluded that "when an assessment instrument has good incremental validity, it is almost always the case that it has good validity when used alone" (p. 517), although the reverse is not necessarily true.

Test-Taking Approaches and Their Measurement

The predictive accuracy of an individual's test results depends not only on the validity of the instrument but also on the test taker's responsiveness to test items (thoroughness), response consistency (attention), and test-taking approach (straightforwardness). Because of the high stakes involved in preemployment screening, job applicants are usually motivated to be attentive and thorough in completing tests, leaving test-taking approach as the primary threat to accurate reporting.

Approaches to testing fall into two broad categories: *overreporting* (also referred to as malingering and faking bad), defined as any pattern of responding in which applicants claim to have problems that they do not have or exaggerate ones that they do have, and *underreporting*, defined as any pattern of responding in which test takers emphasize their

strengths and deny or minimize problems and shortcomings. Understandably, overreporting is rarely encountered in preemployment evaluations. On the other hand, the base rate of underreporting is estimated to be upwards of .30 (Baer, 2002).

Specific test-taking approaches that belong to the category of underreporting include (1) *intentional underreporting* or *impression management*: the conscious dissimulation of test responses—including the deliberate denial or gross minimization of physical and/or psychological symptoms—in order to create a favorable impression, and (2) *unintentional underreporting* or *self-deception*: positively biased responses that the respondent actually believes are true (Paulhus, 1984). The term "underreporting" as used here refers broadly and generally to both intentional and unintentional (i.e., naïve) claims of good adjustment and moral virtue (Paulhus, 1991; Thomas et al., 2009).

Table 6.1 compares the average scores of peace officer candidates on several personality test validity scales against those of the general population. As indicated in this table, peace officer candidates commonly score higher than the general population on scales measuring underreporting. While these elevated average scores could indicate defensiveness or deception, it might also or instead be the result of the rigorous winnowing of the candidate pool that takes place earlier in the hiring process. It is not surprising that those who make it to the psychological evaluation are generally found to be psychologically healthy individuals who rarely endorse serious psychopathology (Lowmaster & Morey, 2012).

Table 6.1
Comparison of Selected Validity Scales Against General Adult and Peace Officer Norms

	General Adult Norms		Peace Officer Norms	
Scale/Test	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
L, MMPI-3[a]	50T	10T	57	12
K, MMPI-3[a]	50T	10T	65	7
PIM, PAI[b]	50T	10T	61.3	7.3
Gi, CPI[c]	17.20 (raw)	6.32	25.08	6.16

[a] Corey & Ben-Porath, 2022; [b] Lowmaster & Morey, 2012; [c] Gough & Bradley, 1996

In a meta-analysis of police applicant studies focused on positive test-taking approaches, Ones and Dilchert (2004) reported that large proportions of applicants meet or exceed cutoffs on validity scales when compared to general population norms, thereby necessitating the need to interpret them against law enforcement applicant norms. They concluded that underreporting scales such as the L or K scale on the MMPI instruments, and the PIM on the PAI: (1) cannot be used to correct personality scale scores to improve prediction; (2) do not assess faking or lying (this requires confirmation from extratest data); (3) may be measuring actual traits, particularly emotional stability and conscientiousness; and (4) are negatively correlated with cognitive ability.

In a meta-analytic review of underreporting of psychopathology on the MMPI-2, Baer and Miller (2002) concluded that the consequences of classifying applicants as deceptive solely on the basis of their scores on underreporting scales could be quite problematic. "[I]n an effort to minimize such errors," they advised, "it may be important to consider other sources of information, such as interview data, behavioral observations, other self-report data, and collateral information when making decisions about individual protocols" (pp. 23-24).

Findings from individual studies reporting correlations of underreporting scales and post-hire counterproductive behavior (Weiss et al., 2013) have not been broadly replicated, leading some researchers (e.g., Ones & Dilchert, 2004) to conclude that these scales do not predict job-related outcome criteria. Even in the landmark PERSEREC study of personality tests as

predictors of police corruption (Boes et al., 1997)—often cited for its finding that "[o]ffending officers were more likely to obtain high scores on the Lie scale" (p. 22)—the MMPI/MMPI-2 L scale could not accurately differentiate violators from non-violators. Therefore, even when underreporting is found, it may not distinguish suitable from unsuitable candidates (Rogers, 2008b). However, it can and should raise questions about the ability of scores on substantive scales to accurately reflect a candidate's psychological functioning (Corey & Zelig, 2020; Forbey et al., 2013).

In their study of the PAI as a predictor of post-hire performance of police applicants, Lowmaster and Morey (2012) found that applicants who acknowledged greater psychological problems (i.e., showed less defensiveness) were also less likely to engage in post-hire unethical behaviors. The reverse was not necessary true; defensive applicants did not necessarily perform poorly in their duties. They concluded with a caution about making predictions based solely on response style.

Detrick and Chibnall (2014) studied police candidates' responses to the MMPI-2-RF in both high demand (preemployment evaluation, with results used in selection decisions) and low demand (following completion of the academy, with results used solely for research) contexts. They found that underreporting scales (L-r and K-r) have differential attenuating effects on the substantive scales: Candidates exhibited significant underreporting in high demand settings and substantially less so in low demand conditions. Interestingly, however, the change in L-r was inversely related primarily to externalizing acting-out behavior (i.e., scales BXD, RC4, JCP, DISC-r), whereas a change in K-r was the sole predictor of inverse changes in scales measuring internalized affective functioning, including EID, RC7, RC9, HLP, BRF, and NEGE-r.

Conclusion. Although underreporting can impact an individual's personality test scores, the extent to which it poses a threat to overall test validity may be more nuanced. Nevertheless, the following general conclusions can be supported regarding the treatment of high scores on measures of underreporting:

1. A score on an underreporting scale cannot be judged to be high except in comparison to other candidates who completed the same test under similar conditions. Scores that deviate substantially from the comparison group mean should be subject to heightened scrutiny for intentional underreporting, rather than lead to automatic disqualification (Weiss et al., 2013).
2. A high score on a measure of underreporting does not automatically render the test protocol uninterpretable (Corey & Ben-Porath, 2018; Detrick & Chibnall, 2014; Hogan, et al., 2007). It does mean that the absence of elevation on the test's substantive scales cannot be assumed to indicate the absence of problems associated with them (Ben-Porath & Sellbom, in press). Elevated scores on substantive scales may continue to be interpreted in an underreporting protocol, albeit with the understanding that the scores may underestimate the problems measured by those scales.[60] Although a test scale may be a valid measure of a psychological construct per se, individual scale scores may provide invalid information for a given test taker (Ben-Porath & Waller, 1992).

It is important to keep in mind that complete and accurate self-report is a rarity in any context, even in those that are uniquely supportive and nonjudgmental, and that most individuals engage in a variety of test-taking approaches that reflect their personal goals in a particular setting. Indeed, "all individuals fall short of full and accurate self-disclosure, irrespective of the social context. The evidence is compelling that some degree of deception, be it omission or commission, is a part of most extended communications" (Rogers, 2008a, p. 4). As a result, underreporting should be thought of as falling on a continuum, ranging from low to high in both magnitude and consequence, rather than as a dichotomous (present or not present) phenomenon.

[60] There is little doubt that underreporting, at least at high levels, reduces a test's sensitivity in the prediction/classification of psychopathology. See Lanyon & Wershba (2013). Its impact on validity with respect to other job-relevant criterion measures is less clear. See also Hough et al. (1990).

Finally, when integrating data to make a suitability determination (Chapter 9), keep in mind that a candidate's reluctance to report problems or symptoms and a tendency to emphasize more positive qualities can contribute to discrepancies between self-report and collateral data sources. The opposite also can occur: Candidates who respond to test items in an overly scrupulous manner may produce more problematic self-report data than their collateral sources reveal (see Detrick & Chibnall, 2014).

Retesting When Underreporting Scores Are High

Re-administering a test when it appears that the candidate was excessively defensive or deceptive is not good practice for several reasons. First, doing so alerts the candidate to respond differently but not necessarily more accurately.[61] Second, re-administering a test with an admonishment, warning, or other alteration of the standard instructions violates test standardization, thus rendering the results uninterpretable when evaluated against norms and comparison groups gathered under standardized conditions (Hogan, Barrett, & Hogan, 2007).[62]

As an alternative to re-administration, a psychologist may consider administering a second, comparable test measuring similar constructs and using standardized, unaltered instructions. This also permits a comparison of test-taking approaches across measures.

Unanswered Items

Items left unanswered by a test taker reduce the reliability of the scores on the scales that contain them. Using test publisher recommendations, test users should carefully assess the degree to which unanswered items may render a score uninterpretable.

Discussing Responses to Individual Test Items with the Candidate in the Interview

It is important to resolve concerns raised by candidates' responses to written testing. However, asking candidates to explain or elaborate on their responses to individual test items frequently provides little reliable information. Candidates typically reply that they misunderstood the item content or incorrectly recorded their answers, even when a pattern of such responses raises legitimate doubts about the credibility of a candidate's reply.

An alternative approach is to treat the individual test items as topics of inquiry by evaluating what the item response, if accurate, would reveal about the candidate, and then probe to determine whether that hypothesis is supported. For example, consider the case in which a candidate answers "true" to the item, "I often feel unsafe when home alone." The psychologist might hypothesize that the candidate is hypervigilant, anxious, or perhaps prone to overestimate risks associated with low-probability events. Testing these hypotheses would be aided by examining scale scores measuring hypervigilance and anxiety, as well as by interview questions focused on evaluating the candidate's objective appraisal of risk.

Specific Written Tests

Table 6.2 lists the written psychological tests frequently identified in the literature as used in psychological evaluations of peace officer candidates. These tests are grouped into three categories:

1. ***Omnibus tests*** comprise multi-construct measures of normal and/or abnormal adult personality functioning with a substantial literature supporting their use in peace officer screening, as well as availability of peace officer applicant norms or comparison groups.

[61] Butcher et al (1997) found that specialized retest instructions given to a group of airline pilot applicants who initially produced "invalid" MMPI-2 profiles (defined as L ≥ 65T and/or K ≥ 70T) resulted in valid profiles for the majority of them, although mean retest scores on the clinical scales were still below 65T. While this study demonstrates that specialized instructions can produce less underreporting and slightly higher clinical scale scores on retesting, the study did not address the veracity of the retest self-reports.

[62] Hogan, Barrett, and Hogan (2007) point out that instructional warnings have small effect sizes, may introduce systematic biases rather than reduce response distortion, and may be unethical. Furthermore, in a study of real job applicants who were rejected, reapplied, and were reevaluated 6 months later, Hogan et al. reported that "5.2% or fewer improved their scores on any scale on the 2nd occasion; moreover, scale scores were as likely to change in the negative direction as the positive" (p. 1270).

2. ***Specialized tests*** and systems consist of tests and assessment systems (i.e., proprietary combinations of tests or tests and biodata) developed specifically and solely for use in peace officer applicant screening and not for use with, or for comparison to, the general adult population.
3. ***Adapted omnibus tests*** refer to multi-construct measures that have been adapted for use in peace officer screening. These tests have specialized interpretive statements referencing empirical correlates and/or construct inferences, tables or figures showing comparisons to both general adult and peace officer applicant norms, and/or special scales or indices developed specifically for use in peace officer evaluations.

In addition, tests within each of these categories are identified as to whether they target *abnormal* vs. *normal* functioning, consistent with Commission Regulation 1955(e)(2) requiring that the test battery contain at least one instrument designed and validated to identify patterns of abnormal behavior and another designed and validated to assess normal behavior.[63]

Tests of *abnormal* functioning are capable of assessing emotional and/or mental conditions that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer. Tests of *normal* functioning contain only measures of normal-range personality traits and attributes. Both types of tests can and should aid in the evaluation of candidates against the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions, since they have equal relevance for screening out candidates based on job-relevant psychopathology or unsuitable personality traits. For purposes of comparison, several facts about each test are listed in Table 6.2. Hyperlinks to product information and detailed information on the use of the instruments for peace officer psychological screening are included. This information should be evaluated against the criteria and considerations discussed earlier in this chapter.

Two types of reputable personality and psychological instruments are purposely not listed in Table 6.2. First, tests of single or very limited range constructs [e.g., State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI), Emotional Judgment Inventory (EJI), Personnel Reaction Blank (PRB), Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) are not listed because they would not satisfy the regulatory requirements of a written assessment instrument unless used in conjunction with tests listed in this table or comparable alternatives. Second, information on select-in (vs screen-out) personality instruments [e.g., Hilson Personnel Profile/Success Quotient (HPP/SQ), Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) and the Law Enforcement Services Inc. (LESI) Multi-Domain Assessment System Law Enforcement] is not included.

[63] This distinction is not equivalent to the ADA distinction between a "medical" and "non-medical" evaluation, since some tests of normal functioning include individual test items that may render them medical inquiries, thus requiring that they be given after a conditional offer of employment.

Table 6.2
Written Assessment Instruments Commonly Used to Screen Peace Officer Candidates

Test	Category	Abnormal or Normal	Number of Items	Validity Scales	Substantive Scales	Average Amount of Time to Complete
16PF	Omnibus	Normal	185	3	21	25-35 min.
16PF PSR	Adapted Omnibus	Normal	185	3	25	25-35 min.
16PF/PEPQ PSR Plus	Adapted Omnibus	Normal & Abnormal	325	3	32	35-45 min.
CPI	Omnibus	Normal	434	3	34	45-60 min.
CPI Police & Public Safety Selection Report	Adapted Omnibus	Normal	434	3	42	45-60 min.
HBI-R	Omnibus (limited range)	Abnormal	309	1	9	35-45 min.
HDS	Omnibus (limited range)	Normal[1]	168	0	11	15-20 min.
HLAP	Omnibus	Abnormal	114	1	12	15-20 min.
IPI-2	Specialized	Abnormal	202	1	16	30-40 min.
MMPI-3	Omnibus	Abnormal	335	10	42	35-50 min.
MMPI-3 PCIR Police Candidate Interpretive Report	Adapted Omnibus	Abnormal	335	10	42	35-50 min.
MMPI-3 CCIR Correctional Candidate Interpretive Report	Adapted Omnibus	Abnormal	335	10	42	35-50 min.
MMPI-2-RF	Omnibus	Abnormal	338	9	42	35-50 min.
MMPI-2-RF PCIR Police Candidate Interpretive Report	Adapted Omnibus	Abnormal	338	9	42	35-50 min.
MMPI-2 Revised Personnel System, 3rd Edition	Adapted Omnibus	Abnormal	567	8	100+[2]	60-90 min.
MMPI-2	Omnibus	Abnormal	567	8	117+[3]	60-90 min.
MPQ	Omnibus	Normal	256	3	14	30 min.
MPQ Police Preemployment Interpretive Report	Omnibus	Normal	256	3	14	30 min.
M-PULSE	Specialized	Normal[10]	455	2	22	60-90 min.
NEO PI-R	Omnibus	Normal	240	0	30	30-40 min.
PAI	Omnibus	Abnormal	344	4	18	50 min.
PAI Police & Public Safety Selection Report	Adapted Omnibus	Abnormal	344	4	25	50 min.

[1] Although focused on normal aspects of personality and behavior, these instruments contain one or more items or scales that may be seen as identifying the nature or severity of a disability as defined by the ADA/FEHA.

[2] Based on the Minnesota Report: Revised Personnel System, 3rd Edition, Law Enforcement Adjustment Rating Report. Availability of the Restructured Clinical (RC) scales, clinical subscales, content scales, content component scales, special indices, and non-K-corrected T-scores varies by report.

[3] Based on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 Extended Score Report.

16PF Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (Talogy/Pearson)

The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) is a comprehensive measure of normal-range personality resulting from factor-analytic research on the sixteen normal-range personality traits for which the instrument is named. The 16PF also measures five broad dimensions–a variant of the "Big Five" factors, resulting in a hierarchical structure of personality. The five second-order global measures describe personality at a broader, conceptual level, while the primary factors describe more nuanced, trait-based aspects of personality. The standard report for the 16PF, either from Talogy or Pearson, does not include peace officer applicant norms. Two versions of the 16PF (5th and 6th editions) are currently available.

Product information

Sample Report

16PF PSR: 16PF Protective Services Report (Talogy)

The 16PF PSR is generated from the 16PF Questionnaire and uses proprietary, research-based analyses to produce four composite dimensions that are the foundation of the PSR: emotional adjustment, integrity/control, intellectual efficiency, and interpersonal relations. In addition to scores for each of these four dimensions, the PSR provides an empirically derived narrative interpretation that describes how the individual's personal work style impacts performance in areas such as safety, communication, teamwork, and use of force.

Product information

Sample report

16PF/PEPQ PSR Plus Public Safety Report Plus (Talogy)

The PSR Plus is based upon the test-taker's responses to the 325-item PsychEval Personality Questionnaire (PEPQ). Part I of the PEPQ uses the 185 normal personality items from the 16PF Fifth Edition Questionnaire. Thus, the PEPQ includes the 16 Primary Factor scales as well as the five Global Factor scales from the 16PF Questionnaire. Part II of the PEPQ, which contains 140 items, focuses on pathology.

Product information

Sample report

CPI California Psychological Inventory (Myers-Briggs)

The CPI is a self-report questionnaire designed to measure normal-range human behavior. The CPI is available in both a 434- and 260-item format. In developing the CPI-260 the author did not add items; rather, he only removed items. Great care was taken to maintain equivalence between the two measures, enabling the user to interpret CPI-260 results using legacy CPI-434 interpretive guides and empirical research (Gough & Bradley, 2005). The CPI–434 contains 20 folk scales that measure features of individuals and interpersonal functioning. These include scales measuring constructs highly relevant to psychological domains of the police officer position, including Dominance (Do), Self-Control (Sc), Sociability (Sy), Social Presence (Sp), Independence (In), Empathy (Em), Responsibility (Re), Socialization (So), Tolerance (To), and Achievement via Conformance (Ac) (Gough & Bradley, 2005). In addition, the CPI also provides "special-purpose" scales that are also directly relevant to the police officer position including Managerial Potential (Mp), Work Orientation (Wo), Amicability (Ami), Anxiety (Anx), Narcissism (NAR), Leadership (Lp), and Law Enforcement Orientation (Leo) (Gough & Bradley, 2005). The CPI reports produced by Myers-Briggs do not include peace officer applicant norms.

Product information

CPI Police & Public Safety Report (JRA)

The Johnson-Roberts & Associates (JRA) CPI Police and Public Safety Report is available for both the CPI-434 and CPI-260 instruments. The JRA specialized reports supplement the basic CPI with features designed specifically for selecting public safety officers. These include: (1) risk statements that estimate the likelihood that the applicant will demonstrate specific selection relevant problems (e.g., Anger Management, Job Performance, Integrity, Involuntary Departure); (2) CPI scale profiles based on norms that compare the applicant's test scores to those of applicants who were hired and successfully held the job that the applicant is applying for; and (3) a list of individual "selection-relevant" CPI items endorsed by the applicant which have been identified as indicators of likely job performance problems. The report's risk statements are generated from proprietary prediction equations derived from large samples of peace officer applicants. For each risk statement and scale score reported, percentiles representing the applicant's relative placement within the comparison group are also displayed to provide additional interpretive value. Both JRA CPI Reports have special norms for six job classes (police, corrections, fire, communications dispatcher, probation officer, and security) and profiles can be displayed in the standard JRA format with computed special group norm T-scores, or with the scores of the applicant overlaid on shaded bars representing the comparison group. In addition, the JRA CPI-260 special report includes a new Scale Descriptions section that dynamically displays scale information that may be relevant to a selection determination when a scale score for a specific applicant meets a prescribed elevation or depression.

Detailed information on the use of the CPI Police and Public Safety Reports is available in the JRA technical manuals for each special report (JRA CPI-260-PPSR Technical Manual, 2019; JRA CPI-434-PPSR Technical Manual, 2018)

HBI-R Hilson Background Investigation Inventory-Revised (Talogy)

The Hilson Background Investigation Inventory-Revised aids in identifying "high-risk" candidates with antisocial behavior patterns and/or job-related difficulties. It is a combination of the Inwald Survey 2, Inwald Survey 5-Revised, and Hilson Safety/Security Risk Inventory developed by Robin Inwald, Ph.D.

Product information

Sample report

HDS Hogan Development Survey (Hogan Assessments)

The Hogan Development Survey (HDS) measures 11 dark-side personality characteristics and 33 subcharacteristics associated with career derailment and leadership failure. The HDS provides scores and interpretative information on these tendencies that emerge when a person fails to manage their impression (often due to stress, authority, or boredom). These tendencies impede work relationships, negatively impact leadership performance, hinder productivity, and limit one's career potential and success. Administrators should be trained on the use and interpretation of the HDS prior to using it for selection. Peace officer applicant norms are not available for the HDS.

Product information

HLAP Hilson Life Adjustment Profile (Talogy)

The Hilson Life Adjustment Profile (HLAP) measures specific psychological characteristics that may affect a person's ability to function in a high-risk occupation. Symptoms related to emotional adjustment disorders, such as depression, paranoia, and anxiety are identified. The HLAP, developed by Robin Inwald, Ph.D., also includes items relating to an individual's actual involvement in activities, social support network, and overall level of functioning.

Product information

Sample report

IPI-2 Inwald Personality Inventory-2 (Talogy)

The Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI) was the first assessment instrument designed specifically to evaluate police and public safety candidates for personality characteristics, emotional patterns, attitudes, and behaviors that were likely to significantly impair their ability to function in a public safety role. In 2011, PSI (previously named IPAT) released the IPI-2. Like its predecessor, the IPI-2 measures unfavorable characteristics and patterns of behavior that have been determined to be undesirable for professionals in high-risk occupations. The IPI-2 is based on public safety norms that permit analysis of how an applicant's scores compare with those of other public safety applicants.

Product information

Data sheet

Sample report

MMPI-2 Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (Pearson)

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), a revision of the original MMPI (1943), was published by the University of Minnesota Press in 1989 and revised in 2001. Updates were introduced in 2003 (The Restructured Clinical [RC] Scales) and 2006 (The Symptom Validity [FBS] Scale) documented in a test monograph in 2009. The MMPI-2 is a 567-item self-report instrument designed to aid in the assessment of a wide range of clinical conditions. It is used in nonclinical settings to assess persons who are candidates for high-risk public safety positions.

Product information

Detailed information on the use of the MMPI-2 in peace officer psychological screening (Ben-Porath, 2014)

MMPI-2 Revised Personnel System, 3rd Edition Adjustment Rating Report or Revised Personnel Interpretive Report (Pearson)

Both the Adjustment Rating Report and the Revised Personnel Interpretive Report are tailored to specific public safety-sensitive positions, including law enforcement officer. Reports have been updated with two sets of mean profiles on the validity, clinical, content, and supplementary scales. One profile compares applicants to other applicants for the same position; the other compares applicants to a sample of individuals applying for public safety positions generally. The Revised Personnel Interpretive Report includes a narrative section, whereas the Adjustment Rating Report graphically presents scores for five work-relevant dimensions (openness to evaluation, social facility, addiction, potential, stress tolerance, and overall adjustment). This report does not include the MMPI-2 Restructured Clinical (RC) Scales.

Product information

MMPI-2-RF Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 Restructured Form (Pearson)

The MMPI-2-RF consists of a subset of 338 items from the MMPI-2. It includes nine Validity Scales (seven of which are modified versions of the MMPI-2 Validity Scales). Also included are the nine RC Scales (identical in composition to the ones scored on the MMPI-2) and PSY-5 Scales (revised to be scored from the reduced item pool). The MMPI-2-RF also includes three Higher-Order Scales that assess three broad domains of dysfunction measured by the MMPI-2 item pool (Emotional/Internalizing Dysfunction, Thought Dysfunction, and Behavioral/Externalizing Dysfunction), which serve the dual role of measuring broad-based dimensions of personality and psychopathology and providing an organizing framework for interpreting MMPI-2-RF scale scores. Twenty three Specific Problems Scales cover the areas of somatic complaints, internalizing problems, externalizing problems, and interpersonal difficulties; and two Interest Scales. The Specific Problems Scales include measures of distinctive Clinical Scale components that are not represented in the RC Scales, measures of facets of the RC Scales that warrant separate assessment (for example, a substance abuse facet of RC4) and scales designed to assess clinically significant attributes that are not directly assessed by Clinical or RC Scales. Using modern scale construction techniques, all the MMPI-2-RF Scales were designed to measure the constructs assessed by the MMPI-2 in a more efficient and psychometrically sound manner. Because the 338 items are a subset of the 567 items of the MMPI-2, it is possible to use existing MMPI-2 data sets to investigate the MMPI-2-RF. The Score Report permits a comparison of the test-taker's scores against both the normative population and other user-designated comparison groups, including a large, representative sample of law enforcement officer applicants.

Product information

Detailed information on the use of the MMPI-2-RF in peace officer psychological screening (Ben-Porath, 2014)

MMPI-2-RF PCIR Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 Restructured Form, Police Candidate Interpretive Report (Pearson)

The PCIR reports a candidate's scores on the MMPI-2-RF in comparison to both the normative sample and norms from a North American sample of 2,074 police officer candidates. It includes interpretation of clinically significant scores, construct-based statements about possible implications of uncommonly high (but not necessarily clinically elevated) scores for police officer candidates, base rate information for both clinically elevated and non-elevated scores, and a narrative description of job-relevant correlates of the candidate's scores organized into 10 domains closely linked to the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions. This report incorporates findings from a growing literature on identification of psychological risk factors in peace officer candidates based on MMPI-2-RF scores substantially below a statistical threshold for clinical significance. The PCIR also reports item-level information, including a list of the candidate's MMPI-2-RF item responses that warrant follow-up in the clinical interview. The MMPI-2-RF PCIR's narrative statements and inferences are fully annotated and referenced.

Product information

MMPI-3 Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-3 (Pearson)

Updated for the first time since the mid-1980s and designed to match the 2020 US Census demographics, the MMPI-3 normative sample includes 1,620 individuals (810 men and 810 women) ages 18 and older from diverse communities throughout the United States. The MMPI-3 includes 75 new and 24 updated items used to develop new scales (Combined Response Inconsistency, Eating Concerns, Compulsivity, Impulsivity, and Self-Importance) and to enhance existing MMPI-2-RF scales. Descriptive data from a broad range of settings

make it possible to compare an individual's test results with relevant groups in mental health, medical, forensic, and public safety settings (see the MMPI-3 PCIR description below). The 335-item inventory takes only 25–35 minutes to administer by computer and 35–50 minutes to administer by paper and pencil. Remote administration is also possible using Pearson's Q-global web-based system. The *Manual for Administration, Scoring, and Interpretation* (Ben-Porath & Tellegen, 2020a) provides a brief description of the background for and development of the MMPI-3, a description of the new normative sample, standard procedures for administering, scoring, and interpretation, and case illustrations. The *MMPI-3 Technical Manual* (Ben-Porath & Tellegen, 2020b) describes the rationale for developing the test, the procedures used to fashion the scales and collect the new test norms, descriptive findings on the scales in a broad range of settings, and extensive psychometric findings. These findings include scale score reliability estimates as well as standard errors of measurement and empirical correlates in mental health, medical, forensic, public safety, and other nonclinical settings. Detailed analyses reported in the Technical Manual indicate that interpretation of the updated MMPI-3 scales can be guided by over 450 peer-reviewed MMPI-2-RF publications.

Product information

Detailed information on the use of the MMPI-3 in peace officer psychological screening (Corey & Ben-Porath, in press)

MMPI-3 PCIR Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-3 Police Candidate Interpretive Report (Pearson)

Developed with new normative data, an updated and diverse comparison group of 2,036 police candidates, and based on the most up-to-date police candidate outcome research, the MMPI-3 PCIR report helps psychologists identify high-risk candidates in an efficient, evidence-based, and legally defensible way. The report follows the same structure as the MMPI-2-RF PCIR with the following sections: Synopsis, Protocol Validity, Clinical Findings, Diagnostic Considerations, Comparison Group Findings, Job-Relevant Correlates, Item-Level Information (list of unscorable responses, critical responses, optional user-designated item-level information, and critical follow-up items for police candidate evaluations), Endnotes, and Research Reference List.

Product Information

MMPI-3 CCIR Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-3 Correctional Candidate Interpretive Report (Pearson)

As with the updated MMPI-3 PCIR, the MMPI-3 CCIR is among the new suite of MMPI-3 Public Safety Candidate Interpretive Reports published by the University of Minnesota and distributed by Pearson. The CCIR follows the same structure and contains the same sections and features as the PCIR, with comparison group data based on a nationally diverse sample of 536 correctional officer candidates. Other reports in the suite include the MMPI-3 Dispatcher Candidate Interpretive Report (DCIR) and MMPI-3 Firefighter Candidate Interpretive Report (FCIR).

Product Information

MPQ Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (Pearson)

The Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) is a 256-item self-report measure of a broad array of normal-range, individual-differences personality traits. It contains three (3) Validity, three (3) Higher-Order, and 11 Primary Trait scales with a long history of research use. The current version of the test includes updated scales for applied use and a new normative sample representing the contemporary U.S. population. A comprehensive MPQ Manual

for Administration, Scoring, and Interpretation (Tellegen, Sellbom, Kamp, & Handel, 2023), available from the test distributor (Pearson), provides a detailed description of the history and development of the MPQ, information on the new normative sample, validity evidence, case illustrations, and standard procedures for administering, scoring, and interpretation.

Product information

MPQ Police Preemployment Interpretive Report (Pearson)

Developed with both MPQ normative and police comparison group data, the MPQ Police Preemployment Interpretive Report (PPIR) is a computer-generated report designed to inform the assessment of a prospective police officer's job-relevant psychological traits and competencies. It provides an option for preoffer or postoffer reporting for use in situations in which the MPQ was administered, respectively, before or after a conditional offer of employment. The PPIR provides empirically grounded and conceptually informed interpretations to assist screening psychologists when making suitability decisions. The MPQ User's Guide for the Police Preemployment Interpretive Report (Corey, Sellbom, & Ben-Porath, 2023) provides background on the development of the report, a summary of validity evidence, standard procedures for interpretation, and case illustrations. The PPIR focuses on identifying both positive and negative attributes, as indicated by the test taker's scores, and it includes evidence-based interpretive statements (organized by their corresponding POST psychological screening dimension) with fully transparent citations linking all statements with their interpretive sources, as well as user-designated item-level information.

Product information

M-PULSE Matrix-Predictive Uniform Law Enforcement Selection Evaluation Inventory (Matrix)

The M-PULSE Inventory produces results for 18 liability scales designed to predict police officer misconduct; 16 empirical scales measuring attitudes, values, and beliefs; 10 "California POST Scales" measuring facets of personality considered important to police work; two validity scales; and a measure of substance abuse problems. High scores on any of the individual subareas indicate increased chances of problematic post-hire behavior as a law enforcement officer. Many of the test's 455 items were written to represent what the authors regarded as the most salient items from the PAI and the MMPI-2. (Note: Although the publisher states that this test may be used either pre- or post-offer, careful consideration should be given to the potential impact of the "Chemical Abuse/Dependency" liability scale and the "Substance Abuse" scale on the classification of the test as medical under the ADA.)

Product information

Detailed information on the use of the M-PULSE in peace officer psychological screening (Matrix, 2014)

NEO PI-R NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (PAR)

The NEO PI-R is a 240-item inventory designed to operationalize the Five-Factor Model of personality. Examinees respond to items on a 5-point Likert-type scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with the order of the labels balanced across items to control for acquiescence and nay-saying effects. The NEO PI-R yields five domain scores that represent the most basic personality dimensions of the five-factor model. Within each broad domain, there are six narrow traits (facets) that together represent a given domain score. Norms are established for men and women separately, and combined into non-gendered norms for use in personnel selection. The authors of the NEO PI-R maintain that empirical evidence does not support the use of validity scales. In response to criticism of this position, three NEO PI-R

research validity scales were developed by Schinka, Kinder, and Kremer (1997). Detrick and Chibnall (2013) published police officer applicant norms for use of the NEO PI-R in police candidate screening.

Product information

Detailed information on the use of the NEO PI-R in peace officer psychological screening (Detrick, 2014)

PAI Personality Assessment Inventory (PAR)

The PAI is a 344-item, multi-scale measure of personality, emotional, and behavioral features of psychological functioning. In contains 22 non-overlapping scales covering constructs relevant to a broad-based assessment of mental disorders. The scales are organized into four clusters: four validity scales, 11 clinical scales, which correspond to psychiatric diagnostic categories; five treatment scales, pertaining to factors that may affect treatment of a mental health condition; and two interpersonal scales (warmth and dominance). To facilitate interpretation and to cover the full range of complex clinical constructs, 10 scales contain conceptually derived subscales. The PAI utilizes a four-point response scale (false, somewhat true, mainly true, very true). Police applicant norms, using a small sample of 85 law enforcement officer candidates, were published by Lowmaster and Morey (2011).

Product information

PAI Police & Public Safety Selection Report (JRA)

The Johnson-Roberts & Associates (JRA) Police and Public Safety Report supplements the basic PAI with features designed specifically for selecting public safety officers. These include: (1) risk statements that estimate the likelihood that the applicant will demonstrate specific selection relevant problems (e.g., Anger Management, Job Performance, Integrity, Involuntary Departure); (2) PAI scale and subscale profiles based on norms that compare the applicant's test scores to those of applicants who were hired and successfully held the job that the applicant is applying for; and (3) a list of individual "selection-relevant" PAI items endorsed by the applicant which have been identified as indicators of likely job performance problems, and (4) a Scale Description section that dynamically displays scale information that may be relevant to a selection determination when a scale score of a particular applicant meets a prescribed elevation or depression. The report's risk statements are generated from proprietary prediction equations derived from large samples of peace officer applicants. For each risk statement and scale score reported, percentiles representing the applicant's relative placement within the comparison group are also displayed to provide additional interpretive value. The JRA PAI Report has special norms for six job classes (police, corrections, fire, communications dispatcher, probation officer, and security) and profiles can be displayed in the standard JRA format with computed special norm T-scores or with the scores of the applicant overlaid on shaded bars representing the comparison group.

Detailed information on the use of the PAI Police and Public Safety Report in peace officer psychological screening

Personal History Information 7

Behavioral history information is a critical component of any psychological assessment. Guided by the principle of behavioral consistency—that past behavior predicts future behavior under similar circumstances—there is a longstanding tradition in psychological practice of anchoring clinical judgments about psychological conditions to manifested behavior. Job behavior is the ultimate criterion of interest and therefore a necessary consideration in the formulation of a suitability determination.

This chapter discusses methods of collecting and using the many forms of behavioral history data in psychological evaluations, including standardized self-report questionnaires, background investigation reports, detection-of-deception results, and information from mental health professionals. Gathering personal history information during the clinical interview is addressed in Chapter 8: The Psychological Screening Interview.

Personal History Research

Research has mainly shown that individuals with problematic behavioral histories—particularly substance abuse, criminal acts, and employment problems—have a higher probability of subsequent disciplinary problems as law enforcement officers. For example, Sarchione et al. (1998) found that several life history events—negative work history, criminal behavior, and history of drug use—predicted officers who were more likely to have been formally disciplined in their law enforcement careers as compared to officers who did not exhibit such behaviors.[64] Prior terminations and past employment disciplinary records have repeatedly been found predictive of dysfunctional peace officer job behaviors (Cohen & Chaiken, 1972; Cuttler & Muchinsky, 2006; Poland, 1978) and subsequent terminations (Malouff & Schutte, 1986).

Inwald and Shusman (1984) determined that several acting-out behaviors, such as prior employment problems, trouble with the law, and illegal drug use, were predictive of peace officer job performance problems. Criminal history, traffic and parking tickets, auto accidents, military and job discipline problems, and the number and amount of time in prior jobs have been found to be related to peace officer counterproductive work behavior (Cohen & Chaiken,1973; Mealia, 1990; Staff, 1992).

Brennan et al. (2005) found that a history of non-felony criminal offenses committed by law enforcement candidates was significantly correlated with later for-cause job termination or forced resignation due to misconduct. Disciplinary problems while in the military were predictive of departmental complaints, suspensions, written reprimands, and inappropriate sexual behavior or harassment. Disciplinary actions in prior jobs were significantly correlated with the number of suspensions or written reprimands in subsequent law enforcement employment.

Zwemke, Johnson, and Roberts (1990) conducted a follow-up study of officers who were hired over a 17-year period and later terminated or forced to resign due to inappropriate sexual activity, integrity problems, drug use, brutality, and/or other problems (supervisory problems, excessive citizen complaints, off-duty problems, theft, and sick leave abuse). A number of

[64] The researchers also wisely noted that although past dysfunction predicts future dysfunctional behavior, the absence of past dysfunctional behaviors does not necessarily indicate their absence in the future.

background factors were found to predict these terminations/forced resignations, including illegal drug usage, shorter job tenure, number of traffic tickets, and number of jobs held in the past five years.

Fischler (2004) also identified significant relationships between various life history events and later police performance. Criminal history was associated with sustained complaints, a poorer driving record predicted involuntary departure, and officers with more supervisory problems had poorer financial/credit histories. Guller and Guller (2003) also found significant relationships between various life history events and later police performance, particularly alcohol and drug use, family problems, driving record, criminal record and number of jobs held in the past two years. Substance abuse was also found to predict peace officer disciplinary problems in Aamodt's 2004 meta-analysis.

Further support for the use of behavioral history data – and drug testing in particular—can be found by examining research performed on other occupations. For example, in a 1987 study by the U.S. Postal Service on the predictive value of drug testing (Norman, Salyards, & Mahoney, 1990), over 4,000 job applicants who tested positive for drugs were hired at 21 postal facilities. Supervisors were not told the test results. After 1.3 years of employment, employees who test positive for illegal drugs had a 59% higher absenteeism rate and a 47% higher rate of involuntary turnover as compared to employees who had tested negative.

Recent research reported by Corey, Sellbom, and Ben-Porath (2018) indicates that the *absence* of minor employment problems, trouble with the law, and substance use were predictive of inhibited, overcontrolled behavior during field training, including problems leading to termination. The authors concluded that *"in police candidates who are otherwise behaviorally regulated,* a normative history of minor externalizing behaviors, particularly those associated with disinhibition [e.g., minor incidents involving law violations, juvenile misconduct, physical aggression, failure to adhere to obligations, or substance use], such history predicts better performance during training than in those with no such history" (p. 10, emphasis and bracketed information added). This finding also has implications for background investigations.

Aggregation of Data

Although the predictive power of biographical information is well proven, no one single piece of biographical information can reliably predict future counterproductive job behavior. Fortunately, a strong pattern of intercorrelations exists among problematic personal history behaviors; therefore, the need to interpret one negative behavioral act in the absence of supporting biographical data is relatively rare (Marcus & Schuler, 2004). Irresponsibility, poor judgment and emotional instability are commonly reflected in a pattern rather than a single act of norm- and rule-violating behavior.

Aggregation of personal history information should occur across items and data sources. For example, in the case where psychological testing indicates a candidate may lack responsibility or interpersonal skills and is prone to violate rules and regulations, the candidate's employment history, including disciplinary actions, terminations, and arguments with peers and superiors should be reviewed to support or refute this hypothesis. When test results and background predictors agree, there is less probability of error. For example, a candidate's psychological testing suggesting a deficiency in emotional self-control, evidence of spousal abuse, fighting, or other indications of poor impulse control provides strong support for these findings. In other cases where a candidate has produced a test profile characterized by an unrealistically virtuous or highly defensive self-portrayal indicating unusually positive adjustment, a problematic behavioral history—especially a contemporary one—may support concerns about their suitability despite the absence of problems indicated on test scores.

Personal history is also linked to personality. For example, Sellbom, Corey, and Ben-Porath (2020) found that a police candidate's self-reported problematic history, aggregated into

conceptually-linked clusters, was correlated in expected ways with measures of normal personality traits. The authors found that a history of mental health concerns, developmental risk factors, social competence and teamwork concerns, work-related integrity problems, and work-related commitment problems was strongly correlated with a measure of stress reactivity (i.e., tense and nervous, easily irritable, exhibits mood swings), and a history of high-stakes gambling and substance use problems was negatively correlated with constraint (i.e., propensity toward inhibitory control.

Ethnic Group Differences

Another useful attribute of personal history information—especially as compared to cognitive ability measures—is that it appears to have little if any disparate impact on protected classes in the candidate population. Johnson, Roberts & Associates (2014) analyzed the relative percentages of critical admissions by White, Black and Hispanic candidates for a specific law enforcement agency. The results are displayed in Table 7.1. There are very few differences in the admission rates of candidates across these groups. To the extent that differences do exist, they are not in and of themselves an indication of adverse impact, since this results only from evidence of disproportionately adverse selection decisions on the basis of protected class.

Table 7.1
Occurrences of Selected 'Critical' Admissions Among Police Applicants By Ethnic Group

Police Applicant Admissions	Total N=37,178	White N=21,614	Black N=5,646	Asian N=2,875	Hispanic N=5,876
Fired from Employment	19%	17%	27%	17%	19%
Oral or Written Reprimand at Work	42%	41%	44%	42%	41%
Bankruptcy (Chapter 7)	6%	4%	10%	5%	6%
Arrested	20%	19%	25%	15%	23%
Misdemeanor Conviction or Plead Guilty	14%	14%	13%	12%	15%
Convicted of DUI	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Tattoos	39%	36%	53%	32%	42%
Hit Spouse or Romantic Partner	4%	3%	6%	3%	4%
Tried Marijuana	51%	55%	42%	49%	47%
Used Marijuana in Past Year	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Used Marijuana >20 Times	4%	5%	3%	3%	3%
Tried Cocaine	4%	5%	1%	4%	5%
Committed or Accused of Physical Threat in the Workplace	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%

Reprinted with permission from Johnson, Roberts & Associates (2014)

Information Consistency

A lack of thoroughness, consistency and accuracy when describing one's personal history can itself be a powerful predictor of future disciplinary action. For example, Cuttler and Muchinsky (2006) found that officers who gave inconsistent or discrepant responses to life history questions were more likely to be members of a formally disciplined group relative to the non-disciplined control group. Omitted items on life history questionnaires and discrepancies between the applicant's self-reported background/life history information and information submitted in support of other applications are also predictive of future negative job outcomes and should be considered in forming suitability judgments.

The Background Investigation and the Psychological Evaluation

Certain background problems statutorily disqualify a candidate, such as a felony conviction (GC § 1029) and spousal abuse [US Code Title 18 § 922(d)(9)]. Other personal history problems are manifestly related to peace officer unsuitability or are otherwise unacceptable on their face (for example, alcohol use problems or recent psychiatric inpatient status), and therefore do not require empirical justification. Candidates with these disqualifying behavioral histories

are rejected as a result of the background investigation. Many agencies are able to screen out between 15-25% of candidates before they get to the psychological evaluation, while others apply more lenient decision rules. In general, there is an inverse relationship between percentage of candidates disqualified during the background investigation versus the psychological evaluation (Tracy et al., 2006).

Even during rigorous background investigations, candidates with personal histories that violate departmental hiring standards have been known to slip by to the psychological evaluation. There are several reasons for this. First, the background investigation information provided to the psychologist may not be complete. Second, the psychologist has access to certain types of information that background investigators do not. This includes information that is more rightly the purview of the psychologist—such as psychological treatment history—as well as areas that are of equal relevance and concern to the background investigator, but cannot be investigated during pre-offer background investigations, such as extent of alcohol and past illegal drug use. Third, candidates may reveal information to psychologists that they did not disclose during inquiries at earlier stages, perhaps owing to their belief that psychologists possess special powers of perception or are likely to be less judgmental. For all of these reasons, the psychological evaluation provides an important means of crosschecking the accuracy of information that has been reported to the background investigator and a means of assessing consistency (i.e., integrity) in the candidate's self-report.

The shared importance of personal history information for both background investigators and psychologists is illustrated in the overlap between the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions and POST Background Investigation Dimensions. Table 7.2 depicts the two sets of POST dimensions. Six of these—Integrity, Impulse Control/Attention to Safety, Substance Abuse and Other Risk-Taking Behavior, Stress Tolerance, Conscientiousness, and Decision-Making/Judgment—are identical. This overlap is also apparent when comparing the specific counterproductive behaviors contained within the Psychological Screening Dimensions and the behavioral indicators included within each of the parallel Background Investigation Dimensions (see Chapter 2 of the POST Background Investigation Manual).

The Bias Assessment Framework (see Chapter 5, Step 6) also illustrates the important role that background investigation findings play in the psychological evaluation. The Bias Assessment Framework requires that the psychologist's assessment of a peace officer candidate's explicit and implicit bias be informed, in part, by the candidate's (1) history of biased behaviors, (2) evidence of mitigating or protective factors subsequent to biased behaviors, and (3) indicators of traits or attributes that may aggravate/facilitate or mitigate/protect against discriminatory behavior. Without findings from a comprehensive background investigation, the psychologist would necessarily be forced to rely solely on the candidate's self-reported history of biased and other bias-relevant behavior, which the candidate may willfully conceal or naively deny.

Despite similarities between the Background Investigation Dimensions and Psychological Screening Dimensions, there are major differences. The background investigation behavioral indicators consist of past behaviors; as such, they are intended to provide the background investigator with a set of markers to look for in the candidate's personal history. In contrast, the positive and counterproductive behaviors underlying the Psychological Screening Dimensions are manifested by peace officers, thereby requiring inferential expertise on the part of the psychologist to make predictions about the likelihood that the candidate will manifest these behaviors if hired. Therefore, while both the background investigator and the psychologist collect and evaluate similar personal history information, they do so from two different professional perspectives and competencies.

Table 7.2
POST Psychological Screening and Background Investigation Dimensions

Psychological Screening	Background Investigation
Integrity	Integrity
Impulse control/attention to safety	Impulse control/attention to safety
Substance abuse and other risk-taking behavior	Substance abuse and other risk-taking behavior
Emotional regulation/stress tolerance	Stress tolerance Confronting and overcoming problems, obstacles, and adversity
Conscientiousness	Conscientiousness
Decision-making and judgment	Decision-making and judgment
Social competence Teamwork Assertiveness/persuasiveness	Interpersonal skills
Adaptability/flexibility	
	Communication skills Learning ability

POST Background Investigation Requirements and Guidelines

The background investigation requires the collection of information from relatives and references (initial and secondary), education (including law enforcement academies), employment, military history, financial information, criminal history, driving history, social media, and other resources (Commission Regulation 1953). The POST Personal History Statement (2-251) (PHS) contains over 200 items covering the gamut of personal history topics, including education (e.g., academic probation or expulsion); financial (e.g., bad debts, income tax evasion); employment (e.g., terminations, disciplinary actions); military history (e.g., court martial, dishonorable discharge); driving (tickets, DUIs); over 75 criminal conduct items; questions regarding involvement in subversive, violent and/or hate-based organizations or activities and more.

Psychologists are required to review information collected during the candidate's background investigation. Access to this information, including the investigator's opinions and personal biases, must not be allowed to prejudice the psychological evaluation. At times, background investigators—on behalf of the hiring authority or independently—have been known to exert pressure on psychologists to disqualify candidates that they found unsuitable yet cleared, believing that the psychological evaluation provides greater protection from challenge than the more transparent background investigation. Conversely, hiring authorities have been known to lobby for candidates based on personal relationships or other reasons.

> ***Who Makes the Call?*** A candidate may reveal personal history that violates an agency's legal or departmental standards but in and of itself may not form a basis for a determination of psychological unsuitability. For example, a psychologist who discovers that a candidate used cocaine once in the distant past may conclude that this alone does not warrant a psychological disqualification. However, if the department has a "no tolerance" standard for any history of cocaine use, the best course of action would be to forward this finding to the background investigator or hiring authority to make the appropriate determination.

What to Ask. There are literally hundreds of behavioral history questions of potential relevance to a psychological evaluation. To identify the personal history indicators of most importance in the evaluation of psychological suitability, psychologists serving on the POST oversight committee (Appendix I) were asked to identify and rate various biographical data points with respect to each one's relevance to psychological suitability. These results were then compared to findings from similar research conducted by Law Enforcement Psychological Services (LEPS) and Law Enforcement Services, Inc. (LESI). Table 7.3 displays the resulting list of personal history data points, categorized by topic and coded by degree of seriousness. While neither definitive nor exhaustive, this list provides a sense of the many behavioral history indicators that **can and should** be assessed during both the background investigation and the psychological evaluation.

Legal Restrictions

Privacy. Personal history questions that delve into extremely personal issues must be carefully vetted for both relevance and necessity. Questions about a candidate's sexual behavior that deal with unlawful or inappropriate acts (such as using prostitutes, voyeurism, sexual assault, self-exposure, sexual harassment, selling sexual favors, viewing child pornography, or making jokes or comments in the workplace or on social media about the opposite sex or another ethnic group) are important to explore, as these constitute some of the most common reasons for officer termination (far more frequent than excessive force). However, inquiries regarding normal-range, legal and consensual sexual behavior must be justified by a strong rationale.

FEHA and GINA. As discussed in Chapter 2, FEHA requires all inquiries, even at the post-offer stage, to be job-related and consistent with business necessity. GINA prohibits questions regarding a family member's medical (including psychological) history. This includes questions related to a family member's past or current substance abuse or alcohol use disorders.

Personal History Questionnaires

Personal history information gathered during the background investigation may be supplemented with a personal history questionnaire administered during the psychological evaluation [Commission Regulation 1955(e)(3)]. A number of commercially available behavioral history inventories have been developed expressly for use in peace officer selection. These include the Police Candidate Background Self-Report (Applied Personnel Research) and the Integrity Inventory (I/O Solutions). Overt integrity tests,[65] which measure attitudes toward theft and dishonesty and admissions of theft and other illegal activity, are basically biographical inventories as well.

A highly efficient data collection procedure draws on a comprehensive set of life history questions and produces a report that highlights the responses that are most relevant to the psychological evaluation. In addition to simply listing the candidate's most relevant responses (and sometimes the frequencies with which other candidates give the same response), these reports may include various kinds of numeric risk ratings or problem scores, ranging from a simple count of the number of problematic ("critical" and "serious") responses to a formula-based value that summarizes the level of problems indicated by the entire set of responses.

A more sophisticated procedure still includes an empirically validated prediction model that estimates the likelihood of job failure or job performance problems as a function of a number of behavioral history variables. Another similar method is based on a subjectively derived behavioral history scoring system, created by expert consensus. As with the prediction model, a sufficiently high problem score can warrant rejection on that basis alone. An advantage of a subjectively derived scoring system is that it can include disqualifying background problems that may be so rare or infrequent as to not appear in empirically derived prediction models.

[65] Examples of overt integrity tests include the Personnel Selection Inventory (London House), Reid Public Safety Report, and the Stanton Survey.

Table 7.3

Biographical Data Points by Topic

Critical, ***Serious,*** Concerning

Employment

Terminations/Resignations

Multiple job terminations	Job termination
Termination due to integrity (e.g., theft)	One resignation in lieu of termination
Multiple resignations in lieu of termination	Multiple job resignations for "personal reasons"
Two job terminations	

Discipline/Complaints

Discipline or termination due to alcohol or substance use on job	*Suspension from work*
Multiple written or oral reprimands	*Indication of substantial disciplinary or any integrity problems in more than two jobs*
Multiple suspensions from work	Formal written disciplines or reprimands – documentation of oral counseling
Subject of complaints/disciplinary actions for verbal/physical behavior against women or protected groups	Written documentation of oral counseling
Multiple unsatisfactory/needs improvement job evaluations	Indication of substantial disciplinary or integrity problems in one job
Multiple performance evaluations perceived as unfair	Written complaint(s)

Questionable Work History/Behavior

Tardy several times/month or greater	Failure to complete probationary period
Multiple jobs with brief tenure	Called in sick when was not sick 2+ times in past year
Incomplete and/or discrepancies in job history	Sleeping on job
Periods or extensive (>90 days) of unemployment or time unaccounted for	

Theft

Theft of goods or merchandise totaling over $100	*Took money without authorization*

Emotional/Mental Issues

Committed (or accused of committing) harm, threats, stalking at workplace	**History of sexual harassment**
Multiple emotional arguments/personality conflicts at work	

Hiring/Selection Issues

Rejected for job due to background investigation, psychological, drug test, polygraph	

Law Enforcement/Public Safety/Criminal Justice

Terminations/Resignations

Termination	**Termination after probation**
Termination during probation	

Discipline/Complaints

Multiple suspensions	*Civil suits or criminal prosecutions resulting in settlements*
6+ citizen complaints	*Subject of internal affairs investigation*
2+ substantiated citizen's complaints	*Loss of rank or discharge*
Multiple unsatisfactory performance ratings	Formal written discipline or reprimand without rank loss or discharge
Use of force discipline	3-6 citizen complaints
Suspension (lost time) discipline	

Questionable Work History/Behavior

Alcohol use on duty/in uniform	**DUI assault/arrest/conviction as peace officer**
Falsification of official reports/cover-ups/perjury	*Involvement in 4+shootings*
3+ on-duty traffic accidents	Failed to report damaged equipment/property
Multiple on-duty traffic accidents resulting in injury or death	On-duty traffic accident resulting in serious injury or death
Illegal drug use while an officer	Multiple jobs without evidence of career progression

Emotional/Mental Issues

Filed worker's compensation for psychological stress/trauma	

Hiring/Selection Issues

Dishonesty in applicant process	Denied employment post-offer/failed polygraph

Military

Terminations/Resignations

Less than honorable discharge (excludes pure medical and/or administrative)	**Multiple disciplinary actions**
Discharge for psychological or psychiatric reasons	

Discipline/Complaints

Incarceration(s) in military	Written military discipline
Summary court martial	Reduction in rank

Questionable Work History/Behavior

Poor rank progression	

Ratings: Critical, ***Serious,*** Concerning

Driving Record

Accidents/Moving Violations

Multiple at-fault traffic accidents	*3+ auto accidents*
Significant number of moving violations	

DUI

DUI conviction/plead down	DUI arrest
DUI drug use 3+ times	

Criminal Conduct

Detentions/Arrests/Convictions

3+ arrests	*Pleaded guilty or no contest to a misdemeanor*
Arrested for assault, resisting arrest or battery	*Been on probation*
Felony conviction	Misdemeanor convictions
Pleaded guilty or no contest to 2+ misdemeanors or any felony	Law enforcement detentions
Tried and convicted for vandalism	Significant juvenile record in applicants less than 25 (emphasis on larceny, drugs, assault)

Restraining Orders/Domestic Violence/Child Endangerment

Domestic assault arrest or conviction	Police response to home for domestic abuse
Restraining order violation	Restraining order issued
Referrals to CPS	

Fights/Threats

2+ fights since age 18	Disorderly behavior
Making threats	

Theft/Property Crimes

Theft > $100	**Buying or selling stolen property 2+ times**
Forgery	**Arson**
Embezzlement	Theft < $100

Inappropriate Sexual Behavior

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault	**Child molestation**
Statutory rape (age difference > 3 years)	

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct/impropriety (e.g. flashing, sexual phone calls to strangers)	**Use of prostitutes**

Financial

Multiple failures to file income tax	20+ bounced checks
Excessive gambling (e.g., significant loss of money, owing money, causing problems in personal life)	Financial irresponsibility – evidence of money mismanagement (e.g., wage garnishment)
Delinquent child support	Failure to file income tax
Consistent spending beyond one's means	Frivolous spending

Substance Abuse

Alcohol

Multiple episodes of excessive drinking (5+ drinks/day)	*Alcohol-related blackouts*
Missed work due to drinking	*Alcohol-related incidents at work, drunk, sick with hangover, calling in sick with hangover*
High tolerance to alcohol (6+ drinks)	*Public intoxication*
Alcohol leading to marital difficulties, missing work, fighting	

Marijuana

Marijuana use in past three years (or two years for ages greater than 25)	*Use of marijuana in military*
Use of marijuana within past year	

Illegal Use of Drugs/Hard Drugs

Cocaine use within past three years after age 25	*Any hard drug as adolescent*
Any hard drug use (heroin, crack, meth) 18 years+	*Illegal use of prescription drugs*
Any use of ecstasy, hallucinogens, and other illegals (e.g., quaaludes) past three years	

Employment/Drug Distribution

Any illegal drug use since applying for, training for, or employed by public safety agency	**Sold drugs within past 3 years**
	Failed a drug test

Mental Health

Suicide Attempts/Psychiatric Conditions

Suicide attempts within past 5 years	*Stress-related medical conditions*
Suicide attempts/threats ever	Mental health treatment
Psychiatric hospitalization	

Other Disorders

Eating disorders	Diagnosed/treated for dyslexia, ADD/ADHD, hyperactivity

Ratings: Critical, *Serious,* Concerning

One example of a subjectively derived scoring system is the Psychological History Questionnaire (PsyQ), published by JRA, Inc. Designed specifically for the purpose of providing background information to be used in psychological evaluations of law enforcement officers, the PsyQ contains 340 multiple-choice questions covering a broad range of personal history categories, which can be administered online or by booklet. Risk ratings were created by highly experienced peace officer screening psychologists who rated each response to each question with respect to its influence on overall candidate suitability, ranging from "no problem" to "a problem that, by itself, justifies disqualification, regardless of mitigating factors." Frequency distributions were calculated for each response based on a sample of 12,330 public safety applicants who had completed the PsyQ during the hiring process. Table 7.4 provides a sample of personal history admissions by police officer applicants.

Table 7.4
Personal History Admissions of Police Officer Applicants (N=12,330)

Type of Admission	Admission Rate, %
Employment History	
Fired once	15.5%
Fired twice	2.7%
Fired 3 or more times	0.6%
Resigned to avoid firing, once	4.5%
Resigned to avoid firing, twice	0.3%
Resigned to avoid firing, 3 or more times	0.0%
Failed probation at any job	6.6%
Reprimands, 2	9.8%
Reprimands, 3	2.7%
Reprimands, 4 +	2.4%
Argued at work (raised voice or insulted) 2 times	6.0%
Argued at work (raised voice or insulted) 3+ times	4.1%
Theft from an employer, exceeding $100	1.1%
Taken money from work without authorization	3.8%
Driving Record	
Traffic citations other than parking (4+)	2.4%
Traffic accidents (3+)	2.4%
Outstanding traffic warrant	1.8%
Legal History	
Misdemeanor conviction (1)	10.7%
Misdemeanor convictions (2)	2.0%
Misdemeanor convictions (3+)	1.1%
Theft (property in excess of $100)	1.2%
General Information	
Currently delinquent with child support payments	1.2%
Has hit a romantic partner once	5.7%
Has hit a romantic partner more than once	1.9%

The personal history questionnaire produced by Law Enforcement Services, Inc. (LESI) is administered online using a sophisticated branching technique whereby detailed descriptions and explanations of specific responses are elicited depending on the candidate's response to the "stem" question. The LESI system presorts both quantitative scores based on weighted life history events as well as detailed descriptive information input by candidates. It uses an actuarial prediction equation to combine this information, along with scores on cognitive ability and personality (CPI) measures, to arrive at a classification of the police

candidate as "unsuitable," "suitable with minor contraindications," or "meeting minimum suitability requirements."

Results from both JRA and LESI indicate that the incidence of candidates endorsing any one disqualifying behavior is extremely low—lower than for the general population and especially as compared to psychological client populations. This is not surprising, given the high standards of personal conduct in jobs where the safety of the public health is at stake.

> ***Remote Assessment Tip***
>
> *Although personal history questionnaires are most often administered in conjunction with written psychological testing, when they are administered independently and outside of the psychologist's office, judgment must be used in determining whether it needs to be done in a proctored environment (e.g., either at the hiring agency's facility or by use of a synchronous teleconference platform). If proctored via teleconference, state law requires disclosure of certain information to the examinee. See POST Bulletin 2020-18 (Appendix O).*

Detecting Deception

As discussed in Chapter 6: Written Psychological Tests, peace officer candidates and others in high stakes situations often engage in significant impression management when responding to personal history questions, potentially compromising the accuracy and completeness of their responses (Levashina & Campion, 2007). As discussed earlier, one way of verifying the accuracy of the candidate's self-reported information is to crosscheck it against information obtained during the background investigation. The POST PHS warns candidates that ***deliberate misstatements or omissions*** *can and often will result in rejection, regardless of the nature or reason for the misstatements/omissions.* Any personal history questionnaire administered by the psychologist should include a similar admonition. Candidates should be reminded that the veracity of their responses can and will be checked if deemed necessary.

Any inconsistencies detected by the psychologist should be discussed with the candidate, provided that protected sources of background information are not revealed. Inconsistencies, and the candidate's explanation for them, should be discussed with the background investigator, as appropriate.

Polygraph and Voice Stress Analysis. Other tools used to assess honesty are aimed specifically at detecting deception. These include the polygraph and the voice stress analysis (VSA). Although neither required nor prohibited by POST, they have widespread use in the peace officer hiring process.

The usefulness of these measures is perhaps most evident in the higher rate of admissions to various negative behaviors by applicants applying to agencies that administer a polygraph as compared to applicants applying to agencies that do not administer a polygraph. JRA, Inc. (2004) compared life history information provided by approximately 17,000 peace officer candidates who applied to law enforcement agencies administering a polygraph against the responses of 10,500 candidates who applied to agencies not using a polygraph. Table 7.5 displays the relative percentages of these two groups on a sample of admissions. In nearly every instance, the presence of the polygraph was associated with a higher rate of negative admissions.

Table 7.5
Candidate Admissions With and Without Use of Polygraph

Behavioral Admission	No Poly N=10,500	Poly N=17,314
Referred to collection agency	34%	36%
Failed to file income tax	5%	5%
Ever arrested	12%	28%
Convicted of a misdemeanor	9%	17%
Stole goods worth $25 or more	2%	6%
Has Hit Spouse or Romantic Partner	5%	9%
Missed Work Due to Alcohol	2%	3%
Drives Under the Influence (2+/Yr)	6%	5%
Has Driven After Using Drugs	4%	11%
Has Sold Drugs	1%	2%
Ever Used Marijuana	34%	58%
Ever Used Drugs Besides Marijuana	9%	22%
Suspended from High School	14%	17%
Fired from Job	14%	22%
Failed Job Probation	4%	8%
Quit Job Without Notice	9%	15%
Reprimanded at Work	31%	47%
Received Workers Compensation	13%	20%
Stole Money from Work	1%	5%
Had Drivers License Suspended	19%	17%
2+ Traffic Accidents in Last 3 Years	11%	10%
Assigned Risk Auto Insurance	7%	10%
Declared Bankruptcy	6%	6%

Adapted and reprinted with permission from JRA, Inc. (2004).

The use of a detection-of-deception measure has also been shown to influence the degree of underreporting on written psychological tests. In one study,[66] MMPI L Scale T-scores > 80 among the general community (N=2,600) was 1.5%. For candidates at police departments that used a polygraph (N=20,396) it was 6%, and for candidates at police departments that did not use a polygraph (N=6,421), the percentage rose to 19% (Johnson & Roberts, 1997). This difference may not hold true in all instances. For example, Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath (2015) studied the MMPI-2-RF scores of 136 police candidates in an agency prohibited from using polygraphs in preemployment evaluations. Their mean score on L-r (measuring claims of uncommon virtues) was 61 (s.d. = 13), as compared to a mean L-r score of 59 (s.d. = 13) for a comparison group (N=2,074) based predominantly on candidates who passed a polygraph examination.[67]

If deception detection measures are used, the psychologist should request access to the polygraph report along with the background investigation report prior to the psychological interview. This may not only result in more honest responses but may also help resolve conflicting self-reports and clarify issues raised by negative psychological test results.

Post-offer, polygraph questions should be limited to those that are job-related and consistent with business necessity (Handler, 2009). Polygraph topics useful to the background investigator and the screening psychologist, include (1) tolerance-related issues (adult acts of physical/domestic violence, use of racial or ethnic slurs directed at others, etc.); (2) criminal

[66] JRA Inc. data for police candidates were obtained from preemployment psychological evaluations administered by Law Enforcement Psychological Services between 1990-1997.

[67] The mean score for general population norm group is (by definition) 50 with a standard deviation of 10.

conduct and involvement with or income from organized crime activities; (3) illegal drug use, particularly during recent years; and (4) formal disciplinary actions received from current and previous employers (AELE, 2011). Although they may not be appropriate for a background investigation per se, questions pertaining to suicide threats or attempts/gestures, contact with a mental health professional, or hospitalizations for psychiatric reasons, can provide critically important information for the screening psychologist.

How to Ask. It is not just the social desirability of the question that influences a candidate's response; the questions themselves are a source of information that respondents draw on in order to determine what constitutes a useful and informative answer. Even individuals who are attempting to answer questions openly and honestly try to determine the type and nature of information desired in their response by the wording, format and even the ordering of questions. Conditionally worded questions (e.g., "I sometimes procrastinate") can be especially frustrating to the respondent when the response options are also conditional (e.g., "rarely," "sometimes," "always") (Schwarz, 1999).

Contacts with Mental Health Professionals

Commission Regulation 1955(e)(5) requires that *psychological records and relevant medical records be obtained from the candidate's treating health professional, if warranted and obtainable*. Approximately 25% of candidates have consulted a professional for help with personal problems at some time in their lives, and 1% have been in an inpatient facility (Johnson & Roberts, 2005). For those candidates who have sought help, psychologists should have an accurate understanding of the nature and extent of the psychological problem and whether it has relevance for the purposes of determining psychological suitability.

An authorization for release of psychological treatment information is necessary before this information can be collected. An example of one such form, the *Limited Release of Mental Health Information Form*, is provided in Appendix M. This form requires the treating professional to disclose the candidate's history of domestic violence or spousal abuse, treatment for alcohol or drug use/abuse, psychiatric hospitalization, psychotropic medication, additional contacts with other mental health professionals, and whether the individual's condition impacts a major life activity or work function. Consistent with the requirements of the ADA, the form limits the scope of the inquiry to that which is pertinent to its purpose.[68]

The psychological evaluation pass rates for those who have and have not had contact with a mental health professional are not appreciably different. However, for approximately 5% percent of those who have consulted mental health professionals, there are substantive differences between what the candidate reports about the consult and what the treating professional states (Roberts,1998). The candidate's stated reason for the contact is often minimized. For example, the candidate may report "test anxiety" but the treating professional listed "panic disorder," or the candidate's reported "marital problems" are documented as "sexual molestation of stepdaughter."

Reviewing copies of actual treatment records provides additional diagnostic, treatment and contextual information; however, the extra delay involved in getting access to that data can be frustrating to both the hiring agency and the candidate. For this reason, and as discussed in Chapter 5, Pre-Evaluation Considerations, it is better to obtain these records prior to the clinical interview, when possible. Alternatively, it is good policy to educate the hiring agency that the candidate has been instructed to provide the treatment records within a specified time frame, and until they are received and reviewed by the examining psychologist the recommendation will be deferred. It is critical that the requested information be received and considered as part of the psychological evaluation.[69]

[68] The EEOC specifically approves a "limited release allowing the employer to submit a list of specific questions to the employee's health care professional about his condition and need for accommodation" (EEOC Enforcement Guidance, 1997).

[69] For state law enforcement agencies, a deferred status is equivalent to a "withhold" under the terms of California GC § 18935.

Requesting and Evaluating Disability Claim Records

It is especially important to request records related to employment-related disability claims. These records have potential to reveal three kinds of information relevant to peace officer screening. First, they can indicate the kinds of stressors to which the individual may be especially vulnerable—some of which may be common to law enforcement work. Second, they may reveal mental health conditions and related symptoms that portend functional impairments should the candidate be appointed as a peace officer. Finally, as just discussed, medical records may reveal substantial discrepancies in the candidate's self-report, which has implications for integrity as well as other important attributes.

Any psychological disability claims resulting from combat and other stressful military deployments should be reviewed if warranted by the recency and nature of the claim, and if available. The most common claim involves military service-connected claims associated with combat trauma exposure. The mechanism for determining whether a veteran qualifies for a service-connected psychiatric disability is the Compensation & Pension (Comp & Pen) Evaluation, the major findings from which are documented in a "Rating Decision" letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. This letter will include a narrative discussion of the symptoms reported by the candidate, a diagnosis, a rating of the degree of service-connected disability supported by the clinical evidence, and the extent to which the individual's symptoms impair work performance. The letter, and the Comp & Pen report, if available, provides an important source of collateral information against which to evaluate the candidate's self-report. The VA Request For and Authorization to Release Medical Records or Health Information (VA Form 10-5345) can be printed and given to the candidate with instructions to have the VA forward the relevant disability determination documents directly to the evaluating psychologist. These records are digitized and are typically received within days of the applicant providing the VA with the signed release.

To the extent that the Rating Decision letter indicates a greater degree of impairment than the candidate currently reports, the psychologist must consider the specifics of the situation and use clinical judgment to reconcile the discrepancy. For example, if the candidate was awarded a 30% disability six years ago for an impairment resulting from PTSD, but subsequently received verified treatment for that condition which substantially improved functioning, the fact that the candidate continues to receive a disability award may be irrelevant. Veterans are not obligated to report improvements in their conditions to the VA. On the other hand, candidates who have been awarded a substantial disability rating for a service-connected psychiatric injury, but who have never received treatment, may warrant more careful scrutiny, as would those who filed recent claims for service-connected disability compensation. The "VA Schedule of Ratings for Mental Disorders" specifies the nature and degree of impairment associated with various percentage awards of service-connected disability (0%, 10%, 30%, 50%, 70%, and 100%), which can be a useful way of gauging the significance of the candidate's impairment at the time of the award.

Evaluating Personal History Information

There are two basic ways to consider life history events in the psychological evaluation. The first is to identify the occurrence of specific life events and measure the degree to which these discrete events (e.g., job terminations) have been shown to be predictive of specific outcomes (e.g., peace officer performance). The second way is to evaluate life history data in terms of the psychological constructs (i.e., the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions) they reflect and their relevance to the Bias Assessment Framework (see Chapter 5, Step 6). As discussed earlier, negative behaviors often cluster together to provide convergent information on these dimensions. Although many personal history acts or admissions can reflect more than one psychological dimension, some of the more clear-cut connections are provided in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6
Personal History Indicators

Personal History Indicators	
Social Competence	Biased behaviors, employment history, difficulty in relationships, court-ordered counseling for anger, altercations – physical and verbal
Teamwork	Military & employment history (co-workers and supervisors), personality conflicts/arguments at work, performance appraisals
Adaptability	College performance, employment history, financial (disciplinary actions, terminations), negative performance evaluations, job changes due to "bad supervisor," failure to accept responsibility or blame, mental health history
Conscientiousness	Work performance, attendance, tardiness, college performance, terminations, completing job probation, valid auto license and insurance, bounced checks, collections, wage garnishments, unpaid taxes and child support, failure to file income tax, legal history, job and relationship stability
Impulse Control	Driving record, financial record, legal history, school suspensions or expulsions, traffic citations for speeding, reckless driving, number of auto accidents, DUI, restraining orders, number of fights, spousal/child abuse, inappropriate sexual behavior
Integrity	Theft from workplace, paid under table (not reporting income for purposes of income taxes or to maintain unemployment benefits), legal history, illegal sexual behavior, child support, school cheating or plagiarism, spousal/child abuse, omissions or inaccuracies during background investigation, calling in sick when not ill, failure to accept responsibility or blame
Emotional Regulation	Legal record related to aggressiveness, fights since age 18, spousal abuse, restraining orders, mental health history, disciplinary actions, terminations, school suspensions, excessive sick leave and personal time off, arguments, threats of violence, mental health history, medical history, substance abuse, denigration of past supervisors or coworkers
Decision-Making/Judgment	Employment history, illegal activities, arrests, fights, substance abuse
Assertiveness	Military, employment, academic, demotions
Substance Abuse	Drug and alcohol history, DUI, illegal activities, number of arrests, detentions

In evaluating the relevance of any given behavioral act or admission, there are several factors that may be considered (Corey & Stewart, 2011):

1. The nature, extent, and seriousness of the conduct;
2. The circumstances surrounding the conduct;
3. The frequency and recency of the conduct;
4. The individual's age and maturity at the time of the conduct;
5. The extent to which participation was voluntary;
6. The presence or absence of permanent behavioral changes;
7. The motivation for the conduct;
8. The degree to which the behavior violates societal and cultural norms;
9. The likelihood of continuation or recurrence; and
10. The relevance of the behavior to one or more of the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions.

While these factors may assist in the evaluation of the circumstances surrounding admissions or reported events, rationales or explanations offered by the candidate must be viewed cautiously unless verified by one or more reliable sources.

Summary of Recommendations

Summarized below are the major recommendations presented in this chapter concerning the collection and use of behavioral history information for conducting psychological evaluations of law enforcement candidates.

- Develop a standardized protocol for reviewing relevant background areas and identifying critical behavioral admissions.
- Before collecting self-reported behavioral history data, inform candidates that providing incomplete or dishonest information will be grounds for rejection, or dismissal after hiring.
- Ask a comprehensive set of behavioral history questions that cover the full spectrum of potential problem areas, highlighting any serious or critical problems.
- Be familiar with the relative importance of life history predictors, based on a consensus of subject matter experts and/or knowledge of the empirical literature.
- Consider use of a comprehensive personal history questionnaire developed for law enforcement selection as a tool for identifying critical items and creating quantitative/comparative results.
- Work closely with the background investigator to ensure that personal history information collected by/about the candidate is complete and accurate.
- Crosscheck behavioral history data with information obtained from the background investigation and polygraph examination to identify consistencies in findings and to extend and clarify inferences from test scores. Consider omitted items and discrepancies between the information provided in the psychological evaluation and that provided in the background investigation and other sources.
- With written authorization, obtain pertinent information and/or records related to current or prior mental health treatment (including prescriptions for psychiatric medications made by primary care physicians) and disability claims, if relevant to the candidate's ability to perform the duties and withstand the stressors of a peace officer.

The collection and evaluation of personal history information continues in the psychological interview, as discussed in the next chapter.

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The Psychological Screening Interview 8

Interviews take place at multiple times during the peace officer hiring process, beginning with the oral interview panel and continuing through the background investigation and the psychological evaluation. The incorporation of an interview during these stages reflects its widespread popularity: rarely is someone hired without one.

There is good reason for the interview's popularity. It provides a two-way, face-to-face interaction, allowing the interviewer to see how the candidate behaves and responds in real time. It also allows the interviewer to steer the assessment into as many directions as needed. Ironically, some of these same attributes have resulted in interviews being assailed—particularly those that are unstructured and haphazard—for their susceptibility to subjectivity and bias, with a resulting lack of reliability, validity, and accountability.

Whether the interview adds more validity than error variance hinges on how it is constructed and conducted, and on how the resulting information is analyzed and used. Drawing on research from both clinical and personnel psychology, this chapter provides guidance to help maximize the advantages and minimize the limitations associated with this information-gathering medium. Additional guidance on employment interviews is provided in the POST *Interviewing Peace Officer Candidates: Hiring Interview Guidelines*.

The Psychological Screening Interview vs. the Employment Interview

The psychological screening interview is a hybrid of sorts between an employment interview and a clinical interview conducted for the purpose of diagnosis, treatment, or outcome evaluation. Although conducted expressly for the purpose of making hiring decisions, those who conduct psychological screening interviews must be accomplished both in the diagnosis of mental and emotional conditions as well as the assessment of personality traits and characteristics. However, in contrast to more traditional psychological interviews in which clinicians often use a Socratic method of questioning to help lead their clients to self-discovery and insight, questions in a psychological screening interview are intended to support the psychologist in arriving at a determination of a candidate's psychological suitability.

By virtue of their education and training, psychologists are often more skilled at interviewing than human resource personnel or others who perform employment interviews. Nevertheless, psychologists are not immune to the effects of impression management, rating biases and other threats to validity. As discussed here, this risk is compounded when the interview lacks adequate structure or fails to focus on job-relevant dimensions and critical constructs.

Psychological Screening Interview Purposes

The unique attributes of the psychological screening interview allow it to serve an integral role in the psychological assessment process and multiple, important purposes in a peace officer evaluation. A psychological assessment is, by definition, a complex, comprehensive examination that includes the collection and interpretation of test scores, personal history information, and psychological, medical and/or other records. The interview is necessary to integrate this information by observing and evaluating the candidate's responses, explanations and behavior. The integration of information itself serves multiple purposes, including:

- Clarifying issues identified in the background report; in particular, distinguishing behavioral patterns and trends from isolated incidents of little, if any, psychological relevance; clarifying and reconciling discrepancies or inconsistencies in information obtained in

written test results, the background investigation and other life history information, detection-of-deception results, and medical findings; and

- Verifying or disconfirming hypotheses regarding the candidate's mental/emotional condition or maladaptive behaviors suggested by these other information sources.

Allowing candidates an opportunity to address negative information identified during testing or personal history collection provides procedural fairness; it can also preempt or mitigate problems in the future, as many appeal panels frown on denying candidates the opportunity to clarify negative information leading to a disqualification determination. Although asking candidates to explain a response to a particular test item can pose certain problems and limitations, probing or exploring the underlying construct or content may provide a more useful and less problematic alternative. *In general, it is best to use the interview to clarify what isn't known, not to mitigate what is already known.* This point is particularly applicable to the required Bias Assessment Framework (see Chapter 5, Step 6), which notes,

> *When there is clear and direct evidence of unmitigated biased behaviors or attitudes, other factors are not relevant for assessing the bias of a peace officer candidate. However, when direct evidence of explicit or implicit bias is unavailable, ambiguous, or relatively weak, it may be useful to consider related factors such as neutral or favorable intergroup contact, motivations to respond without prejudice, perceptions of social norms about prejudice, and executive function. These factors also generally contribute to more equitable behavior and fair treatment of others, and thus can mitigate tendencies to act in discriminatory ways even when some evidence of bias is detected.*

The interview can also help clarify a candidate's test-taking approach, thereby providing a more complete assessment than validity scale scores alone. In particular, the interview can be useful in differentiating between defensive strategies (attempts to repair or protect one's image via deception, excuses and justifications) and assertive strategies (promoting a favorable impression via ingratiation and self-promotion)—the former being more problematic than the latter. In response to high scores on underreporting scales, the psychologist can explore the candidate's degree of openness, deceptiveness, defensiveness, or naïveté. Underreporting is not dispositive of deception; other hypotheses include the possibility that the candidate is reporting honestly or is merely exaggerating a quality that is usually, but not always, exhibited (Corey & Ben-Porath, 2018). Candidates who continue in the interview to present themselves in an excessively positive light by denying even minor faults or shortcomings—to the point of implausibility and, more pertinently, to the point of contradiction by reliable sources—demonstrate a level of deception that may raise concerns about their integrity. In any event, such indications of deception preclude reliance on a "clean" or indeterminate psychological test protocol as evidence of the absence of problematic traits and behaviors.

The psychological interview provides an opportunity to reexamine issues about which candidates may have been less than candid when responding to a questionnaire or to the background investigator. It is not uncommon for candidates to admit past negative behaviors in a psychological interview that they did not admit earlier in the selection process. The relevance of the new information itself, as well as the significance of the prior omission or denial, must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, the psychologist may determine that it is even more relevant to the background investigation than to the psychological evaluation, in which case the information should be reported back to the background investigator.

The psychological interview also provides the opportunity to elicit information that cannot lawfully be asked during the pre-offer background investigation and employment interview, such as the extent of past drug use, the extent of past or current alcohol use, and the use of prescribed medications. (Note: Under GINA, questions about family member's current and past mental health history or substance use disorders are prohibited at any stage of the employment process.)

Arguably, one of the interview's most important attributes is its ability to investigate areas that do not easily lend themselves to assessment through discrete questions and answers.

Observing the candidate's verbal and nonverbal behaviors provides the unique opportunity to evaluate important constructs such as decision-making, judgment under pressure, reasoning, thought processes, interpersonal and social skills, oral communication,[70] emotional reactivity, and personal responsibility.

The nature and impact of rating biases are well known and pervasive and occur when interviewers allow their evaluations to be influenced by cognitive errors. Specific rating biases include:

- *First impression error* (the first encounter strongly affecting the perception of the candidate), and
- *Halo/horns* (allowing one or two characteristics to influence the entire evaluation),
- *Leniency/stringency* (rating all candidates similarly—either higher or lower—than appropriate),
- *Central tendency* (a reluctance to rate any candidate high or low),
- *Confirmatory biases* (undue focus on information that confirms the interviewer's preconceptions or hypotheses).

The ***contrast effect*** is one of the most cited biases in the interview rating literature. This bias refers to a situation in which an applicant's rating is affected by the ratings of previous applicants. For example, if the preceding candidate performs poorly, it is more likely that the next candidate will be given higher ratings than warranted (Dipboye, 1992).

The ***similar-to-me bias***, in which a favorable rating is given as a result of the interviewer's perception of a similarity between themself and the candidate, has been observed during research investigating the effects of applicant race, interviewer race, and the racial composition of interview panels on applicant ratings (Prewett-Livingston et al., 1996).

The influence of both ***applicant attractiveness*** and ***personal style*** (e.g., wearing a suit and tie, a firm handshake) has also been well-noted, although with little research to prove their validity as predictors of job performance. The influence of impression management tactics has not been lost on savvy candidates (and authors of the many books on how to conduct oneself during an interview) who employ a number of tactics, both verbal (e.g., ingratiation) and nonverbal (e.g., nodding in agreement, smiling, eye contact) in an attempt to promote a favorable impression (McFarland, Ryan, & Kriska, 2003).

Although difficult to eradicate entirely, there are ways to mitigate the contaminating effects of rater biases. Knowing the influence of these rating biases is a good start. Allowing sufficient time to fully assess the candidate, and taking detailed notes during the interview, all help to ensure that determinations will be based on a comprehensive assessment of the candidate rather than extraneous factors or responses to one or two critical items. See Corey and Zelig (2020) for a self-assessment bias checklist intended to aid psychologists when conducting suitability and fitness evaluations.

Interview Structure

By far the most effective way to safeguard interviews against interviewer biases and idiosyncrasies is through the appropriate use of structure. Research has consistently shown that interviews demonstrate adequate levels of reliability and validity if they are appropriately structured (Ployhart, Schneider, & Schmitt, 2006).

Interview structure is defined as any enhancement that increases standardization or otherwise assists the interviewer in determining what questions to ask and/or how to evaluate responses (Campion, Palmer, & Campion, 1997). In totally unstructured interviews, few constraints are

[70] Although an admittedly critical peace officer competence, "oral communication" is not included as a POST Psychological Screening Dimension since it can and should be assessed during the required oral interview conducted by the hiring agency (Commission Regulation 1952) and other pre-offer stages of the hiring process.

imposed on the questions asked, and follow-up questions and probes are frequent. This absence of structure leaves interviews vulnerable to unreliable, variable, and idiosyncratic interpretations, thereby reducing the reliability and validity of the broader assessment. In contrast, totally structured interviews ask all candidates precisely the same job-relevant questions; probes and follow-up questions are prohibited.

Neither extreme is appropriate for psychological screening interviews. Making diagnoses on the basis of unstructured interviews can reduce accuracy and increase the risk of error (Rogers, 2003). On the other hand, Blackman and Funder (2002) found that largely unstructured interviews can yield more information for personality judgment than do highly structured interviews. They opine that the more informal, relaxed atmosphere of an unstructured interview, as well as the inclusion of follow-up and probing questions, may draw out more candid responses and a greater range of behavior relevant to the targeted traits.

Preemployment psychological interviews are most effective when they involve a process that ensures similar information is collected in a consistent manner across all candidates and all interviews, and that information is tethered to psychologically relevant job demands and requirements such as those embodied in the POST Dimensions. Therefore, it may be useful to use a common structure or outline for all candidates, supplemented with unstructured questions designed to provide individualized clarification. Keep in mind, however, that unstructured does not mean unplanned or unfocused.

Regardless of the style and manner of interviewing that individual psychologists find most effective, it should involve a consistent process that permits clarifying questions and branching (i.e., questions that occur in response to answers to other questions), as well as latitude to adapt the lines of questioning as necessary (Inwald, 1989; Inwald & Resko, 1995).

Interview Topics

Using a structured interview outline based on a life history questionnaire and background reports is one way to provide consistency across candidates and ensure that essential topics are not overlooked. Reviewing the candidate's life in a more or less segmented manner (e.g., in chronological order or pertaining to relevant themes like employment, education, developmental history, relationships) has the added benefit of being perceived as natural and therefore less threatening than if the interview questions focus exclusively and obviously on specific issues of concern or, alternatively, are asked haphazardly.

Chapter 7: Personal History Information provides a list of psychologically-relevant life history categories and topics and their relationship to the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions. Table 8.1 provides a list of topics of particular relevance for psychological interviews.

Any systematic review of the candidate's behavioral history must be supplemented with open-ended, individualized questions. In addition to supplying important information, open-ended questions can reveal a candidate's ability to formulate thoughts, demonstrate interpersonal competence, and provide useful observational data. For example, asking a candidate, "What would a person who knows you well be likely to criticize you for, or suggest you could improve upon?" may yield relatively unguarded self-criticism. Open-ended questions provide a context for understanding a candidate's problematic behavioral history, even if that understanding may not alter a final negative determination.

The Bias Assessment Framework (see Chapter 5, Step 6) stipulates that, although psychological evaluators are required to assess each of the targeted constructs (i.e., biased behavior, biased attitudes, and bias-relevant traits and attributes), the data sources used for this assessment "are at the discretion of each evaluator." This caveat applies mainly to the use of written personality testing, which has not been shown in the published peer-reviewed literature to be a valid measure of bias and risk of discriminatory behavior (Lai & Dovidio, Appendix P), although some personality traits may mitigate or protect against discrimination when evidence of biased behaviors and attitudes is weak or nonexistent. The interview in particular is a rich data

source for assessing biased attitudes. One strategy for exploring bias-relevant beliefs in the interview is to ask the candidate to provide their opinion concerning the beliefs contained in published measures of biased attitudes, such as Social Dominance Orientation Scale (Ho et al., 2015; Sidanius et al., 2017), Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale (Altemeyer, 1998; Zakrisson, 2005), Modern/Symbolic Racism Scale (Henry & Sears, 2002; McConahay, 1986), Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996), Attitudes Toward Lesbians & Gay Men (Herek, 1998), and Bias Awareness Scale (Perry, Murphy, & Dovidio, 2015). A candidate's discussion about the relative merits and justifications for these beliefs—even ones they explicitly disavow—can provide important information about their own biased attitudes and beliefs.

The Interview Process

Providing the candidate with an orientation to the psychological evaluation and obtaining informed consent should be performed at the outset of the psychological evaluation.[71] Nevertheless, some of that information bears repeating at the start of the interview, such as limits of confidentiality, intended use(s) of the evaluation, whether the candidate will be provided with an explanation of the assessment results, who has access to the written report, and who is the client of the interviewer. Research has shown that providing candidates with detailed explanations about the interview promotes more favorable reactions (Ryan & Ployhart, 2000), which can go a long way toward mitigating later complaints and appeals. Candidates should also be told that they will be assessed specifically on their integrity and forthrightness in the disclosure of personal information.

[71] Informed consent is discussed in Step 1 in Chapter 5: Evaluation Process and Procedures.

Table 8.1
Interview Topics

Interview Topics	
Educational History	Suspensions/expulsions—why and when; negative incidents during high school and college years
Employment History	Reprimands, warnings, difficulties with coworkers/supervisors, discipline, demotions, terminations, resignations in lieu of terminations, attendance, reason for absences, reasons for leaving jobs, failure to give adequate notice
Public Safety Experience/Law Enforcement History	Reprimands, citizens complaints, allegations (sustained and not sustained), incidents—critical and otherwise (weapons, use of force), traumatic incidents, negative academy experience(s), supervisory conflict, co-worker conflict, demotions, terminations, resignations in lieu of termination, two-week notice failure, experience that led to nightmares/sleep problems/avoidance issues/alienation from others
Military History	Reprimands, supervisory and co-worker conflict, demotions, discharge of weapon, deployment(s), combat experience, IED experience, experience that led to nightmares/sleep problems/avoidance issues/alienation from others, PTSD/ASD evaluation/treatment, VA disability rating(s) and reason(s), what was learned about people/human nature
Driving Record	Traffic records (moving and nonmoving violations, accidents—reported and unreported and at fault/no fault) license suspensions
Legal History	Contact with law enforcement (detainments, arrests, convictions) civil legal history (lawsuits, child custody), illegal but unreported activity (theft, fire-setting); association with friends who steal cars, drugs, etc.; driving problems/antisocial behavior history [Note: The purpose is not just to record these events but to shed some light on how the candidate has coped with the problems (e.g., no remorse regarding past difficulties, repeatedly giving excuses and blaming others)]
Financial History	Current delinquencies, collection agency contact(s), bankruptcies, foreclosures, vehicle repossession, failure to file/pay taxes, and in general how they handle financial responsibilities
Alcohol Use/Abuse	Age began drinking on regular basis, prior and current pattern of consumption, instances of most alcohol consumed in 24-hour period, history of hangovers and vomiting, altercations/fights and alcohol, complaints regarding drinking too much, driving and alcohol, accidents and alcohol, blackouts, missing work and alcohol
Illicit Drug Use	Type of drug(s)—including prescription drugs and steroids—when (age and date), patterns, reason for stopping
Interpersonal Conflict History	Work related altercation(s), last physical fight, previous fights & reasons, physical encounter(s) with significant other(s)—pushing, slapping, hitting, spitting—when & resolution, incidents associated with anger management, racism, etc.
Job-Relevant Developmental/ Psychosocial History	History of physical or psychological abuse (impact on abuse in adulthood), relationship with family members, stressful situations/time period & resolution, significant illness and/or trauma, family criminal history; abuse: as victim, perpetrator or witness—sexual, physical, emotional, neglect, domestic violence, child abuse, animal cruelty
Relationship History	Marriages, divorces, significant relationship(s), history of physical encounters (pushing, slapping, hitting), children, child support current, child neglect or abuse), domestic violence relationship with children (responsibility, disciplinary style; incidents and investigations into domestic violence, including arrests, suspended sentences, diversion programs, convictions, and protection orders related to elder abuse, child abuse, sexual assault, stalking, or domestic violence
Psychological Evaluation and/ or Treatment History	Psychological disqualifications from other agencies, relevant medical history (physical symptoms that may be manifestations of poor psychological health); fears, symptoms, health concerns, depression, anxiety, bizarre thoughts, past therapy or medications for emotional problems, sleep problems, eating problems, depression, anxiety, inability to focus, phobias, fears, inability to cope, self-mutilation, psychological treatment or counseling, history of suicidal ideation or poor adaptation to stress, anger management classes/counseling
Biases	Gender, racial, disability, nationality, religion, sexual orientation
Gambling	Frequency, circumstances, compulsivity, amount in excess of what they can afford, conflict with family
Tattoos	Denoting sexual, violence, anti-social themes; gang affiliation; affiliation with hate groups
Social Media History	History of postings denoting hate, violence, and/or intolerance of others based on group and/or individual characteristics, especially in relation to race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation; sharing inappropriate jokes, memes, cartoons, etc. that depict negative attitudes toward individuals or groups based on their race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

Professional Demeanor and Interview Settings

Psychologists must present themselves in a professional manner, both in dress and style of interaction. A professional, confident demeanor with a sense of control is best achieved by sitting across from and facing the candidate. It is important to remain emotionally neutral, avoiding both facial expressions and follow-up questions that reveal negative judgments or biases, nor lapsing into the role of an advocate, offering personal advice, counseling, or providing referrals for professional services.

The overwhelming majority of psychologists operate as consummate professionals. That said, the below are a list of interview "Don'ts" gathered from the California Department of Human Resources (2012) for their screening psychologists. As improbable and far-fetched as some may seem, each incident had actually occurred during an interview:

- Do not have any animals (cats or dogs) in the interview room.
- Do not eat during the interview.
- Do not take or make phone calls during the interview (unless it is a genuine emergency).
- Do not have your pager on sound, do not leave your office phone ringer on, and do not have your answering machine operating in the interview room.
- Do not make comments that might be interpreted as biased, sexualized, or gratuitously personal.
- Do not counsel the applicant or provide advice on any matter, especially regarding the need for therapy.
- Do not tell the applicant your interpretation of the test data.
- Do not in any way convey disapproval of the applicant's judgments, behaviors, or lifestyle. Remain aware of your verbal and non-verbal communications and facial expressions.
- Do not tell the applicant what your recommendation will be.
- Do not wear a gun to the interview.
- Do not throw objects at the applicant, in jest or otherwise.
- Do not yell at the applicant.
- Do not touch the applicant except for a handshake.
- Do not assume that information in the background report is necessarily correct. Ask about it, but ensure that background sources are protected (i.e. not revealed).
- Do not tell jokes or joke around with the applicant.
- Do not allow yourself to be drawn into a discussion should a candidate contact you once the interview is over.

"Stress" interviews (including yelling, hitting, throwing objects) are never appropriate. Candidates are already under the stress of being evaluated and there is no value to intentionally inducing further discomfort or tension for its own sake. Some may argue that observing the candidate in stressful situations provides a relevant sample of future job behavior. However, while inducing stress situations may provide some insight into how candidates behave when they are subordinate to authority, it fails to offer any useful information for predicting behavior in situations when, under the color of authority, the candidate interacts with those who have considerably less power and authority—situations that best match the peace officer job demands.

The most appropriate and effective demeanor during the interview is one of attentiveness and receptiveness. By putting candidates at ease, they are much more likely to openly discuss

problem areas. Of course, this does not mean that the psychologist should avoid probing or confronting the candidate regarding potentially problematic concerns, especially when candidates appear unduly defensive, avoidant, or non-disclosing.

The manner in which questions are asked influences the resulting responses over and above the effect of social desirability and impression management. As discussed in the previous chapter with respect to written questionnaires, the way questions are posed provides strong cues that candidates use to make sense of what is being asked and what information is sought in response. This is no truer than in the case of general or vague questions (Schwarz, 1999). Candidates may give answers based on their perceptions of the expectations of the interviewer; therefore, psychologists should carefully phrase their questions, taking care not to use words that are subject to either unwitting or willful misinterpretation.

Remote Psychological Interviews

On April 3, 2020, POST issued Bulletin 2020-18, "Compliance with POST Selection Standards During Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency" (see Appendix O), which provides "guidance to assist agencies with continuing to meet hiring needs, while mitigating concerns for the health and safety of candidates and others involved in the hiring process" (p. 1). The bulletin provides particular guidance on the remote administration of the psychological interview (including informed consent and disclosure, the interview environment, and technical issues), and provides a checklist for conducting psychological interviews by teleconference. Although this guidance was issued in response to the pandemic and the Governor's mandatory "stay-at-home" order, other unforeseen circumstances may make it necessary or prudent to conduct some evaluations via the use of synchronous (live) teleconference technology, but ***only at the direction and discretion of the hiring department.*** When doing so, psychologists should adhere to state laws and professional practice guidance pertaining to telepsychology, some links to which are included in Appendix O.

Multicultural Competence

Psychologists must be competent in the evaluation of individuals across diverse populations, including gender, age, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, disability, religious orientation, and other cultural dimensions. Multicultural competence includes an awareness and understanding of how the candidate's cultural background can influence their responses. For example, norms for behaviors such as making eye contact and shaking hands can vary across cultures, as can a reluctance to admit failings, reliance on family members, and mistrust of government authorities. It is incumbent on the psychologist to consider these responses and behaviors in the context of the candidate's cultural identity. See Chapter 3 for further discussion of Multicultural Competence.

Length of the Interview

The length of the interview should be based on the time necessary to meet its objectives. The entire interview process, including preparation (review of the psychological test results, psychological history questionnaire, background investigation report, and any relevant mental health treatment or evaluation records) and the interview itself generally requires about an hour and a half to two hours. Some candidates, particularly those who are very young with little life experience and "clean" test results and background reports, may require less time. Others, especially in cases where the various data sources point to seemingly contradictory or discrepant conclusions about the candidate, often require considerably more time.

Candidates who carefully work to conceal negative aspects of their personality can be difficult to assess. These individuals will also require more interview time in order to observe patterns that might aid in making accurate assessments (Colvin, 1993). Evaluations that lead to a disqualification determination almost without exception require lengthier interviews.

In appeal hearings, one of the most common accusations brought against the psychologist

is that the interview only lasted 15 minutes or less (regardless of the actual length of the interview) and did not allow the candidate time to adequately respond to questions. An effective strategy for countering this charge is to require the candidate to document and initial the time when the interview began and ended, thereby confirming the length of the interview in the evaluation record.

Detecting Deception

It is commonly assumed that deceptive persons are more evasive, talk less, have longer response latencies, and deflect or avoid responses to direct inquiries in areas that show some discrepancy or may have been problematic. Deceptive candidates may also present oversimplified stories or use third person or impersonal language structure to disavow personal responsibility. Denying events that are documented in the background investigation or treatment records, or minimizing their importance, are also indicators of deception (Rogers, 2008a).

Interviewers often rely on non-verbal behaviors to signal deception, such as an increase in pupil size, abrupt change in facial expression or overall body posture, nervousness, pursed lips, stalling for time, and reduced eye contact. But how accurate are these non-verbal cues in aiding people to detect deception? Bond and DePaulo (2006) attempted to answer that question by meta-analyzing over 200 studies on deception accuracy. They found that accurate detection rates consistently hover around 50%, about the same as chance, although the ability to correctly identify truth-tellers was higher (61%) than the average accuracy rate for identifying liars (47%). They did find that experts may be better at lie–truth discrimination; however, they still make many mistakes.

Accuracy rates were even lower in experiments where the evaluators couldn't hear what was being said and had to make a judgment based solely on watching the person's body language, since liars tend to be less forthcoming and tell less compelling stories (although even these differences are usually too subtle to be discerned reliably). Facial behaviors and body language are also less effective indicators of a speaker's veracity because they can be better controlled (Ekman, 1993). Unfortunately, in terms of false-positive error rates, people who are motivated to be believed can appear deceptive whether or not they are lying. Making matters worse, there appears to be a similar-to-me bias when judging veracity: judges are more reluctant to perceive as liars people who they feel resemble themselves.

Psychologists should admonish candidates to provide complete and truthful answers and point out the consequences of not doing so. This may mitigate deception and impression management and foster honest reporting. Candidate responses must also be compared against other sources of information to the extent possible.

Even when deception is detected, professional judgment must be used in determining whether it is consequential. This judgment typically rests on evidence of intentionality. Deception resulting from misunderstanding, confusion or erroneous beliefs about what the candidate believes he or she is being asked to disclose should warrant a less negative attribution than deception involving materially false statements and substantive omissions of negative history.

Interview Records

Note Taking. Taking comprehensive notes can serve two useful purposes. First, full notes provide additional documentation for use in supporting interpretations in the written report. Second, if the interviewer is consistently writing throughout the interview, the candidate will not be easily alerted to the significance that the interviewer attaches to certain answers. This can contribute to a less guarded interview. Notes made during the interview should be in a form and in sufficient detail to reconstruct the interview and refresh the memory of the psychologist as to the content and clinical issues emerging during the interview, should that information be needed at a later date during an appeal, investigation or otherwise.

Electronic Recording. The decision to video and/or voice record the interview should be made

with due consideration to the intended and potential uses of the recording and the possible influence of the recording on the candidate's behavior. No electronic records of interviews should be made without proper disclosure and authorization.

Privacy/ Invasiveness

Despite society's compelling interest in ensuring that those who perform public safety functions are psychologically qualified to do so, there are limits to the degree of acceptable invasiveness of questions used in determining candidate suitability. Inquiries involving highly sensitive or taboo topics, such as age of first sexual encounter, sexual preferences, religious upbringing, and political orientation, may be difficult to justify as sufficiently job-related to warrant privacy intrusion. Questions such as, "Have you ever been sexually molested as an adult?," although informative, are highly contentious and have dubious relevance to psychological suitability. Similarly, although childhood victimization (physical, sexual and psychological) can be a good predictor of stress tolerance problems, eating disorders, problematic relationships and maladaptive behavior in adults, investigating these dysfunctional behaviors is likely to be more informative and relevant—and less contentious—than inquiries into the instigating events.

Some personally sensitive topics are worth the intrusiveness. In particular, inappropriate and illegal sexual behavior is one of the most frequent reasons why police officers are fired. Although this behavior is uncommon, it makes up about 25% of the causes for termination—much higher than termination for excessive force or other types of misconduct. But even questions regarding sexual behavior are best limited to those that focus on illegal acts—such as child molestation, viewing child pornography, prostitution, voyeurism, sexual assault, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, on-duty sexual behavior, and selling sexual favors—or on sexual behaviors with known or reasonably established links to adult sexual misconduct, such as sexual boundary violations, viewing pornography at work, and on-the-job sexual contact.

Reaching a Determination Through Data Integration 9

The effective, systematic integration of test data, personal history information (including pertinent medical records), and clinical interview data to arrive at a suitability determination is the principal challenge faced by screening psychologists. The intent of this chapter is to assist screening psychologists in minimizing reliance on impressionistic judgments and maximizing use of evidence-based methods and strategies.

Risk Management vs. Risk Assessment

In evaluating psychological suitability, the screening psychologist is, in effect, determining whether the candidate falls within or outside the parameters of tolerable risk. The psychologist's role is therefore one of *risk assessor*. Establishing the parameters of acceptable risk—*risk management*—is the purview of state law, Commission regulations, and the hiring authority.

State law provides rather paradoxical risk management criteria. Government Code § 1031(f) stipulates that "*peace officers must be free of any emotional or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of peace officer powers.*" The term "might" suggests that only a low level of certainty is required to justify psychological disqualification. However, by expanding the focus of "emotional and mental conditions" to include bias against groups and its members, the law expands the risk assessment criteria beyond mental and emotional disorders to include biased behaviors, attitudes, and related traits. In addition, Commission Regulation 1955 further requires that peace officers have the ability to withstand the psychological demands of the position and provides behaviorally based criteria—in the form of the POST *Psychological Screening Dimensions*—against which to evaluate the psychological suitability of candidates. The examples of acceptable and unacceptable job performance contained in the POST Dimensions, as well as the many performance examples included in the critical incidents (see Table 4.9), provide a vehicle for the hiring authority and the psychologist to discuss agency-specific areas of concern and levels of risk tolerance.

The responsibility for integrating and evaluating candidate information against these risk management criteria rests with the psychologist. Steps for systematically arriving at a psychological suitability determination are detailed below.

Clinical vs. Actuarial Prediction

Arriving at a determination of psychological suitability requires the integration of data that cover a broad spectrum of constructs and competencies, yet research has shown that people are not highly reliable as processors of large amounts of data and do not consistently follow even their own integration and decision rules. Even highly-trained and experienced clinicians are susceptible to judgment errors, such as ignoring base rates, assigning non-optimal weights to cues, failing to take into account regression toward the mean, and failing to properly assess covariation (Grove et al., 2000; Meehl, 1954). Mechanical predictions of human behavior—using statistical equations, actuarial tables, or algorithmic formulae—have been found to increase accuracy by anywhere from 10% to 13% over clinical methods that rely on informal, subjective procedures for synthesizing data and making predictions about human behavior (Ægisdóttir et al., 2006; Grove et al., 2000).

The use of an actuarial model to screen peace officer candidates has been advanced in systems that provide various risk ratings using evidence-based rules for weighing and

combining the selected variables.[72] But no matter how highly mechanized the decision rule, all decision-making systems rely on human judgment. This is especially true for systems that attempt to predict behavior. The identification of relevant factors, as well as their accurate measurement and optimal weighting, requires clinical expertise (Grove & Meehl, 1996).

This is not all bad news. Relative to mechanical methods, clinicians are more effective collectors and interpreters of psychological information. They can recognize and record behavior and behavioral patterns relevant to psychological constructs of interest, and they can interpret this information against both group norms and information collected on other variables for the same candidate, all of which leads to a fuller understanding of the individual. Even sophisticated statistical models used for data integration and prediction routinely rely on a clinician's perceptions—honed by advanced training and experience—to be later coded and used in prediction [Ægisdóttir et al., 2006(a)]. To minimize error, however, clinicians must analyze the factors known to be empirically associated with counterproductive job behavior, exclude extraneous factors, and weigh the evidence supporting predictive utility according to its quality and reliability. To maximize confidence, clinicians should look for support across data sources.

The collection and use of data from multiple sources is a defining characteristic of psychological assessment. Any single source provides only a partial or incomplete representation of the characteristics it intends to measure, and every information source contains bias. Collecting information across sources (e.g., people, records, instruments) helps attenuate that bias. Distinct assessment methods provide unique sources and types of data; optimal knowledge is obtained from a sophisticated integration of information from a multimodal assessment battery, based on an understanding of the unique strengths and limitations of the various assessment methods.[73]

Diagnoses vs. Determinations

Because of the hiring agency's responsibilities under the ADA and FEHA, it should be informed when candidates are found to be unsuitable due to a psychiatric disorder.[74] However, that information and any other clinical findings should focus on how the functional limitations of the condition may render the candidate susceptible to engaging in unsafe and/or counterproductive behavior and its impact on critical psychological attributes as defined by the POST Psychological Screening Dimensions. For example, consider a candidate who suffered some degree of psychological trauma that left him with an anxiety condition (e.g., Posttraumatic Stress Disorder or Generalized Anxiety Disorder) and continues to experience symptoms. The test of whether the candidate's condition is disqualifying is determined by an individualized assessment of its impact on the candidate's emotional regulation/stress tolerance, assertiveness/persuasiveness, and/or other POST Dimensions, rather than based on stereotypical symptoms or course of the condition. The POST Dimensions serve to "flesh out" Government Code § 1031(f) by specifying "the proper manner" that a peace officer is to perform their duties (*Sager v. Yuba County,* 2007; see also *Brown v. Sandy City Appeal Board,* 2014).

[72] Specific systems are discussed in Chapter 7: Personal History Information.

[73] See Graham et al. (2013). Note, too, that error is attenuated by multimodal assessment only when using relevant, reliable and valid methods. Error is otherwise additive.

[74] Disqualifications based on an emotional disorder are rare (Ben-Porath et al., 2011).

Clinical illustration: ***Diagnosis vs Determination***

A candidate's background report reveals several references that describe excessive defensiveness and a lack of confidence under high-stress conditions. The candidate has a confirmed history of using prescribed antidepressant medication, without counseling, to aid in anxiety and mood control purportedly caused by job stress. On the MMPI-3 EID scale (a measure of emotional-internalizing dysfunction correlated with poor performance under stress conditions, becoming easily discouraged, and failure to accept and respond constructively to performance feedback), he scored 59T—a score received by only 0.1% of the 1,924 subjects in the Police Candidate Comparison Group. He also scored outside normal limits (in comparison to peace officer candidates) on RC2, ARX, and NEGE. Similarly, the candidate's CPI scores on scales Re, So, and Ac were at or below the 5th percentile based on police applicant norms. In the clinical interview, the candidate discussed several past conflicts at work, assigning all blame and responsibility to his coworkers and supervisors.

It is not this candidate's diagnosis that is at issue here, but rather his likelihood of exhibiting counterproductive behavior resulting from deficits in Emotional Regulation and Stress Tolerance based on his past behavior, performance in the interview, and psychological testing (e.g., difficulty admitting to shortcomings or mistakes; excessively defensive when challenged or criticized; consistently blaming others or circumstances for mistakes; suffering reactions to job stress). In this case, a prior history of a diagnosed mental disorder is irrelevant to a determination of unsuitability, since the collective evidence indicates that the candidate fails to meet the standards for suitability.

Integrating Multiple Sources of Information

To optimize accuracy of opinions and resulting decisions, data from within and across various sources should be weighted according to their relevance and reliability (Corey & Zelig, 2020; Heilbrun, Grisso, & Goldstein, 2009). The integration of data from a multimodal assessment has the highest degree of reliability and validity when performed systematically. It begins with the evaluation of written testing and proceeds to the consideration of personal history and interview data, culminating in a strategy for integrating these data to reach a suitability determination. Six sequential steps are recommended for a systematic data review:

1. **Evaluate test scores for evidence of response inconsistency, overreporting, and underreporting.**
2. **Identify and interpret relevant findings, using standard norms and peace officer norms.**
3. **Evaluate relevant personal history information from all sources to determine if any information meets agency standards for disqualification and how the information is convergent with, divergent from, or complements relevant test findings and interpretations.**
4. **Evaluate relevant clinical observations to determine how they are convergent with, divergent from, and/or complementary of relevant test findings and personal history information.**
5. **Determine whether the weight of the collective evidence (convergent, complementary, and divergent findings) supports or refutes the conclusion that the candidate meets the selection standards.**
6. **Obtain feedback from the hiring agency to determine the status of hired candidates and make adjustments to the prediction strategy as necessary.**

It is important for psychologists to utilize some form of an explicit model of data integration in order to reduce the influence from various types of clinician bias and to document the decision-making process. The recommended model described in this chapter provides a process and structure to ensure completeness and reliability, while allowing for legitimate differences in professional styles and approaches. Corey and Ben-Porath (in press) illustrate the use of this data integration model with a comprehensive set of cases that include information

from the MMPI-3 (PCIR /CCIR) and normal-range personality testing, and information from the background investigation, self-reported history, clinical interview, and mental health records.

Evaluate Written Testing

Step 1: Evaluate test scores for evidence of response inconsistency, overreporting, and underreporting.

Response Inconsistency. Excessive response inconsistency may undermine validity. Evidence of response inconsistency is normally evaluated using the test's standard norms[75] rather than special population or peace officer comparison group norms. The test's technical manual should indicate if response inconsistency is measured and the recommended cutoff score for deciding that a protocol is invalid.

Overreporting. Although rare in peace officer candidates, evidence of overreporting—the self-reporting of unusually high numbers of infrequent problem behaviors or symptoms—should first be evaluated using the test manual's recommended criteria. If overreporting scales are within normal range (e.g., +/- 1 s.d.) based on standard norms, but not peace officer norms, their meaning or relevance should be evaluated in the context of all other assessment information, including non-test data. A large number of these endorsements on behaviorally focused tests that do not include overreporting scales can be the result of poor reading ability, valid responding, or the rare desire on the part of a candidate to "look bad."

Underreporting. The literature is replete with evidence that peace officer applicants score especially high on measures of underreporting (i.e., validity scales) (Carpenter & Raza, 1987; Detrick & Chibnall, 2008; Detrick, Chibnall, & Call, 2010; Hiatt & Hargrave, 1988; Sellbom et al., 2007). All self-report measures are inherently susceptible to intentional guardedness and positive distortion, especially when the stakes are high. However, some score high on these measures due to a lack of self-awareness or insight into their psychological problems (Ben-Porath & Tellegen, 2020a). High scores may also be the result of testing such a highly vetted and comparatively well-adjusted population. Therefore, test results should not be deemed "invalid" simply on the basis of high levels of underreporting. Instead, when interpreting such protocols, the absence of elevations on scales measuring negative constructs and/or elevations on scales measuring positive constructs, should be regarded with caution.

Proceeding with caution begins with the use of collateral and corroborative information before concluding that the individual's test-taking approach reflects deception. However, the influence of defensiveness, social desirability and impression management—to the extent that they reflect an approach to self-representation in the assessment process—can infiltrate all self-report data, including personal history questionnaires and interviews, although not always in a uniform way across all domains (Detrick & Chibnall, 2014). Therefore, when the candidate's test protocol indicates a lack of cooperation or unusually high defensiveness, self-report and psychological test results should be deemphasized, although not ignored, and third-party information should be weighted more heavily (Heilbrun, Marczyk, & DeMatteo, 2002).

Individuals with a history of poor adjustment who present themselves as well adjusted on psychological inventories should be subjected to special scrutiny. If deception is detected as a result of comparing self-report information with collateral or third party information, the psychologist must determine whether it constitutes a breach of integrity—a critical dimension for both psychologists and background investigations.

Rogers (2008a) concurred that the clearest indicator of defensiveness occurs when the individual categorically denies particular events, but the denial is controverted by extensive or otherwise reliable sources. He advanced the idea of using specific "detection strategies" associated with particular test-taking approaches, focusing on the magnitude of the deception rather than merely the presence of it. Consistent minimizations rather than outright

[75] Standard norms are those used to establish the test's standard interpretive inferences. For specialized instruments developed specifically for use in screening police candidates, standard norms and peace officer norms are equivalent.

denials also indicate deception according to his strategy. In applying this detection strategy, however, psychologists should be careful not to fall into the "inconsistency trap", in which any inconsistencies are wrongly equated with deception and the absence of inconsistencies are equated with meticulously honest reporting (Rogers & Shuman, 2000).

Step 2: Identify and interpret relevant findings, using standard norms and peace officer norms.

Assess for significance against standard norms. Evaluating the significance of scale scores based on a test's standard norms (i.e., the general adult or community sample used to establish standardized scale scores) provided in the test manual's standard scoring guidelines or interpretive report should always be the first line of analysis when evaluating written test scores. This is true whether the test measures psychopathology or normal personality, since scale scores that fall outside of normal limits for the normative population have particular implications for safe and effective job performance. Scale scores of this magnitude are not mere hypotheses; they have specific meaning that must be evaluated against the POST Dimensions. When interpreting findings from specialized tests developed specifically for screening peace officer candidates, scale scores should be analyzed initially against the test's standard peace officer norms and then against any local or agency-specific norms.

Assess for comparison group significance. The mean scores and standard deviations of peace officer candidates on most written personality tests, both abnormal and normal, often fall below interpretive thresholds for the standard normative population (Carpenter & Raza, 1987; Corey & Ben-Porath, 2018; Hiatt & Hargrave, 1988; Lowmaster & Morey, 2012). The use of peace officer applicant norms or comparison groups enables the detection of scores that fall below the standard (i.e., clinical) threshold for interpretation but which studies have shown to be nevertheless interpretable (Sellbom et al., 2007; Tarescavage, Corey, & Ben-Porath, 2015).[76]

When interpreting these more moderately elevated test scores, it is important to know which scales have interpretive meaning at subclinical levels and what scores trigger those meanings. This information is included in automated reports that limit interpretive statements and inferences to only those scales with empirical evidence for validity. Treating all significant score deviations from peace officer applicant mean scores as having the same meaning as comparable deviations from general population norms cannot be justified without adequate validity evidence; without such evidence, the risk of making erroneous interpretations is heightened.

Clinical illustration: ***Drawing inferences from subclinical test scores only when they are empirically justified***

A peace officer candidate scored 31T on the CPI's Independence (In) scale when measured against peace officer applicant norms. A standard interpretive inference for this score is that the test taker lacks self-confidence, seeks excessive support from others, tries to avoid conflict, and has difficulty making decisions. However, caution should be exercised when making this interpretation without empirical evidence, since a score of 31T (i.e., markedly below average) using police applicant norms equates to a score of 51T (i.e., average) using the standard CPI normative group. Without empirical evidence, these inferences should be treated as hypotheses to be evaluated in the context of collateral data, including background, clinical interview, and other psychological assessment instruments with comparable construct measures.

The same candidate, scored 29T, 28T and 27T on Responsibility (Re), Socialization (So), and Self-Control (Sc), respectively, using police applicant norms, which equate to T scores of 50, 49 and 50 (all average scores), using the standard CPI norms. Nevertheless, there are well-established correlations between these scales and relevant post-hire behaviors that these scales measure, including self-indulgence, indifference to personal obligations, resistance to rules, rule and norm violations, rebelliousness, problems of undercontrol and impulsivity. The inferences drawn from these scores may be treated as "findings" rather than simply hypotheses.

[76] See Chapter 6: Written Psychological Tests for a discussion of the importance of using peace officer candidate norms.

Assess for convergent, divergent, and complementary findings. Searching for complementary findings—elements within or across tests that help to understand a person in a way that isolated findings would not—is an important step in the integration of assessment data. Personality tests that contain scales measuring both higher-order or primary constructs and facets of those primary constructs facilitate this assessment. For example, the PAI's DEP scale measures the general construct of depression, whereas DEP-C, DEP-A, and DEP-P measure cognitive, affective, and physiological facets of depression, respectively.

Clinical illustration: ***Make use of complementary test scores***

RCd (Demoralization) on the MMPI-3 and MMPI-2-RF measures a pervasive and affect-laden dimension of unhappiness and dissatisfaction with life (Ben-Porath & Tellegen, 2020a). When RCd is high, scores on a number of the Specific Problems Scales (e.g., SUI, HLP, SFD, NFC) can help to identify particular manifestations of demoralization. Conversely, a low RCd score, along with an elevation on one or more of its associated scales, indicates that the problems measured by the latter scale(s) are unaccompanied by a pervasive sense of being overwhelmed or a desire to give up.

Reconciling and Bringing Meaning to Divergent Test Findings: Advice from the Experts

Questions regarding the proper interpretation of divergent test findings were posed to leading experts in the field of psychological test development and validation.[77] Their combined responses are provided here:

Why can scores differ on various measures of defensiveness or underreporting, either on the same or different tests?

There are two possible reasons for discrepant scores of defensiveness or underreporting of negative symptoms/behaviors:

- The scales do not measure the same type of underreporting, defensiveness or positive response bias, or they are designed to measure different aspects of this test-taking orientation. This is why, for example, L and K on the MMPI-3 can and do diverge. L measures underreporting in the form of uncommon claims of moral virtue, whereas K measures it in the form of uncommon claims of good psychological adjustment.[78] Although there is generally a high correlation between any one measure of underreporting and a similar measure on another test (e.g., PAI PIM correlates .60 with the MMPI-2 L scale, .69 with the CPI Gi scale, and .54 with the IPI Guardedness scale),[79] this does not guarantee that when one is elevated the other will be as well.

[77] The test experts contributing to this guidance are Yossef S. Ben-Porath, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Kent State University, an internationally recognized expert on the MMPI instruments and coauthor of the MMPI-2-RF, MMPI-A-RF, and the MMPI-3 test manuals; Jeff Foster, Ph.D., an industrial/organizational psychologist and Director of Research and Development at Hogan Assessment Systems, publisher of the Hogan Personality Inventory and Hogan Development Survey; Robin Inwald, Ph.D., ABPP, founder of Hilson Research, Inc. and retired director of Inwald Research, Inc., author of the original Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI), HCSI, HPP/SQ, IS5-R, IS2 and HSRI for public safety; and Michael D. Roberts, Ph.D., ABPP, co-owner of JRA, Inc., publisher of the PAI and CPI Police & Public Safety Reports, Personal History Questionnaire and Psychological History Questionnaire.

[78] See Ben-Porath and Sellbom (in press) and Detrick and Chibnall (2014) for a detailed discussion of the differences in MMPI-3 L and K scales, and MMPI-2-RF L-r and K-r scales, respectively, as measures of underreporting.

[79] PIM correlations with L and Gi are reported in Roberts et al. (2000); the correlation with Guardedness is reported in Ben-Porath et al. (2010).

- They do measure the same type of underreporting, defensiveness or positive response bias, but one does so better than the other. Similarly targeted scales on different tests may also demonstrate differences in their ability to measure the construct due to differences in their internal consistency reliability. A scale consisting of items that are strongly correlated with one another is better able to make valid predictions than one with low internal consistency reliability.

Why can scales purportedly measuring the same construct (e.g., dominance, aggressiveness, antisocial traits) produce different results across tests?

As discussed above, similarly named scales may not actually measure the same construct. This is why it is important not to judge a scale merely by its label. Information about the construct validity of a scale (what it does and does not correlate with) is needed to determine what it actually measures. For example, the MMPI-3 and MMPI-2-RF have an Aggression (AGG) scale and an Aggressiveness (AGGR) scale. On its face, it may appear that these scales measure the same construct, but research reveals that the former is a measure of physically aggressive behavior, whereas the latter is a measure of interpersonally domineering behavior that need not have a physical element (Ben-Porath & Sellbom, in press; Ben-Porath & Tellegen, 2020a). Similar differences in the facets of constructs may moderate the correlations between other scales ostensibly tapping the same or similar constructs, such as PAI ANT (Antisocial Features) and MMPI-2 Pd (Psychopathic Deviate) r=.49, and PAI ANT and CPI Re (Responsibility) r=-.49 (Roberts et al., 2000).

Discrepant outcomes on scales that purportedly measure the same construct can be due to one test doing a better job than the other—just as with underreporting scales from different tests. Other alternative explanations include the fact that the scales use different test items with varying degrees of correlation with the other items on the scale and/or the research strategy used to validate the construct. For example, sometimes college students are used as subjects when developing test scales, other times subjects are selected who display the traits tied to the target construct.

What meaning should be given to an elevated subscale or lower-order scale score when its associated higher-order, primary or parent scale is within normal range?

The answer depends on whether the subscale is sufficiently reliable and valid to be able to stand on its own. For example, this is the case with the MMPI-3 and MMPI-2-RF Specific Problems Scales, but not the MMPI-2 Harris-Lingoes subscales, which should only be interpreted if the parent scale is elevated (Ben-Porath & Sellbom, in press).

Although subscales are generally correlated with one another, this is not true in all cases. In fact, some of the most interesting results occur when the same individual receives very different scores on subscales of the same parent scale. The implications of these results depend on what the respective scales measure, which is "not always fully understood or well-articulated" (APA, 2018a, p. 9). As illustrated in the following examples, when comparing similarly-named scales from different tests, understanding what the scales actually measure is key to determining the meaning of scale score differences.

Example 1: A candidate's CPI Socialization (So) score is in the normal range, accompanied by an So3 subscale score that is below normal limits—a configuration that tells more about the individual than the So scale alone. In this case, So3 includes items dealing with good memories of home and parents, indicating that although the candidate presents as norm-conforming and generally stable in behavior and attitudes, she did not enjoy a happy childhood. Depending on other clinical information, including scores on other test scales, this may pose a risk of future adjustment problems. The addition of within-normal-limits scores on So1 (optimism), So2 (adequate self-discipline), and So4 (sensitivity) substantially mitigate that risk. Findings that the candidate's personal history are consistent with these inferences would further reinforce that conclusion.

Example 2: The score on the PSR Interpersonal Relations scale is in the low or moderate range, indicating that the individual appears to be well adjusted in dealing with others. However, an elevated score on the Dominance subscale indicates that, despite functioning well across social interactions, the person may have a tendency to be persistent in pushing for acceptance of their ideas.

All scale scores, including subscales, derive their meaning from evidence of their ability to predict relevant aspects of behavior, including important post-hire behavior, at a designated score level. Psychologists must therefore be familiar with and use available statistical formulas, cutoffs and other evidence-based prediction techniques to enhance predictive accuracy, especially when judgment accuracy is critical (e.g., when assessing control of impulses, emotions, and behavior). Ignoring available statistical prediction strategies may do a disservice to client agencies and may even be unethical when false-negative outcomes carry severe consequences (Ægisdóttir et al., 2006).

Evaluate Personal History Information

Step 3: Evaluate relevant personal history information from all sources to determine if any information meets agency standards for disqualification and how the information is convergent with, divergent from, or complements relevant test findings and interpretations.

Findings and interpretations from written instruments should inform the preliminary assessment of the candidate. However, there are times when the findings on written tests, and the interpretations that these findings generate, are not borne out in the clinical interview, background investigation or other personal history.

There can be several reasons for discrepancies between what a test indicates about a candidate and what co-workers, family and friends and other collateral sources report. These include: (1) informants are not aware of some aspects of an individual's psychological functioning (especially ones that they would be less inclined to share or advertise); (2) informants are more willing to report problems than is the candidate in this high-stakes situation; (3) test scores are not 100% valid and/or (4) informants are not 100% accurate or reliable.

The reliability of third-party sources (friends, family, work references, neighbors) is also subject to great variation as a function of differences in frequency and duration of exposure to the candidate, the context of that exposure, and motivation to aid or harm the candidate. When evaluating the reliability and quality of information provided by third parties, it is important to consider the impartiality of the source and their familiarity with the subject. This does not mean, however, that a collateral informant needs substantial or prolonged exposure to the individual before reporting credibly. Third-party sources with very limited familiarity with the candidate may have accurate and relevant information if their exposure was sufficient to provide a reliable and accurate account or impression. Particularly when investigating a history of biased behavior, it is important that background investigators query "a broad range of diverse references and developed references, including workplace (e.g., supervisors, co-workers), family members, neighbors, close personal relationships, social and family friends, teachers, military colleagues, and other contacts" (Bias Assessment Framework, footnote 1). It is especially important to include, whenever available, third-party sources who differ from the candidate in terms of the characteristics listed in GC § 1031(f) (i.e., race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation). Interviewing collateral sources from within the candidate's same identity groups may yield little information about biased behaviors even when they exist. This also points to the importance of obtaining information from secondary references (i.e., references offered by a candidate's initial references). These developed references may yield more information about the candidate than the primary references provided by the candidate.

Additional information should be sought when substantial discrepancies cannot be resolved. For example, if a co-worker indicates that the candidate is rude, domineering and aggressive,

but this does not show up in the test data, the background investigator can be consulted to verify or disconfirm this behavior through contact with other co-workers or family members; in addition, time can be spent during the clinical interview assessing the candidate's relationships with co-workers and others. Even a single report of problem behavior should not be dismissed as invalid or insignificant if it reveals circumstances that may trigger a disconcerting reaction by the candidate. Understanding the context in which a candidate behaved badly, and what triggered it, may be more useful in evaluating a candidate's suitability than trying to understand whether they have a propensity to behave in a particular way.

Evaluate the Psychological Interview

Step 4: Evaluate relevant clinical observations to determine how they are convergent with, divergent from, and/or complementary of relevant test findings and personal history information.

Clinical observations provide a unique source of relevant information about the candidate; they can also be a source of bias and error. To guard against the intrusion of unreliable and irrelevant data, the evaluation should focus primarily on observed behaviors (versus the psychologist's reactions to those behaviors). Even then, behaviors in the interview may not generalize beyond the evaluation context. Observations of behavior that seem idiosyncratic and, therefore, non-generalizable, should be carefully considered, especially if the behavior appears novel in comparison to the candidate's background references and psychological testing.

Clinical illustration: ***Use clinical observations to clarify background and test findings***

During the clinical interview, the candidate initially exhibited poor eye contact, equivocal and non-responsive answers, and barely audible vocal volume, but exhibited increasingly strong eye contact, responsiveness, and volume over time. Some co-workers reported that the candidate comes across as "shy at first, but is really fine once you get to know him." Depending upon the environment in which the candidate would be working, the volume of calls for service, and the rapidity with which they would be expected to move between calls, there may not be sufficient time to establish a comfortable level of rapport with citizens. For example, in fast-paced, high-volume urban work contexts, first impressions may be more influential than in more rural environments. Whether the clinical and background observations reflect a deficit in Assertiveness/Persuasiveness and Social Competence sufficient to warrant disqualification depends on agency-specific risk tolerance, compensatory assets, and other findings from the evaluation, including the results of psychological testing.

When interpreting behavior displayed in the clinical interview, it is important to consider the context, or what is also referred to as the frame of reference. Behavior is always contextual and, in the context of the clinical interview, the psychologist is the gatekeeper—the authority figure—whereas the candidate is a subordinate in the power hierarchy. As discussed earlier, conclusions about the nature of that interaction may not be generalizable much beyond contexts with a similar frame of reference. Because of this, counterproductive behavior observed during the interview is especially compelling and warrants particular weight, as it mimics an important context found in a law enforcement organization; namely, the relationship between a peace officer and superiors in the chain of command. The reverse (i.e., positive behavior during the clinical interview), however, is not necessarily generalizable, since candidates may behave quite differently when placed in the role of an authority figure dealing with people in vulnerable and dependent roles. Care should be taken not to generalize across contexts without justification.

This point is especially salient when evaluating findings from the clinical interview that differ from ones found in test results and/or the background investigation. Observations from

family members, neighbors, friends, and co-workers should not necessarily be expected to correspond perfectly with observations made in a clinical interview, as the frame of reference is quite different. Well-established friendships and social networks may influence observations made by work supervisors; consequently, it should not be surprising when substantial differences exist between observations made by collateral sources and those made in the clinical interview.

Reach a Determination

Step 5: Determine whether the weight of the collective evidence (convergent, complementary, and divergent findings) supports or refutes the conclusion that the candidate meets the selection standards.

If the convergent, divergent and complementary findings from the written testing, background information, and clinical interview have been properly integrated, there should be a reasoned basis for making a suitability determination. That determination should be made systematically and consistently by deciding in advance what factors to weigh and what weight to assign them based on their reliability, validity and relevance to the suitability criteria. Data or findings that appear to be discrepant (e.g., differences in test scores on different measures of the seemingly same construct, differences in observations among background references, differences in test scores and clinical interview behavior) may actually reflect complementary facets of the individual's personality, including how the candidate functions in various contexts and in response to differing demand characteristics.

Three sequential questions can help the screening psychologist reach a determination based on the collective evidence in the evaluation:

1. ***Considering all risk-related findings from all sources, what evidence-based inferences can be drawn from them?*** Eliminate those that do not map onto the POST Dimensions , the Bias Assessment Framework, or agency-specific criteria.
2. ***What divergent findings oppose these inferences?*** Eliminate those inferences that are outweighed by divergent findings of sufficient relevance, validity and reliability.
3. ***Are any surviving risk-related inferences of sufficient magnitude and relevance to warrant the candidate's disqualification?***

Integrating data across multiple sources of information is challenging when they appear to contradict one another. Consulting with colleagues who have broader experience, expertise and perspective can help bring clarity or a plan for obtaining it. A colleague or testing expert is the appropriate resource if in doubt as to the reliability of the assessment. Since it is the agency's job to establish the parameters of risk tolerance, they should be consulted if in doubt as to whether a particular problematic trait or behavior warrants disqualification under the agency's standards.

At times it may be necessary to defer a determination decision to await additional third-party information. Most commonly this will consist of background investigator clarification or reconciliation of discrepant information, or records pertaining to past medical or psychological treatment and/or evaluation that could not be acquired earlier or were only discovered later.

One final note: The ratio of suitable to unsuitable candidates in any given candidate pool is, in part, a function of the quality of the hiring agency's previous vetting efforts. Agencies with highly effective systems at the pre-offer stage yield a higher proportion of suitable candidates. They should not be punished for their good deed by adhering to any sort of disqualification rate quota intended to show that the psychologist is "doing their job," or by the belief that deeming too many candidates suitable may be seen as an act of mere acquiescence and rubber-stamping.

Validate the Determination

Step 6: Obtain feedback from the hiring agency to determine the status of hired candidates and make adjustments to the prediction strategy, as necessary.

Many errors are repeated because psychologists never receive feedback about the results of their determinations (Ægisdóttir et al., 2006a, 2006b). In the absence of feedback, screening psychologists are vulnerable to the influence of confirmatory biases, whereby they recall instances in which their predictions were correct but fail to consider instances in which they were wrong because they are ignorant of the outcomes.

Good analyses require good feedback. That feedback can range from the most basic (e.g., the candidate successfully completed academy, field training and probation; separated from the agency under positive circumstances; or separated from the agency under adverse circumstances) to more detailed and refined surveys of job performance (see Appendix B). Longer-term, longitudinal follow-up allows for the accumulation of cases with low base rate outcomes (e.g., on-duty sexual misconduct, integrity violations), potentially aiding the psychologist in identifying indicators that may otherwise go undetected.

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Evaluation Reporting Requirements, Guidelines and Second Opinions 10

This chapter discusses the content of psychological evaluation reports, the protection and retention of those reports and underlying records, and the second-opinion/appeal process.

Minimum Reporting Requirements

Documentation of the psychological evaluation requires that the *"evaluator shall provide the department with their findings from the bias assessment … and identify the data sources relied upon for their findings, including information obtained through the background investigation"* [Commission Regulation 1955(f)(2)]. The evaluator shall make a determination of the candidate's psychological suitability, which must be documented through a completed and signed POST 2-364, Psychological Suitability Declaration form. Prior to appointment as a peace officer, the candidate must be determined to be psychologically suitable. [Commission Regulation 1955(f)(3)].

The 2-364 form (Appendix N) must be included in the candidate's background investigation file and made available during POST compliance reviews [Commission Regulation 1955(f)(4)]. Since the background file is maintained as a protected but not confidential record, it must be free of any medical or other disability-related information.

It is lawful to provide medical information to the hiring authority; however, only that information necessary to satisfy the purpose for which it is being communicated, such as the nature and seriousness of the potential risks posed by the candidate, should be included [Commission Regulation 1955(f)(5)]. When mental or emotional conditions are disclosed, the focus should be on the impact of those conditions and the limitations their symptoms impose on the candidate's ability to perform the essential job functions safely and effectively, rather than on the diagnosis itself.

Narrative Report Considerations

The hiring authority has the right to determine what information is—and isn't—to be included in the psychological report. Before instituting a policy of receiving only a pass/fail determination from the psychologist, the hiring authority should consider the following:

Psychologist Accountability. Receiving only a pass/fail decision from the psychologist without any additional explanation does not absolve the agency from the ultimate responsibility for the hiring decision. For example, in *Holiday v. City of Chattanooga* (6th Cir., 2000), the court held that the law enforcement agency blindly accepted the decision of its screening physician, who disqualified a police candidate based on generalized conclusions about his medical condition rather than on an individualized inquiry into his actual medical condition and its impact, if any, on his ability to perform the job. A full report provides the agency with a mechanism to ensure accountability of their screening psychologists.

Hiring Authority Rights and Responsibilities. A law enforcement agency can only appoint candidates as peace officers who have been deemed psychologically suitable. The reverse, however, is not true: an agency is not legally obligated to hire all candidates who are cleared by the psychologist. For this reason, and especially when faced with equivocal determinations of suitability, screening psychologists should describe the bases for any residual concerns with sufficient specificity to permit the hiring authority (and others who are not experts in psychological testing or clinical assessment) to understand the issue(s).

Verification of Candidate-Supplied Information. A full report allows the hiring authority the ability to check the reliability and credibility of information provided by the candidate elsewhere during the hiring process.

Reasonable Accommodation Information. The responsibility for determining and implementing accommodation, when and for whom it is appropriate,[80] rests with the employer; however, it is incumbent on the psychologist to communicate information necessary to make this determination, including the nature and degree of the impairment and what essential functions are impacted. The psychologist should also provide suggestions on what, if any, job modifications could resolve or mitigate the limitation, such as scheduling adjustments, or adult learning strategies that may prove most effective in training. The employer can then determine whether reasonable accommodation is feasible.

Legal Defensibility. In investigating claims of disability discrimination, both the CRD and EEOC have the authority to inspect confidential medical records, including those that psychologists retain in their custody. Providing the hiring authority with clear, jargon-free language that describes the risks and functional limitations posed by the candidate provides a strong defense against claims of discrimination.

Training and Probation Advisories. A hiring agency may request that the screening psychologist provide information that can aid in training and monitoring the candidate during probation. This might include findings concerning the potential for unassertiveness, inattention, distractibility, inflexibility, and other traits and behaviors that should be further evaluated during field training and probation. Like all information included in a psychological report, psychologists should base their recommendations, reports, and diagnostic or evaluative statements on information and techniques sufficient to substantiate their findings (APA, 2018b; Packer & Grisso, 2011; *Swearer v. Karoleski*, 1989).

There are ethical limits to the nature and depth of personal information that should be included in a narrative report. It is not appropriate to report the intimate details of a candidate's family or personal history unless directly related to the determination or for some other job-relevant purpose. Even then, the private information should be reported in the least intrusive manner. For example, if a candidate experienced an early childhood trauma involving victimization from sexual assault, the narrative report should exclude reference to a sexual assault and instead simply refer to prior trauma history. This informs the hiring authority of the reasons supporting the psychologist's determination and any recommendations, while limiting the disclosure (and potential misuse) of sensitive private information.

Psychologists should establish the amount and kind of information to be contained in the report in consultation the hiring agency and its legal counsel.

Risk Ratings

Some psychologists provide ratings of the candidate's psychological suitability, ranging from highly unsuitable to highly suitable, the degree of risk posed by the candidate, and/or the likelihood of unsatisfactory/problematic performance. Such risk ratings are permissible; however, the files of all candidates who are appointed as peace officers must include the documentation stipulated in Commission Regulation 1955(f)(3), stating that they were found psychologically suitable.

Risk ratings must be carefully considered before being used as a basis for disqualification. For example, in *Swearer v. Karoleski* (1989) a candidate was disqualified because he was rated a "poor risk" based on a rating system that graded candidates into five categories: Highly Recommended, Recommended, Acceptable, Poor Risk, and Do Not Hire. Those identified as poor risk were reported as having a 20% chance of becoming a superior or outstanding police officer, a 65% probability of becoming an average or acceptable police officer, and a 15% chance of unacceptable performance. The court focused on the fact that, based on these metrics, a poor-risk candidate had an 85% probability of becoming an acceptable or superior officer, and those classified as "acceptable" had only a 5% better chance of becoming superior or acceptable and only a 5% less chance of being unacceptable. In siding with the plaintiff, the court remarked, "common sense dictates that where a Pass/Fail result is required,

[80] Reasonable accommodation is discussed in Chapter 2: Legal, Regulatory and Professional Requirements.

a classification below that of failing is absurd. If the classification 'Poor Risk' is failing, then the classification 'Do Not Hire' is superfluous."[81]

Interactions With Others Involved in the Hiring Process

There are several circumstances where information accrued during the psychological evaluation should be forwarded to the background investigator. First, if the basis for a psychological disqualification rests solely on information that is equally if not more relevant to the background investigation, it may be more appropriate to have that determination originate from the background investigation itself. This has the added benefit of preempting claims that the disqualification was based on a protected disability. Second, the psychologist can enlist the background investigator's involvement if additional third-party information is needed to make a more conclusive determination. For example, if a candidate were to reveal poor anger management, the background investigator could be asked to verify this behavior in work history or other aspects of the candidate's life. Both the background investigator and the psychologist should be given the opportunity to reconsider their initial decisions in light of new information that the other might unearth.

Some agencies employ the use of hiring meetings or "roundtable" discussions, attended by all those involved in the selection process. These meetings provide an opportunity for the background investigator, polygrapher (when used), screening psychologist, and others to discuss their findings and identify and resolve any discrepancies in their respective data. Facts that may have been overlooked or minimized by one may be emphasized by another, and discussions among the various participants can lead to a more reasoned decision about the candidate than might occur when relying solely on written documentation or second-hand characterization of their respective findings.

Records Retention

The hiring agency and the screening psychologist should reach an explicit agreement as to the custody, control, retention, and disclosure of psychological evaluation records. Psychologists should also maintain copies of their determination reports and the documentation supporting them. Any information deemed medical in nature is confidential and must be maintained in a locked file separate from the employee's background file.

Records related to employment must be maintained for at least four years after they were initially created, and in the case of those who were disqualified or terminated, for at least four years after the employment action [Government Code § 12946]. Additionally, GC § 12960 recently extended the time from one to three years to file an employment discrimination claim. If a complaint is filed, the records must be maintained until the resolution of the action. The background report (including the psychologist's determination) must be retained for as long as the officer remains in the department's employ (Regulation 1953). Although psychological records are not technically part of the background report, it is strongly advised that this information be retained for a length of time no shorter than the hiring agency's requirement.[82] Maintaining records beyond the minimum periods required by law, regulation and agency policy also serves to facilitate research studies upon which test validation depends.

[81] Reporting negative information about a candidate who nonetheless is rated suitable by the screening psychologist may result in the court-ordered release of the report in the event of future litigation. See *Miron v. Town of Stratford* [976 F.Supp. 2d 120 (2013)], in which the court concluded, "The public interest in assuring that candidates who have been offered employment with the police department have indeed passed the psychological evaluations to which they are subjected is not overcome by a candidate's privacy interest in keeping the results of such an evaluation secret where, as here, the professional expresses reservations about a candidate's suitability for the job" (at 143).

[82] California Business and Professions Code §2919 requires a licensed psychologist to retain a patient's "health service records for a minimum of seven years from the patient's discharge date." However, a peace officer candidate is not a patient and the psychological evaluation is not a health service. Therefore, the appropriate record retention authority is Government Code §12946, in accordance with 2 CCR § 11069(g), if applicable.

Access to Psychological Records

Prospective Employers. The confidentiality provisions of both the ADA and FEHA prohibit the employer's disclosure of confidential medical information to all but a select few [29 CFR § 1630.14(b) and 2 CCR § 11069(g)]. Other prospective law enforcement employers are not included in this short list. However, the written determination created in compliance with Commission Regulation 1955(f)(2) (stating that the candidate was found suitable or unsuitable on the basis of the psychological evaluation) is an administrative document and therefore can be accessed by prospective employers and others. An agency should never consider providing confidential information to another prospective law enforcement employer without a waiver signed voluntarily and knowingly by the individual authorizing disclosure of specific medical information to a third party and with the direct involvement and consent of the agency's legal counsel.

Candidates. Federal and state law secures an individual's right to access their own personal health and employment information.[83] However, these rights are limited or exempted when the information was gathered or produced as a matter of law (e.g., Government Code §1031), and public interest in its nondisclosure outweighs private or public interests in disclosure. Various courts have held that the integrity of the peace officer hiring process comprises a strong public interest and would be compromised by allowing candidates access to their psychological evaluation records because candidates would then be able to tailor their responses to the evaluations on the basis of this information (Corey & Zelig, 2020; Schroeder, 1997). Hiring agencies are advised to work with their legal counsel to draft a written waiver of records access rights, to be signed as a condition of participation in the psychological evaluation. A sample waiver is provided in Appendix L.

Appeals/Second Opinions

An individual's private interests in gaining employment and the public interest in assuring a fair employment process are met by allowing a disqualified candidate to submit a second-opinion evaluation for consideration by the hiring authority [2 CCR §11071(b)(2) and Commission Regulation 1955(g)]. The hiring agency is not required to notify the disqualified candidate of this right nor pay for the second evaluation; however, should a candidate indicate that they are seeking a second opinion, the department must make available to the second opinion psychologist the peace officer duties, powers, demands, and working conditions and the requirements set forth in Regulation 1955 that were provided to the first-opinion psychologist. Additional obligations extend to state agencies.[84]

Some agencies have a formal appeal process whereby the candidate is sent to another qualified evaluator selected and paid for by the agency. More commonly, especially at smaller agencies, disqualified candidates must seek out and pay for a second evaluation themselves. When candidates inform the hiring agency that they are seeking a second opinion, the hiring authority should provide them with a description of the second-opinion process, including answers to these anticipated questions:

- *How much time do I have to appeal?*
- *How quickly can I complete the appeal process (potentially to be accepted into an upcoming academy)?*
- *Where can I get a second opinion?*
- *Do I have to pay for the second opinion? How much will it cost?*
- *What happens after the second opinion is sent in?*
- *Will I have access to the second-opinion report and records?*

The qualifications of the second-opinion evaluator, especially with respect to the POST

[83] Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA); California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act, California Civil Code § 56 et seq.; California Public Records Act, Government Code §§ 6250 through 6276.48; Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 et seq.

[84] In the state system the candidate must complete the Dispute Resolution Process before filing an appeal with the State Personnel Board Appeals Division.

requirements for psychological evaluator competence, should weigh heavily into the consideration of the opinion itself. Accordingly, the agency should provide information to assist candidates in seeking a qualified independent evaluator. The POST directory of Peace Officer Psychological Evaluators provides one such resource. Should the disqualification be reversed, the suitability declaration maintained in the background file must be completed and signed by an evaluator who meets POST requirements.

Second-opinion evaluators should be provided with a description of the assessment measures and procedural steps to be followed in order for their findings to warrant consideration. For example, the evaluator may be advised to include copies of any test protocols from the evaluation and warned that a summary description of general profile characteristics or a report of selected findings is insufficient. The name and contact information for the initial, agency-retained psychologist should be provided to the second-opinion evaluator in the event that further clarification or information is needed. Additional information, such as specific procedures or findings from the initial evaluation, may be shared with the second-opinion evaluator at the discretion of the department. The candidate should be informed that the second opinion is reviewed as additional suitability information, and that it is advisory only and not binding upon the hiring agency.

The consideration given to a second-opinion evaluation must be made in good faith. The decision-maker should be provided with a clear articulation of the findings from each evaluation and their implications for the candidate's ability to safely and effectively perform the essential job functions and to otherwise comply with regulatory and agency-specific criteria for psychological suitability. In addition to considering any pertinent differences in the qualifications of the respective evaluators, the decision-maker should consider the degree to which the findings and determination are based on (1) a nexus to the psychologically relevant demands and responsibilities of the position; (2) current, objectively-verifiable information rather than speculation; and (3) relevant personal history (EEOC Enforcement Guidance, 2000).

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Peace Officer Screening Psychologist Questionnaire

Contact/License Information

Name	Title

Address

Phone	Email	California Board of Psychology license number

Experience

1. Per Government Code § 1031 and Commission Regulation 1955, describe how you possess at least the equivalent of five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, including the equivalent of three full-time years accrued post-doctorate.

2. List all law enforcement agencies that you have worked with in the past five (5) years. For each agency listed, provide dates of work, specific type of work performed, number and types of psychological assessments, and contact names, phone numbers, and email addresses. If you need more space, attach additional sheet.

Dates of Work	Specific Type of Work	Assessment Instruments Used	Agency Contact Information

Education and Training

3. What continuing education related to preemployment peace officer psychological evaluations have you completed over the last five (5) years?

4. List any other courses or seminars related to preemployment peace officer psychological evaluations that you have completed over the last five (5) years that did not count toward your continuing education.

Professional Memberships and Certifications

5. List current professional memberships relevant to preemployment peace officer psychological evaluations, and board certifications in specialties certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology (e.g., Police and Public Safety Psychology, Forensic Psychology).

Assessments

6. List all psychological evaluation measures that you currently utilize in your preemployment peace officer psychological evaluations.

Legal issues

7. Have you received any reprimands, sanctions, license restrictions or other adverse action by the California Board of Psychology, the licensing board of another state, or the American Psychological Association? If yes, provide a brief explanation.

8. Have you had any litigation or any other action filed against you for professional work that you prepared? If yes, provide a brief description and the outcome.

In addition to responses to the above questions, please provide the following:

- ❑ A sample preemployment peace officer psychological evaluation report (redact all confidential information)
- ❑ Proof of your malpractice and general liability insurance
- ❑ A blended rate for services, inclusive of any and all costs of travel, lodging, meals, miscellaneous and other expenses related to the completion of your services

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Selection Validation Survey

1. Name of Rated Employee

[NOTE: Employee's name should be redacted after data collection.]

2. Database ID Number

3. Employee's Position

4. Date of Hire (MM/DD/YY)

5. Date of Rating (MM/DD/YY)

6. Employing Agency

7. Name of Rater and Contact Phone and/or Email Address

8. Rater's Position *Mark all that apply*

❑ Field Training Officer ❑ Direct Supervisor ❑ Other:

_____

_____

9. Employee's Probationary Status

❑ Still on probation
❑ Successfully completed probation
❑ Left agency prior to completing probation
❑ Left voluntarily
❑ Left involuntarily

10. Employee's Current Status:

❑ Currently employed
❑ No longer with agency due to:
- ❑ Voluntary resignation in good standing
- ❑ Lay-off or economic reduction in force
- ❑ Resignation under pressure (due to performance or conduct issues)
- ❑ Termination
- ❑ Disability
- ❑ Other: _____

11. Please place an "X" next to each of the behaviors listed below if they occurred during probation and/or served as the basis for separation during or after probation.

If unable to provide information about the basis for post-probationary separation, please check this box: ❑

Problem Behavior	Problem History		Problem Behavior	Problem History	
	Up through probation	Basis for separation		Up through probation	Basis for separation
A. Academic/learning problems	❑	❑	N. Uncooperative toward supervisors	❑	❑
B. Interpersonal problems	❑	❑	O. Shows bias towards others	❑	❑
C. Failure to control conflict	❑	❑	P. Uses position for personal advantage	❑	❑
D. Report writing problems	❑	❑	Q. Misses court appearances	❑	❑
E. Failure to engage subjects as necessary	❑	❑	R. Conduct unbecoming	❑	❑
F. Navigational/geography problems	❑	❑	S. Uses excessive force	❑	❑
G. Integrity violation/unlawful activity	❑	❑	T. Abuses authority	❑	❑
H. Driving problems	❑	❑	U. Rude behavior	❑	❑
I. Failure to accept feedback	❑	❑	V. Deceptiveness	❑	❑
J. Misconduct (non-sexual)	❑	❑	W. Does not take responsibility for mistakes	❑	❑
K. Sexual misconduct	❑	❑	X. Fails to exercise appropriate discretion	❑	❑
L. Excessive tardiness/absenteeism	❑	❑	Y. Drug/alcohol problems	❑	❑
M. Uncooperative toward peers	❑	❑	Z. Other: _____	❑	❑

Field Performance Dimensions: Please evaluate the employee's *probationary* performance on each dimension. If "No Significant Problems" is checked, no other boxes should be checked for that dimension. However, either or both of the "Some Problems" boxes can be checked, as appropriate.
Note: Ratings will be used for research purposes only and will not be linked to the employee's name in any database.

12. **Decision-making:** Uses tactical thinking, legal knowledge, and awareness of ethics to reach decisions quickly.

❑ No Significant Problems
❑ Some Problems Under *Normal Conditions*
❑ Some Problems Under *Stress Conditions*

13. **Restraint and control:** Avoids impulsive and/or unnecessarily risky behavior; reacts to situations with the proper degree of emotional and behavioral restraint and control.

❑ No Significant Problems
❑ Some Problems Under *Normal Conditions*
❑ Some Problems Under *Stress Conditions*

14. **Assertiveness/Control:** Engages with people and takes control of situations; exhibits command presence.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems Under *Normal Conditions* ❑ Some Problems Under *Stress Conditions*
15. **Interpersonal Skill:** Reads people, listens to others, and adapts language and approach to the requirements of the situation.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems Under *Normal Conditions* ❑ Some Problems Under *Stress Conditions*
16. **Learning:** Comprehends and applies instructions and teachings appropriately.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems Under *Normal Conditions* ❑ Some Problems Under *Stress Conditions*
17. **Tactical Skills:** Confidently and safely employs the tactics taught in the academy.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems Under *Normal Conditions* ❑ Some Problems Under *Stress Conditions*
18. **Multi-tasking:** Prioritizes multiple and essential functions of the job and performs them in quick succession while maintaining good environmental awareness of vital information.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems Under *Normal Conditions* ❑ Some Problems Under *Stress Conditions*
General Performance Dimensions: Please evaluate the employee's *probationary* performance *under general conditions*. Check only one box for each general performance dimension. **Note:** Ratings will be used for research purposes only and will not be linked to the employee's name in any database.	
19. **Initiative and Drive:** Obtains information and evidence to help solve crimes, explain incidents, and solve problems.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems
20. **Commitment:** Exhibits a dedication to improve knowledge and skills, take ownership for choices, and provide service to the public.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems
21. **Integrity:** Maintains high standards of personal and professional conduct, including honesty, impartiality, trustworthiness, and compliance with laws, regulations, and policies.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems
22. **Conscientiousness:** Displays diligent, reliable, and conscientious work behavior; can be depended on to follow through with his/her commitments and responsibilities.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems
23. **Teamwork:** Works effectively with co-workers and as a member of a team.	❑ No Significant Problems ❑ Some Problems

24. Overall Rating: Please rate the employee's overall performance.

❑ Poor ❑ Below Average ❑ Average ❑ Good ❑ Excellent

25. Would you like to have other employees like this one?

❑ Absolutely Not ❑ Not likely ❑ Possibly ❑ Probably ❑ Absolutely

Return completed survey to:

Name of psychologist

Mailing address

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Trait Importance Questionnaire

Name: _____ Agency: _____ Date: _____

Title/Position: _____ Assignment: _____ Phone: _____

Instructions: Use the scale below to rate each of the listed traits and abilities with respect to their importance for successful performance as a patrol officer. In doing so, consider the consequences of an individual lacking the ability/trait -- Would the impact upon performance be substantial? Also, give consideration to the qualities and capabilities that the very best performers seem to possess and how they are distinct from the poorest.

0. . . . . 1 . . . . . 2 . . . . . 3 4				
Unimportant	**Somewhat Important**	**Important**	**Very Important**	**Critical**

RATING	TRAITS
1._____	**ANGER CONTROL:** Maintains composure and refrains from overreacting or otherwise expressing anger, even given adverse circumstances and demands (e.g., physical and verbal abuse, personal accusations, time pressure, bureaucratic and/or legal inefficiencies).
2. _____	**STRESS TOLERANCE/EMOTIONAL CONTROL:** Stays in control, makes appropriate, timely decisions, and otherwise reacts effectively under emergency and other stressful, life-threatening, time-critical situations (e.g., physical attacks, emergency driving, crime or accidents scenes). Does not panic. Bounces back from negative situations. Does not allow stress to result in longer term reactions, (e.g., illnesses, alcohol or substance abuse, burnout).
3. _____	**ACCEPTANCE OF CRITICISM:** Accepts criticism without becoming defensive or blaming others. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Does not argue or blame others when criticized or when problems arise.
4. _____	**IMPULSE/SELF CONTROL:** Thinks things through before acting. Gathers necessary information before drawing conclusions. Does not live in the moment at the expense of long terms goals. Takes proper precautions during vehicle pursuits, traffic stops, etc.. Actions are neither foolhardy nor unnecessarily risky.
5. _____	**POSITIVE ATTITUDE:** Maintains a positive, upbeat, service-oriented attitude in dealing with others. Takes the negative aspects and demands of the job in stride; does not express undue cynicism, suspiciousness or distrust of others.
6. _____	**COURAGE/ASSERTIVENESS:** Unhesitatingly takes control of situation as necessary; even under dangerous or adverse conditions; confronts people who are behaving in a suspicious manner. Acts confidently and without hesitation. Not easily intimidated. Willing to use deadly force when justified.
7. _____	**INFLUENCE/LEADERSHIP:** Conveys an image of a law enforcement officer who is trustworthy, capable, professional and in control. Commands respect; able to persuade others across the gamut of society to adopt desired courses of actions.
8. _____	**INTEGRITY:** Honest, impartial, and trustworthy; does not accept bribes or favors or use position for personal gain; maintains confidentiality of sensitive information; does not bend rules or otherwise try to beat the system by tampering with evidence, slanting reports, providing inaccurate testimony, etc.; does not misuse authority; maintains high standards of personal conduct. Accepts responsibility for one's actions.

0. . . . . 1 . . . . . 2 . . . . . 3 4				
Unimportant	**Somewhat Important**	**Important**	**Very Important**	**Critical**

RATING **TRAITS**

9. _____ **DEPENDABILITY/RELIABILITY:** Carries assigned tasks through to successful completion without close supervision; keeps up with paperwork and other assigned duties without sacrificing accuracy or thoroughness; maintains accountability for one's own work and accepts one's share of the workload. Maintains punctual, reliable attendance record.

10. _____ **INITIATIVE/ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION:** Proceeds on assignments without waiting to be told what to do ; works diligently without supervision and exerts extra effort to make sure the job is done correctly rather than just going through the motions; takes work seriously.

11. _____ **CONFORMANCE TO RULES AND REGULATIONS:** Performs work in compliance with laws, rules and regulations of agency. Respects authority; accepts and conforms to accepted standards of conduct; performs the job within the constraints of the law and the organization without bending (or breaking) rules.

12. _____ **ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY:** Able to change behavior to meet the shifting demands of the job, such as changes in patrol assignment, shift changes, different types of incidents that must be handled one right after another, etc.; able to work on several tasks/projects at the same time; nonrigid application of laws and regulations; accepts changes in operations, laws or modes of conduct; appropriately switches roles between public servant/humanitarian and law enforcer.

13. _____ **VIGILANCE/ATTENTION TO DETAIL:** Remains alert and does not become restless during periods of slow or repetitive work or inactivity (e.g., surveillance). Written reports, forms, etc. are completed carefully, completely and accurately. Tolerates a significant amount of detail work.

14. _____ **INTERPERSONAL SENSITIVITY:** Sensitive to the feelings of others and capable of resolving problems in ways that do not arouse unnecessary antagonism; anticipates people's reaction; can calm emotional people and resolve conflicts through persuasion rather than force; refrains from making remarks that could be interpreted as rude or sarcastic.

15. _____ **INTERPERSONAL INTEREST/SOCIAL CONCERN:** Demonstrates genuine interest and enjoyment in being with others by seeking out opportunities to interact with community (e.g., community-oriented policing, talks with groups and organizations); demonstrates concern for the safety and welfare of others; sees role as public servant/humanitarian as much as law enforcer; willingly provides aid and assistance to individuals across a diverse population, including some of the worst elements of society.

16. _____ **TEAMWORK:** Establishes and maintains effective, cooperative working relationships with fellow officers, supervisors, and others by sharing information and providing assistance as necessary; demonstrates ability to be a "team player" by not putting personal goals ahead of group goals; coordinates and does at least one's fair share in a group effort; is supportive of other team members, even if their methods of performing tasks differs; does not allow petty or personal differences to affect working relationships.

17. _____ **WORLDLINESS/ PRACTICAL INTELLIGENCE:** Demonstrates common sense and "street smarts" by sizing up situations quickly and taking the appropriate, prudent action. Is not naive, overly trusting, or easily duped. Able to think on one's feet to perceive social situations and anticipate possible consequences .

18. _____ **DECISION MAKING:** Able to make sound, thoughtful, and timely decisions; prioritizes competing demands. Able to extrapolate from one situation to another.

19. _____ **OBJECTIVITY/TOLERANCE:** Acts in an unbiased fashion towards all members of society; does not let personal prejudices affect one's interactions with others; does not demonstrate racism, sexism, homophobia, or any other cultural bias in exercising peace officer powers.

In your experience, what are the key performance indicators for the entry level patrol officer job? In other words, what are some of the more common and critical ways that success or failure on the job is demonstrated?

Indicator(s) of Successful Performance as a Patrol Officer:

_____
_____
_____

Which traits and/or abilities are most responsible for this successful performance?

_____
_____

Indicator(s) of Unsatisfactory Performance as a Patrol Officer:

_____
_____
_____

Which traits and/or abilities are most responsible for this unsatisfactory performance?

_____
_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS *(use reverse side if needed)*:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your assistance.

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Personality-Based Requirements Questionnaire for Entry-Level Patrol Officers

Rating Scale		
1 **Not important**	**2** **Helpful**	**3** **Essential**
Failure or inability to do this will have ***no appreciable effect*** on overall job importance.	Failure or inability to do this will reduce overall job performance.	Failure or inability to do this will ***dramatically impair*** overall job.

Assertiveness/Leadership/Influence	Traditional Law Enforcement N= 16	Community Policing N=17
1. Lead community meetings and other group activities.	1.50	**2.53**
2. Take control in group situations.	2.44	2.47
3. Initiate change to address community needs/concerns	1.69	**2.53**
4. Persuade people to accept change.	1.87	2.35
5. Take charge in unusual or emergency situations.	**3.00**	**2.94**
6. Make timely decisions when required or requested.	**3.00**	**2.94**
7. Does not hesitate to confront suspects.	**2.94**	**2.94**
8. Help people settle interpersonal conflicts.	**2.63**	**2.65**
9. Mediate and resolve disputes.	**2.62**	**2.71**
10. Negotiate with people to achieve a consensus on a proposed decision or action.	2.06	**2.53**
11. Compromise to achieve goals.	2.19	2.41
12. Settle disputes through negotiations and compromise.	2.50	**2.65**
13. Work with dissatisfied citizens or service recipients to achieve a mutually agreeable solution.	2.13	**2.65**
Initiative		
14. Work to excel rather than work to perform assigned tasks.	2.25	2.29
15. Try always to do the best possible work, not settling for work that is merely "good enough."	2.31	2.35
16. Find ways to excel by improving the way work is done.	2.00	2.24
17. Improve one's performance by analyzing prior mistakes or problems.	2.38	2.47
18. Persevere in the pursuit of his or her own work goals even when unsuccessful.	2.31	2.47
19. Establish and meet challenging personal deadlines for reports or other work products.	2.19	2.35
20. Seek challenging tasks.	1.88	2.18
Agreeableness		
21. Engage in friendly interactions with citizens and others.	2.20	**2.69**
22. Interact with citizens, other service recipients, or other employees.	2.44	**2.82**
23. Start conversations with strangers easily.	2.38	**2.53**
24. Interact with others in a courteous, friendly manner.	2.44	**2.82**
25. Has a positive, even-tempered disposition at work.	2.38	2.47

Importance ratings > 2.50 are in bold.

Interpersonal Sensitivity and Interest	Traditional Law Enforcement N= 16	Community Policing N=17
26. Give constructive criticisms tactfully.	2.13	2.41
27. Deal respectfully with the feelings of others.	2.31	**2.53**
28. Work compassionately with dissatisfied citizens or other recipients of services.	2.13	2.47
29. Help, advise, and encourage people who are new to the agency or to a particular position in it.	2.13	2.24
30. Be considerate when duties lead to physical or emotional pain or discomfort of others (e.g., while administering emergency medical assistance, giving death notifications, etc.).	**2.75**	**2.88**
31. Listen attentively to the family and/or emotional problems of people seen in the course of one's work (e.g., citizens, recipients of services).	**2.56**	**2.76**
32. Take the time needed to provide sensitive care for children, the elderly, or others who cannot help themselves.	2.31	**2.59**
33. Act in a considerate manner toward others.	2.38	**2.65**
34. Recognize the personal needs and concerns of others.	2.19	2.47
35. Is sensitive and intuitive about feelings.	1.94	2.29
36. Demonstrate awareness or concern about other people's situations and/or problems.	2.13	2.47
37. Demonstrate an awareness of how his/her behavior is being judged by others.	2.19	**2.59**
Teamwork/Cooperation		
38. Work in situations where each person's work is dependent on or influenced by the work of others.	2.13	**2.59**
39. Work as part of an interacting work group.	2.13	**2.59**
40. Work with one or more co-workers to complete assigned tasks.	2.44	**2.71**
41. Collaborate with other employees to achieve goals as a group.	2.06	**2.53**
42. Help co-workers solve work-related problems or reach common goals.	1.94	2.35
43. Provide assistance to citizens or other service recipients throughout the work day.	2.44	**2.76**
44. Assist others when needed, even when some personal sacrifice is involved.	2.50	**2.71**
45. Help find solutions for the problems of citizens.	2.37	**2.88**
46. Cooperates, rather than competes, with fellow officers.	2.19	**2.59**
47. Does not hesitate to ask others for assistance in completing tasks.	2.25	**2.59**
Integrity		
48. Avoid temptations inherent in the job for behavior that breaches ethical standards of the organization and/or profession.	**2.94**	**3.00**
49. Refuse to share or release confidential information.	**2.87**	**2.88**
50. Make commitments and follow through on them.	**2.62**	**2.94**
51. Keep one's word about doing things, even when it is inconvenient or unpleasant to do so.	**2.62**	**2.94**
52. Have access to confidential information while resisting temptations to use it for personal purposes.	**3.00**	**3.00**
53. Deal honestly with citizens, employees, etc.	**2.87**	**2.94**

Importance ratings > 2.50 are in bold.

Integrity (cont.)	Traditional Law Enforcement N= 16	Community Policing N=17
54. Have access to valuables or substantial sums of money while resisting temptations to use it for personal purposes.	**3.00**	**3.00**
55. Testify credibly and accurately in court.	**3.00**	**3.00**
56. Prepare credible and accurate sworn affidavits.	**3.00**	**3.00**
57. Demonstrate that it is not acceptable to take risks or bend the rules in order to "beat the system."	**2.94**	**3.00**
58. Is truthful about own positive/negative qualities.	2.44	**2.53**
59. Does not lie about mistakes or errors.	**3.00**	**3.00**
Dependability/Conscientiousness		
60. See things that need to be done and do them without waiting for instructions.	2.20	2.47
61. Work until task is done rather than stopping at quitting time.	2.33	**2.56**
62. Meet specified deadlines for completion of work.	**2.62**	**2.71**
63. Arrive at appointments on time or ahead of time.	2.50	**2.65**
64. Work effectively and consistently, with little or no supervision.	2.44	**2.71**
65. Follow instructions or orders even when disagreeing with them.	**2.93**	**2.94**
66. Work in personal isolation for long periods of time without a substantial drop in performance.	2.44	2.41
67. Follow established work schedules and procedures.	**3.00**	**2.94**
68. Work under conditions that may be physically/emotionally uncomfortable.	**2.94**	**2.94**
69. Conform to limitations and constraints on work and off-duty conduct in the interest of the organization's needs and reputation.	**2.75**	**2.82**
70. Conform to safety procedures (e.g., emergency driving, etc.).	**3.00**	**3.00**
71. Does not procrastinate or put off jobs until the last minute.	2.25	2.35
72. Safeguard the property of others entrusted to them.	**2.75**	**2.82**
Thoroughness and Attentiveness to Details		
73. Examine all aspects of written reports to be sure that nothing has been omitted.	**2.81**	**2.76**
74. Inspect his or her own work (or the work of co-workers or subordinates) carefully and in detail.	2.50	**2.65**
75. Be a stickler for detail in reports, proofreading, planning or other job activities.	**2.62**	**2.53**
76. Remain attentive to details over extended periods of time.	**2.56**	**2.53**
77. Attend to details in working, or in planning work, to minimize glitches.	2.37	2.47
78. Study all detailed aspects of projects to understand them fully.	2.00	2.29
79. Attend to details in working, or in planning work, to minimize glitches.	2.19	2.24
80. Review all relevant information about previous projects to be sure that planning for new ones considers important prior experiences.	**2.75**	2.24
81. Give close attention to every facet of duties of the position.	2.50	2.47

Importance ratings > 2.50 are in bold.

Emotional Maturity and Control	Traditional Law Enforcement N= 16	Community Policing N=17
82. Keep cool when confronted with conflicts.	**3.00**	**3.00**
83. Keep cool in emotionally stressful situations.	**3.00**	**2.94**
84. Remain calm when questioned, criticized, or confronted by citizens, service recipients, or people in the organization.	**2.81**	**2.88**
85. Stay cool in responding to potentially dangerous situations.	**3.00**	**3.00**
86. Perform effectively in environments where people are capable of violence, where even violent deaths may be anticipated.	**3.00**	**3.00**
87. Remain calm in a crisis situation.	**3.00**	**3.00**
88. React under pressure without taking an inappropriate or extreme action or using excessive force.	**2.94**	**3.00**
89. Does not become angry when he/she experiences work pressure.	**2.75**	**2.82**
90. Does not demonstrate undue suspiciousness of others.	2.50	**2.65**
91. Does not tend to distrust the motives of others.	2.13	2.24
92. Work effectively with angry or dissatisfied individuals.	**2.56**	**2.82**
93. Experience anxiety when tasks are not completed on time.	1.62	1.71
Adaptability/flexibility		
94. Adapt easily to changes in work procedures.	2.19	2.35
95. Accept unplanned changes to work schedules or priorities.	2.38	**2.59**
96. Work on multiple projects at the same time.	2.25	**2.71**
97. Shift easily between the roles of law enforcer and public servant/humanitarian.	2.25	**2.82**
98. Does not rigidly apply rules and regulations; understand the difference between the letter and spirit of the law.	**2.63**	**2.88**
Decision-making/Judgment/Creativity		
99. Help develop solutions for the work-related problems of employees or citizens.	1.75	**2.59**
100. Show ability to make level-headed decisions regarding situations at work.	2.62	**2.71**
101. Help develop solutions for the work-related problems of employees or citizens.	1.87	**2.65**
102. Develop innovative/creative approaches to problems.	1.75	**2.71**
103. Suggest alternative conclusions when presented with results that seem to suggest only one possible conclusion.	1.94	**2.65**
104. Develop unusual or unique approaches to working with others.	1.75	2.41
105. Suggest new services or programs to meet the needs of citizens.	1.87	**2.71**
106. Find ways to improve the way work is done.	1.87	2.50
107. Solve complex problems one step at a time.	2.00	**2.53**
108. Analyze past mistakes when faced with similar problems.	2.38	**2.71**
109. Critically evaluate information presented to support a proposed decision or course of action.	2.25	**2.71**
110. Identify and evaluate options before taking action.	2.50	**2.71**
111. Solicit and consider differing options or points of view before making a decision.	2.31	**2.53**

Importance ratings > 2.50 are in bold.

Decision-making/Judgment/Creativity	Traditional Law Enforcement N= 16	Community Policing N=17
112. Make decisions or take actions only after considering their long term implications.	2.19	**2.53**
113. Base decisions on facts, logic, experience, and/or intuition.	**2.62**	**2.71**
114. Does not demonstrate impulsive behavior.	**2.81**	**2.94**
115. Considers things carefully before acting.	**2.56**	**2.65**
116. Make quick, reasoned decisions as necessary; think on one's feet.	**2.87**	**2.88**
117. Demonstrate appropriate behavior in situations that require attention to safety.	**3.00**	**3.00**
118. Demonstrate awareness of how his/her behavior may affect the safety of others.	**3.00**	**3.00**
119. Apply memorized information in stressful circumstances.	**2.63**	2.47
120. Accurately recall significant details of an event that has occurred within the past 12 hours.	**2.69**	**2.65**
121. Attend to auditory information while performing other duties.	**2.81**	**2.76**
122. Analyze problems and attend to details in the face of noise and other distractions.	**2.81**	**2.88**
123. Step into a complex situation involving several people and figure out what probably happened before he/she arrived and what will likely happen as the situation unfolds.	**2.94**	**2.82**

Importance ratings > 2.50 are in bold.

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Sample Characteristics of Subject Matter Experts

Rank	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not Given	3	18.8	18.8	18.8
Officer	1	6.3	6.3	25.0
Sergeant	5	31.3	31.3	56.3
Lieutenant	2	12.5	12.5	68.8
Other	5	31.3	31.3	100.0
Total	**16**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Agency	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not Given	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
Los Angeles PD	4	25.0	25.0	31.3
San Francisco PD	1	6.3	6.3	37.5
Other	8	50.0	50.0	87.5
POST	1	6.3	6.3	93.8
San Diego PD	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
Total	**16**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

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POST Pre-Offer Personality-Based Competencies

Entire set of competencies are provided in the: Pre-Offer Personality Testing in the Selection of California Peace Officers: Technical Report (Source: Berner, J.G., 2010)

SOCIAL COMPETENCE: Being tactful and respectful, and showing sensitivity and concern in one's interactions with others; able to "read" people; having an awareness of the impact of one's own words and behavior on others; showing interest and concern for the feelings of others; treating all members of society with impartiality; able to approach individuals and to confront and reduce interpersonal conflict in ways that show sensitivity to the feelings of others; being comfortable and skillful in interacting with people and establishing and maintaining rapport.

TEAMWORK: Establishing and maintaining effective, cooperative working relationships with fellow officers, supervisors, community partners, representatives of other agencies, and others tasked with serving and protecting the community; sharing information and providing assistance and support to fellow officers, supervisors and others; balancing personal ambitions and organizational/team goals; performing one's fair share in a group effort; collaborating effectively with others to accomplish work goals; not allowing personal differences to affect working relationships; accepting and giving constructive feedback.

ASSERTIVENESS/PERSUASIVENESS: Unhesitatingly taking control of situations in a calm, persuasive and appropriately assertive manner, even under dangerous or adverse conditions; confronting suspects when appropriate; acting assertively and without hesitation; not being easily intimidated; being able to assert ideas and persuade others to adopt a desired course of action; commanding respect; emanating professional pride and demeanor; being willing to put oneself in harm's way.

SERVICE ORIENTATION: Exhibiting an active interest in assisting others; being eager to help others and doing so in a responsive, compassionate, respectful, and enthusiastic manner.

ADAPTABILITY/ FLEXIBILITY: Adjusting to the many different, sudden, and sometimes competing demands inherent in law enforcement work; appropriately shifting between the role of law enforcer and public servant; adjusting to planned and unplanned work changes, including different types of incidents that must be handled one right after another; being able to prioritize and work effectively on several different tasks/projects at the same time; using appropriate judgment and discretion in applying laws and regulations to specific situations; working effectively in unstructured situations with minimal supervision; physically and mentally adjusting to shift work; adapting techniques and procedures as needed to fit a situation.

DECISION-MAKING AND JUDGMENT: Exercising common sense; using practical judgment and efficient problem solving in both routine and non-routine situations; making sound decisions by sizing up situations quickly and determining the appropriate action; being able to sift through information to glean that which is important, and to use that information effectively; recognizing the similarities and differences in situations; developing creative and innovative solutions to problems; basing decisions on the collection and consideration of important information; reasoning effectively.

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS/DEPENDABILITY: Performing job duties in a diligent, thorough and timely manner in accordance with rules, regulations and agency policies; striving to do the best job possible; carrying assigned tasks through to successful and timely completion; being punctual; persevering in the face of obstacles, difficulties, long hours and other adverse working conditions; staying organized; carefully attending to details; staying current on new rules, procedures, etc.; accepting responsibility for one's work, and analyzing prior mistakes or problems to improve performance; performing effectively under difficult and uncomfortable conditions; continually working to achieve or maintain trust with peers, supervisors and citizens; being consistently productive; taking the initiative to get work done without waiting to be told what to do.

IMPULSE CONTROL/ATTENTION TO SAFETY: Taking proper precautions and avoiding impulsive and/or unnecessarily risky behavior that endangers the safety of the public and/or oneself; being self-disciplined and self-restrained; thinking before acting, and always behaving in conscious regard for the larger situation at hand; being continually mindful and attentive to hazards to self and/or others; taking appropriate safety precautions in all situations.

INTEGRITY/ ETHICS: Maintaining high standards of personal conduct; being honest, impartial, and trustworthy; abiding by laws, regulations and procedures; not abusing the system nor using the position of authority for personal gain; not bending rules or otherwise trying to beat the system by tampering with evidence, slanting reports, providing inaccurate testimony, etc.; not engaging in illegal or immoral activities – either on or off duty; taking action to prevent unethical/illegal conduct by others; avoiding behavior that is inappropriate, self-damaging, and can adversely impact the agency; maintaining the confidentiality of information.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND STRESS TOLERANCE: Being composed, rational, and in control, particularly during life-threatening, time-critical events and other stressful situations; taking the negative aspects of the job in stride without becoming unduly cynical or distrustful; maintaining an even temperament; exercising restraint and not over reacting in emotionally-charged situations.

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Job Analysis Focus Groups

Participants

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Blue-Ribbon Oversight Panel

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Meta-Analysis Tables

For each predictor-criterion combination, K represents the number of studies that were aggregated in the creation of the meta-analytic estimate. N represents the number of individuals included across studies (cells with K of 0 or 1 are not depicted). Rho (ρ) represents the best estimate of the criterion-related validity; this estimate is not corrected for range restriction in the predictor, although criterion unreliability is usually corrected. The variability in the correlation is represented by credibility interval (80% CV). A credibility interval provides an estimate of the variability of the correlations across studies: an 80% credibility interval excluding zero indicates that 90% of the correlations for the specified relationship will be positive across situations, meaning that in 90% of the situations, a value at least as high as the one displayed would be expected. Therefore, a sizable estimate infers that this predictor will be useful for predicting that particular criterion in 90% of the situations encountered. Validity estimates that are **bold** indicate that the reported correlations are generalizable across setting and agencies.

Job Performance

POST Dimension	Compound Trait	Overall Job Performance				Training Performance				Task Performance				Inter Personal				Teamwork				Awards/Commendations			
		K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV
Social Competence	**Nurturance** (A)	10	492	-.20	.12	3	121	**-.13**	**-.13**	2	180	.05	.05	3	366	.07	.07	0		-	-	2	149	.02	.02
	Warmth (EX+A+)	43	2,252	.06	-.01	6	262	.08	.08	12	1,385	**.15**	-.01	8	1,003	.02	.02	2	137	**.10**	**.10**	4	321	.01	.01
	Trust (ES+A+)	101	6,821	.05	-.21	15	1,638	-.08	-.05	60	2,800	-.08	-.08	51	2,899	.05	.05	32	1,679	.06	-.07	40	3,724	-.03	.15
	Tolerance (OE+A+)	22	1,875	.04	-.37	4	347	**.35**	**.35**	16	2,168	.06	.06	14	2,366	**.17**	**.17**	1	213	.19	-	4	358	**.11**	**.11**
	Lack of Aggression (A+C+)	28	3,961	**.14**	**.05**	3	186	.04	.04	3	186	**.23**	**.23**	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-
Teamwork	**Agreeableness** (A)	19	1,178	**.27**	**.27**	21	3,141	-.05	-.05	6	733	-.06	-.06	6	510	**.18**	**.18**	3	182	**.21**	**.21**	6	470	.04	.04
Adaptability/ Flexibility	**Complexity** (OE)	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-
	Non-traditionalism (OE+C-)	42	2,282	**.14**	-.23	14	1,799	**.13**	**.13**	16	2,079	-.05	-.05	17	1,827	**.14**	-.12	4	203	**.40**	**.04**	7	472	.07	.07
	Autonomy (EX+C-)	33	1,873	-.01	.30	3	455	.02	.02	11	1,323	**.10**	**.10**	6	1,255	-.02	.19	0		-	-	0		-	-
Conscientiousness/ Dependence	**Conscientiousness** (C)	63	5,264	.02	-.21	6	607	**.18**	**.18**	15	1,800	.09	.09	32	3,127	**.10**	**.10**	13	867	.07	.07	24	1,926	.01	.01
	Dependability (C)	36	2,349	**.13**	**.13**	17	2,848	.08	.08	5	658	**.17**	**.17**	16	1,096	**.16**	**.16**	8	548	.07	.07	16	1,284	**.14**	**.14**
	Achievement (C)	59	4,316	**.22**	**.22**	25	3,703	.09	.09	20	2,557	.09	.01	27	2,837	.01	.01	9	573	.09	.09	18	1,408	.03	.03
	Order (C)	11	748	**.23**	-.21	1	62	.08	-	1	118	.07	-	3	354	.05	.05	0		-	-	1	118	.17	-
	Persistence (C)	33	2,061	.07	-.19	0		-	-	0		-	-	10	619	**.10**	**.10**	4	274	.00	.00	8	642	.12	.12
	Ambition (EX+C+)	17	1,192	**.11**	-.02	0		-	-	8	1,584	**.10**	**.10**	17	2,908	**-.10**	**-.10**	2	137	-.08	.03	5	352	.05	-.20
Impulse Control	**Impulse Control** (C)	35	3,252	**.18**	**.03**	4	183	**.17**	**.17**	2	124	**.10**	**.10**	8	548	**.16**	**.16**	4	274	**.18**	**.18**	8	642	**.12**	**.12**
Integrity/Ethics	**Socialization** (ES+A+C+)	296	26,396	**.15**	-.06	30	4,549	.06	-.09	39	4,899	.05	.05	113	9,516	.09	.09	43	2,896	**.18**	**.18**	111	8,442	.00	-.15
Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance	**Emotional Stability** (ES)	191	16,543	.09	-.19	58	7,388	**.12**	-.09	19	2,180	.08	-.07	52	5,389	.11	.00	22	2,088	.06	-.03	82	6,568	.09	-.01
	Self-Esteem (ES)	24	1,618	**.18**	-.12	11	1,678	**.11**	.00	4	694	**.20**	**.20**	11	1,174	**.12**	**.12**	4	274	**.19**	**.08**	10	696	**.14**	**.14**
	Low Anxiety (ES)	30	1,975	**.11**	-.15	2	157	**.20**	**.20**	3	458	-.02	-.02	16	1,578	.04	-.05	6	411	.07	.07	15	1,382	**.16**	**.02**
	Even Tempered (ES)	8	526	**.34**	**.34**	2	50	.03	.03	0		-	-	4	274	**.33**	**.33**	3	162	**.19**	**.19**	4	321	.02	.02
	Self-Control (ES+C+)	23	2,523	**.19**	**.02**	0		-	-	6	1,188	**.24**	**.24**	17	2,426	**.23**	**.23**	2	137	**.20**	**.20**	9	745	.03	.03
Decision-Making/ Judgment	**Creative/Innovation** (OE)	13	574	**.13**	-.05	8	476	.09	.09	5	854	-.03	-.03	7	1,382	.01	.01	1	45	.29	-	0		-	-
	Intellect	14	1,017	.08	-.21	5	409	**.36**	**.27**	15	1,899	.04	.04	10	1,706	.00	.00	0		-	-	4	344	.00	.00
Assertiveness/ Persuasiveness	**Dominance** (EX)	85	6,039	.05	-.09	30	3,866	**.11**	**.11**	29	3,441	.08	-.21	32	2,952	.06	-.13	8	477	-.02	.32	16	1,279	.01	.01
	Activity (EX)	22	2,515	**.20**	**.06**	9	1,455	.06	.06	3	360	**.24**	**.24**	8	548	-.06	.03	4	274	**.13**	**.13**	8	642	**.14**	**.14**
	Fair/Stable Leader (Es+EX+C+)	0		-	-	0	62	-	-	2	396	**.22**	**.22**	3	626	.13	.13	0		-	-	0		-	-
Sub Abuse/ Other Risk-Taking	**Thrill Seeking** (EX+OE+C-)	0		-	-	1	62	.01	-	1	62	.14	-	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-
	Self-Dest Autonomy (ES-EX+C-)	29	1,750	**-.17**	**-.17**	6	1,250	**-.21**	**-.21**	0		-	-	19	1,195	**-.12**	**-.12**	9	581	**-.16**	**-.16**	13	990	**-.12**	.05

Counterproductive Work Behaviors

POST Dimension	Compound Trait	CWBs				Withdrawal				Substance Abuse				Citizen Complaints				Discipline			
		K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV	K	N	p	80% CV
Social Competence	**Nurturance** (A)	2	236	-.03	.03	2	124	**-.16**	**.16**	0		-	-	0		-	-	4	252	-.04	.04
	Warmth (EX+A+)	36	9,922	-.02	-.11	7	620	-.00	.00	4	695	-.01	.01	6	1,890	-.06	-.11	14	2,984	.04	-.04
	Trust (ES+A+)	298	325,731	-.03	-.10	67	51,943	-.00	-.03	43	86,184	-.09	-.02	80	79,350	.01	.04	105	81,230	.01	.05
	Tolerance (OE+A+)	0		-	-	2	2,888	-.01	.01	4	3,024	.08	-.08	12	15,902	.01	-.01	17	14,097	-.05	-.61
	Lack of Aggression (A+C+)	105	69,331	-.04	-.11	11	3,356	.01	-.01	8	18,125	**-.13**	**.12**	22	13,651	-.02	-.04	31	14,157	-.03	-.03
Teamwork	**Agreeableness** (A)	12	1,237	**-.24**	**.11**	9	12,178	-.07	-.17	2	137	**-.20**	**.20**	1	284	-.07	-	7	4,264	-.05	-.02
Adaptability/ Flexibility	**Complexity** (OE)	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-
	Non-traditionalism (OE+C-)	0		-	-	12	12,039	.01	.04	4	555	-.04	.04	2	284	-.02	.02	14	4,616	.07	.06
	Autonomy (EX+C-)	11	2,485	-.06	.01	0		-	-	1	209	.08	-	0		-	-	3	457	-.07	.07
Conscientiousness/ Dependence	**Conscientiousness** (C)	52	6,779	-.03	-.01	32	1,448	-.07	.07	14	1,240	-.05	-.14	18	2,168	-.04	-.06	21	1,857	-.05	.05
	Dependability (C)	26	2,138	-.05	-.01	18	568	.02	.36	8	548	-.04	-.31	4	568	-.03	.03	10	776	-.01	.01
	Achievement (C)	103	78,946	-.01	.00	25	5,096	-.03	-.05	13	4,875	.00	-.12	22	24,421	.00	-.02	33	21,564	-.02	-.02
	Order (C)	1	118	-.09	-	2	124	**-.18**	**.18**	0		-	-	0		-	-	2	124	-.17	.17
	Persistence (C)	11	756	.01	-.03	10	294	-.07	.07	4	274	**-.20**	**.20**	2	284	-.04	.04	4	326	.01	-.01
	Ambition (EX+C+)	81	56,742	-.00	.00	11	15,066	-.01	.01	8	3,579	.04	.06	13	16,044	.01	-.01	15	16,802	-.02	-.01
Impulse Control	**Impulse Control** (C)	10	720	**-.18**	**.18**	18	1,128	-.03	.03	4	274	**-.32**	**.32**	14	1,600	-.06	-.02	17	2,051	-.04	-.06
Integrity/Ethics	**Socialization** (ES+A+C+)	383	307,181	-.08	-.15	38	3,978	**-.29**	-.35	76	106,805	**-.18**	-.01	81	64,571	.01	-.01	157	86,423	-.02	-.03
Emotional Regulation/Stress Tolerance	**Emotional Stability** (ES)	1015	1,005,672	.01	.09	147	134,671	-.02	-.06	106	234,112	-.04	-.08	272	246,660	.00	.00	344	254,290	.00	-.04
	Self-Esteem (ES)	166	195,211	-.00	-.07	20	23,512	-.04	-.02	13	10,907	.01	.08	50	63,892	.00	.00	48	57,302	-.02	-.03
	Low Anxiety (ES)	244	151,532	-.00	-.02	29	20,666	.00	.00	18	8,275	.00	.00	55	42,205	-.01	.00	66	43,338	.00	-.05
	Even Tempered (ES)	74	107,304	-.06	-.06	12	15,451	-.08	-.03	17	64,796	-.08	.01	17	17,469	-.01	.00	20	18,650	-.01	-.03
	Self-Control (ES+C+)	76	55,013	-.00	-.08	10	3,110	.02	.03	9	3,507	.05	.02	14	16,186	.01	-.01	15	14,001	-.04	-.03
Decision-Making/ Judgment	**Creative/Innovation** (OE)	21	4,223	-.00	.00	2	124	-.03	.03	2	418	.00	.00	0		-	-	3	221	.04	.15
	Intellect	22	4,414	-.00	.00	2	124	**-.27**	**.27**	2	418	**.10**	**-.10**	0		-	-	6	613	-.05	.05
Assertiveness/ Persuasiveness	**Dominance** (EX)	83	37,678	-.00	-.05	26	15,492	.08	.03	10	2,481	.08	-.08	13	9,802	.00	.00	32	14,200	.01	.08
	Activity (EX)	75	55,403	-.02	-.08	13	2,560	.03	.06	10	17,701	-.03	-.01	16	11,085	.02	-.05	21	10,671	-.01	.01
	Fair/Stable Leader (ES+EX+C+)	10	2,089	-.05	-.01	0		-	-	1	209	**-.15**	-	0		-	-	0		-	-
Sub Abuse/ Other Risk-Taking	**Thrill Seeking** (EX+OE+C-)	0		-	-	2	124	.05	-.05	0		-	-	0		-	-	0		-	-
	Self-Dest Autonomy (ES-EX+C-)	124	149,802	**.13**	.11	54	57,195	**.11**	.10	25	66,859	**.32**	**-.15**	29	27,129	.01	-.02	2	124	.20	-.20

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Sample Report on Mental Health Treatment and Evaluation Report

This form is used exclusively in conjunction with post-offer psychological evaluations conducted by [Psychological Evaluator's Name], examining psychologist, and will not be a part of your application or employment records held by the prospective hiring agency. Instead, it will be used and retained only as part of the post-offer psychological evaluation process. ***This form must be faxed to [Evaluator's Name] within 48 hours of receipt of your conditional offer of employment. Secure fax number is [Evaluator's Fax Number].***

Mental Health Treatment and Evaluation History

Contact / Agency Application Information

Name	Title
Agency Applying To	**Position Applying For**

Mental Health Treatment Information

Have you **ever** received mental health treatment or evaluation from a doctor (e.g., psychologist, psychiatrist, or other physician) or any other mental health professional or counselor? (Note: "Mental health treatment" includes, in addition to counseling or psychotherapy, any medication used to alleviate or remedy any mental health symptom, including but not limited to depression, other mood disturbances, anxiety, stress conditions, attention deficit, anger, alcohol or drug abuse/dependence, or relationship problems.)

❑ No ❑ Yes *Do not answer yes if you were evaluated **only** for preemployment purposes.*

If **Yes**, please list the name of each professional you saw, approximate dates of treatment, and reason(s) for treatment or evaluation. ***List all professionals you saw for inpatient treatment or evaluation at any time and for all outpatient treatment or evaluation within the past 48 months. Use additional sheets if necessary.***

Note: *These professionals will not be contacted without your written authorization. If [Evaluator's Name] determines that additional information is needed, you will be asked to authorize the professional to release limited information concerning your treatment or evaluation.*

Name of Professional	Dates of Treatment / Evaluation	Reasons for Treatment or Evaluation *Check all that apply*
1.		❑ Alcohol/drugs ❑ Anger management ❑ Anxiety ❑ Attention ❑ Depression/mood ❑ Relationship ❑ Other (specify): _____
2.		❑ Alcohol/drugs ❑ Anger management ❑ Anxiety ❑ Attention ❑ Depression/mood ❑ Relationship ❑ Other (specify): _____
3.		❑ Alcohol/drugs ❑ Anger management ❑ Anxiety ❑ Attention ❑ Depression/mood ❑ Relationship ❑ Other (specify): _____
4.		❑ Alcohol/drugs ❑ Anger management ❑ Anxiety ❑ Attention ❑ Depression/mood ❑ Relationship ❑ Other (specify): _____

I certify that the above information (including any attachments) is complete and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

_____ Applicant's Signature

_____ Applicant's Printed Name

_____ Date

*Have you included any attachments or additional sheets (**required** if you have seen **more than four** mental health professionals):*

❑ No ❑ Yes If yes, indicate number of additional sheets _____

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Sample Post-Offer Psychological Evaluation: Disclosure and Informed Consent Statement

Overview of Evaluation

The agency that referred you here for assessment (hereinafter referred to as "the hiring agency") has given you an offer of employment conditioned, in part, on the results of a job-related psychological assessment. [*PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME*] is a licensed psychologist (hereinafter referred to as "psychologist") experienced in conducting such assessments and will perform the psychological evaluation. The assessment will consist of standardized written psychological testing, an oral interview, and a review of collateral or third-party information made available by the hiring agency or by you. This may include information gathered during the background investigation you authorized the hiring agency to conduct.

The assessment also will include a review of prior assessments if [*PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME*] previously evaluated you. Both the written inquiries and interview will probe public and private aspects of your life. These inquiries are necessary to adequately assess whether your psychological traits and abilities satisfy the requirements of the position you have been conditionally offered. If at any time you wish to ask about the relevance of any question asked in the interview—which will be scheduled sometime after completion of the written testing—please ask and you will receive an explanation as to why the requested information is needed. As with any job application procedure, you have the right to terminate the assessment at any time.

Limits of Confidentiality

Although the hiring agency is the psychologist's client, not you, the psychologist nevertheless will be mindful of their duty to conduct the evaluation with fairness and objectivity. You specifically understand and agree that you are not receiving treatment or health care from the psychologist and that the psychologist does not consider themself to be treating you. You understand that you are not being examined for any purpose relating to your personal treatment or to your personal health care. Because the psychologist is conducting this evaluation at the request of the hiring agency and for reasons having nothing to do with treatment or health care, you do not have doctor-patient or psychotherapist-patient privilege in your communications with them. Therefore, you understand and agree that anything you say or do during or in connection with the evaluation is entitled to disclosure, if relevant to the evaluation, and may or will be disclosed to others involved in the selection process who have a need to know it. The hiring agency requires a report of pertinent findings and conclusions, including a determination of your suitability for this position, following the completion of the assessment.

The hiring agency may authorize release of the records associated with this assessment, including any written report, to any other qualified professional. Circumstances leading to such an authorization may include a mandatory fitness-for-duty evaluation, disability claim, or other medical evaluation. State law also may require disclosure of otherwise confidential information for reasons associated with, but not limited to, risk of child abuse, a threat of serious harm to yourself or others, or court order. Some or all of the information you provide may be used for psychological research concerning test validation, recruitment, selection, and performance of public safety employees. In the event information from your evaluation is used for research purposes, procedures will be put in place to help ensure that your identity is not revealed.

Report of Findings and Conclusions

Following the completion of the examination, the psychologist will give the hiring agency an oral and written report of relevant findings and conclusions relating to their opinion about your suitability for this position, pursuant to the attached authorization. These reports are necessary to fulfill the purpose for which you have been referred. The reports necessarily will contain private information, but the psychologist will make a good-faith effort to restrict the disclosure of private information to the minimum necessary to satisfy the purpose of the examination and to support their findings, conclusions, and recommendations. If the findings, conclusions, opinions, or recommendations are challenged in an adjudicative forum, the psychologist may make full disclosure of all information as may be necessary or required by law.

Waiver of Access to Report and Records

This assessment is conducted solely to aid the hiring agency in determining your qualification for hire. You will not be provided a copy of any report the psychologist provides the hiring agency concerning your suitability. Because the hiring agency is the client, your authorization will not permit the psychologist to release or disclose the report to you or any third party. You specifically waive any and all statutory rights to access and review personal health care or any other information as it pertains to this examination, if any, whether arising under state or federal statutory, regulatory or common law, including but not limited to, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, the California Labor Code, the California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act, and the California Code of Regulations, and therefore have no rights to access or review the notes, reports, tests, analyses or other information generated in connection with this evaluation of your suitability for employment. Even if some of the information contained or produced in this assessment might otherwise be accessible to you, this information is inextricably interwoven with other confidential data to which you otherwise would not be entitled. Therefore, you agree to exonerate, release, and discharge [*PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME*] and the hiring agency, its officers, agents, or assigns, from any claim or damages, whether in law or in equity, on behalf of yourself, your heirs, agents, or assigns, for their refusal to make available any and all information contained in this preemployment psychological evaluation other than the final determination (i.e., qualified or unqualified).

Payment for Services

The hiring agency is compensating the psychologist for service. However, the psychologist will remain objective and neutral. As such, they will have sole control over the examination and their resulting opinions, conclusions, and recommendations.

Potential Outcomes and Uses of the Examination Results

As a result of this examination, the psychologist may conclude that you are (1) psychologically qualified for this position or (2) psychologically unqualified for this position. The hiring agency has determined the standards and degree of suitability it requires for qualification. Regardless of the conclusions they reach and communicate in their report, the hiring agency may choose not to rely on their findings and recommendation, in whole or in part, when deciding on your status. Alternatively, the hiring agency may rely entirely on their report. Thus, depending on their ultimate conclusions and recommendations concerning your suitability, and depending on the hiring agency's consideration of their conclusions and recommendations, the results of this examination may have a significant impact on your candidacy.

The psychologist's opinion concerning your psychological qualification or suitability for this position is NOT a statement or opinion about your general psychological health or emotional stability, nor is it a statement about your suitability for this position with a different agency or for a different position with the same agency. Rather, it is a statement only about the degree to which the full range of assessment information available to them provides evidence at this time of the psychological traits and competencies required for the position.

Regarding Your Freedom to Decline to Participate

You are free to decline participation in this examination. However, your decision not to participate in the examination will result in the revocation of the hiring agency's conditional offer of employment.

Expiration Date

This authorization may be revoked at any time, except when action has been taken in reliance on this authorization. Unless revoked earlier, this authorization will expire one year from the date of signing or will remain in effect for the period reasonably needed to complete this assessment.

Redisclosure

The psychologist will advise the hiring agency to maintain the written report in a confidential medical file separate from other personnel information and that the information should be made available only to persons who have a bona fide need to know the information included in the report. Nevertheless, by signing the authorization attached hereto as Exhibit A and authorizing the psychologist to release this information to the hiring agency, there is the possibility that the hiring agency could redisclose this information. By signing the authorization you will expressly release [*PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME*] from any liability for the disclosure.

Genetic Information

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA, Title II, from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we are asking that you not provide any genetic information when responding to any request for medical information. "Genetic information," as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

Recording and/or Photographing During the Evaluation

You are not authorized or permitted to photocopy, photograph, record or capture any portion of the evaluation, in whole or in part, including but not limited to written testing, personal history questionnaires, oral interview, and conversations with [*PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME*], whether in-person or by telephone. This prohibition applies to all forms of recording, whether digital or analogue. By agreeing to proceed with this examination, you agree to accept this prohibition and any civil and/or criminal consequences for violating it.

Consent and Signature of Applicant

Note: If you do not have adequate time to review this form, you do not understand it, or if you require additional time to consult with an attorney or other advisor, you may reschedule this examination for a later time by checking the box below, initialling it, and immediately informing the psychologist or the administrative assistant.

❑ *I require additional time to consult with my attorney or other advisor.* _____ Initial only if you require additional time

❑ *I have read, understand, and agree to the terms of the informed consent statement and waiver of my access rights.* ***I do not require additional time*** *to consult with my attorney or other advisor.* _____ Initial only if you ***Do Not*** require additional time

Applicant's Signature	Applicant's Printed Name	Date

Exhibit A

Authorization to Use and Disclose Protected Health Information

I authorize [PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME] to use and disclose their findings and opinions concerning my past, present or future physical or mental health or condition, as well as their conclusions, opinions, and recommendations as to my psychological qualification and suitability for the position I have applied for, to the agency that referred me for this examination (hereinafter referred to as the "hiring agency"). ***This authorization does not authorize any of my prior or current health care providers to disclose personal health care records to*** *[PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME]* ***or my prospective employer without separate and specific written authorization, except as permitted by law.***

_____ Mental health information *You must initial this item in order for the examination to be conducted.*

_____ Drug/alcohol diagnosis, treatment, or referral information *You must initial this item in order for the examination to be conducted.*

I understand that the psychologist will make a good-faith effort to restrict the disclosure of private information to the minimum necessary to satisfy the purpose of the examination and to support the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Consistent with the provisions of state and federal law, I understand that the hiring agency will be advised to maintain any written report provided to it by the psychologist in a confidential medical file separate from other personnel information and that the information should be made available only to persons who have a bona fide need to know the information included in the report. I have been informed that I will not receive a copy of the written report, nor will I be able to authorize its release to any other person or party. I specifically waive any statutory rights to access and review personal health care information as it pertains to this examination.

I acknowledge that the psychologist has no control over how the hiring agency uses the report once it receives it. I understand that the information used or disclosed pursuant to this authorization may be subject to redisclosure and no longer protected under federal law. I expressly release [PSYCHOLOGIST'S NAME] from liability for that redisclosure. However, I also understand that federal or state law may restrict redisclosure of mental health information and drug/alcohol diagnosis, treatment or referral information.

Signature of Applicant

You do not need to sign this authorization. However, your refusal will mean that the required psychological evaluation will not take place. This will result in the withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment.

You may revoke this authorization in writing at any time. If you revoke your authorization, the information described above may no longer be used or disclosed for the purposes described in this written authorization. Any use or disclosure already made with your permission cannot be undone.

To revoke this authorization, please send a written notice, stating that you are revoking this authorization, to:

[

Name of psychologist
Mailing address

]

I have read this authorization and I understand it. Unless revoked, this authorization expires one year from the date below.

Applicant's Signature	Applicant's Printed Name	Date

This page is intentionally blank.

Sample Authorization for Limited Release of Mental Health Information for Purposes of Determining Public Safety Qualification

Patient's Full Name	Health Record Number or Last 4 Digits of Social Security Number

Dear Mental Health Treatment Provider:

Your current or former patient named above is a job applicant for a public safety position. As a condition of employment, the applicant must pass a psychological evaluation to determine whether he or she meets the qualification standards. To accomplish this, it is necessary for me to learn a limited amount of information about the applicant's functioning during the period in which he or she was your patient.

On the following page, you will find a form signed by your patient authorizing you to complete the attached two-page questionnaire and to provide the requested information.

Please fax the completed form to me within 14 days of the above date. Delays may result in the employer withdrawing the applicant's conditional offer of employment. If you have any questions or are unable to provide the requested information within 14 days, please call me.

Sincerely,

[Name and signature of Psychologist]

[License number]

Instructions to Applicant:

1. Fill in your name and health care record number (or last four digits of your Social Security Number) at the **top of this page** and at the **top of page 3**.
2. Fill in all information requested on page 2 ("Authorization" form) and sign at the bottom.
3. Provide this form immediately to each doctor or other professional who has provided you with mental health treatment or evaluation (including prescription medication for mental health purposes) within the past 24 months or as instructed by the hiring agency or [Psychological Evaluator's Name].

Adapted and reprinted with permission from the author, David M. Corey, Ph.D., ABPP

Authorization for Limited Release of Mental Health Information for Purposes of Determining Qualification for Employment in a Public Safety Position

Patient/Applicant Information

Name	Nickname/Maiden Name/Alias/Other	Health Record Number or Last 4 Digits of SSN	
Address	City	State	Zip
Phone	Email	Date of Birth (Mo/Day/Yr)	

I voluntarily authorize:

Name and Title of Treating Mental Health Care Provider	Phone Number	Fax Number	
Agency/Department			
Address	City	State	Zip

To release my medical/mental health information to: (psychologist's contact information/mailing address)

Name of Psychologist	Phone Number	Fax Number	
Address	City	State	Zip

The information contained in these records will be used for the purpose of determining my psychological qualification for employment in a public safety position.

The information to be released includes: *[please initial checked box(es)]*

_____ ❑ **Mental health information**

_____ ❑ **Records concerning drug or alcohol abuse, dependence, or treatment**

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA, Title II, from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual of family member of the individual except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we are asking that you not provide any genetic information when responding to any request for medical information. "Genetic information," as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

I understand that the information used or disclosed pursuant to this authorization may be subject to redisclosure and no longer be protected under federal law. However, I also understand that federal or state law may restrict redisclosure of drug/alcohol diagnosis, treatment or referral information, and mental health information.

I hereby authorize the above-named mental health care provider and/or agency to provide full and complete answers to the questions on this form and to release any and all information deemed by the provider and/or agency to be relevant to this limited request to [name of psychologist]. I understand and agree that any information or opinions provided by my mental health care provider and/or agency will be considered along with other data in determining my psychological qualification for public safety employment.

I hereby release my treating mental health care provider, named above, and their respective agents, officers, and employees from all liability or damage claims which may result from the provision or use of this information in determining my psychological qualification for employment.

This authorization may be revoked at any time. The only exception is when action has been taken in reliance on the authorization. Unless revoked earlier, this consent will expire 180 days from the date of signing or shall remain in effect for the period reasonably needed to complete the request. Under federal law, no covered entity may condition treatment, payment, enrollment or eligibility for benefits on whether the individual signs this authorization.

This authorization is limited to the following time period: treatment received within past _____months and any period of inpatient treatment.

Patient/Applicant Signature	Patient/Applicant Printed Name	Date

Patient's Full Name	Health Record Number or Last 4 Digits of SSN

Employment Position:	Agency Employed At:

SECTION 1: TO BE COMPLETED BY TREATING MENTAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Please return the following two pages to [name of psychologist] **within 14 days.**

Mental Health Care Provider's Full Name	Licensed as (physician, psychologist, LCSW, LPC, etc.)	License Number	State

Time period over which you provided treatment (first and most recent contact):	Total number of contacts

1. Did their psychological condition substantially limit a major life activity such as walking, talking, sleeping, caring for oneself, learning, concentrating, interacting with others, or performing manual tasks? *If yes, note on the next page whether the limitation resolved and the duration of the limitation?*	❑ Yes ❑ No
2. Did their psychological condition result in any substantial impairment in their ability to perform the essential functions of their job at the time? *If yes, note on next page whether the impairment resolved during treatment and the duration of the impairment?*	❑ Yes ❑ No
3. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve alleged or actual violence, assault, stalking or harassment by the patient directed against a spouse or romantic/domestic partner?	❑ Yes ❑ No
4. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve alleged or actual behavior by the patient that caused physical harm to someone other than a spouse or romantic/domestic partner?	❑ Yes ❑ No
5. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve alleged or actual threats or intimidating statements, letters, phone calls, or stalking directed at someone other than a spouse or romantic/domestic partner?	❑ Yes ❑ No
6. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve alleged or actual sexual abuse or misconduct by the patient?	❑ Yes ❑ No
7. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve suicidal or self-injuring thoughts, gestures, or attempts?	❑ Yes ❑ No
8. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve substance abuse or dependence?	❑ Yes ❑ No
9. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve illegal drug use?	❑ Yes ❑ No
10. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve inpatient mental health treatment?	❑ Yes ❑ No

11. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve treatment by any other mental health care providers?	❑ Yes ❑ No
12. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve the use of prescription medication for purposes of controlling, alleviating, or reducing mental health symptoms?	❑ Yes ❑ No
13. Was treatment or evaluation mandated by an employer, court or other third party?	❑ Yes ❑ No
14. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve any substantial deficits or impairments in impulse control?	❑ Yes ❑ No
15. Did treatment or evaluation reveal or involve a mental disorder (Axis I or II) listed in the DSM version in use at the time of service?	❑ Yes ❑ No

*If you answered **Yes** to any of the above, please provide explanation(s) on the next page.*

Patient's Full Name	Health Record Number or Last 4 Digits of SSN

Employment Position:	Agency Employed At:

SECTION 2: TO BE COMPLETED BY TREATING MENTAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Please provide explanation(s) for any items answered **Yes** on the previous page. Please include the question number associated with your explanation. You may attach letters and/or records if you prefer.

I attest that the information provided in Sections 1 and 2 above is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Treating Mental Health Care Provider's Signature	Treating Mental Health Care Provider's Printed Name	Date

Please return these last two pages within fourteen (14) days to:

[Name of psychologist]
Fax: [Fax # if confidentiality can be maintained]

or mail to:
[Mailing address]

Please call [psychologist] at [phone number] for questions or if you are unable to return this form within the time requested.

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State of California – Department of Justice
PSYCHOLOGICAL SUITABILITY DECLARATION
POST 2-364 (10/2023)

Commission on
Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)
860 Stillwater Road, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95605-1630 • 916 227-3909

HIRING DEPARTMENT			
ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP

Suitability Declaration - to be maintained in the background investigation file

Instructions to the Psychologist:

- This form is to be completed and submitted to the hiring department.
- The hiring department will maintain this Psychological Suitability Declaration page in the individual's background investigation file. ***Do not include medical information on this page.***

Psychological Suitability Declaration

CANDIDATE'S NAME	BIRTH DATE	LAST 4 DIGITS OF SSN

On _____, I completed a pre-employment psychological screening
[DATE OF EVALUATION]
evaluation of the above-named peace officer candidate to determine if the candidate is free from any emotional or mental condition, including bias against race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer and is capable of withstanding the psychological demands of the position, in accordance with POST Commission Regulation 1955.

The evaluation was conducted using the psychological screening procedures and evaluation criteria outlined in subsection 1955(d) and the required sources of information identified in subsection 1955(e), as follows:

1. Job information provided by the hiring department,
2. Written assessments, including one designed and validated to identify patterns of abnormal behavior and one designed and validated to assess normal behavior,
3. Personal history information, including all relevant information gathered from the background investigation [Commission Regulation 1953(g)(3)],
4. A psychological interview administered subsequent to a review of the written assessment results and personal history information, and
5. A review of relevant psychological and medical records, as provided by the candidate and/or medical health professional, if warranted and obtainable.

Based on the results and findings of the evaluation, the candidate is:

☐ ***Psychologically suitable*** to perform the peace officer duties and responsibilities as defined and provided by the hiring department either without any accommodations, or provided that the specified work restrictions, limitations, or reasonable accommodations can be implemented. *(Describe any work restrictions, limitations, or reasonable accommodation requirements on a supplemental medical information page. The supplemental page is to be maintained as a confidential medical record, separate from the background investigation file.)*

☐ ***Not psychologically suitable*** to perform the peace officer duties and responsibilities as defined and provided by the hiring department.

Psychologist's Signature ►_____

PRINTED NAME OF PSYCHOLOGIST	LICENSE NUMBER
EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER

ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
XAVIER BECERRA, Attorney General

Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training
860 Stillwater Road, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95605-1630
post.ca.gov

Date: April 3, 2020

Bulletin: No. 2020-18

Subject: Compliance with POST Selection Standards During Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency

On March 19, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a mandatory "stay at home" order for California residents to help lessen the impact of COVID-19. Cities and counties continue to tighten these restrictions, creating exceptional challenges for our law enforcement partners and their need to continue the recruitment, selection and hiring of critical personnel. Departments should continue to follow their current hiring practices if/when possible, however POST is cognizant that these extraordinary circumstances may preclude some departments from conducting business as usual.

The hiring of California peace officers is regulated through state law (Government Code section 1029, et seq.) and Commission Regulations 1950-1955. There are no equivalent state laws for dispatchers, thus their regulatory requirement comes directly from Commission Regulations 1956-1960. POST regulations are codified through the California Code of Regulations; as such they hold the weight of state law. Currently there is no direction from the Governor regarding exempting, waiving or providing temporary extensions to meet these requirements. As such, POST is providing the following guidance to assist agencies with continuing to meet hiring needs, while mitigating concerns for the health and safety of candidates and others involved in the hiring process. Although the guidance specifically addresses and references peace officer candidates, it may be applied to dispatchers, if appropriate, as POST regulatory requirements, with limited exceptions, are nearly identical for both classifications.

As we navigate these uncharted waters, departments should continue to have open and honest communications with their background investigators, physicians, psychologists and others involved in the hiring process to ensure that the hiring process remains fair and impartial. This Bulletin is not to be construed as POST policy nor regulation; rather, it is interim guidance for departments where individual circumstances make it difficult to impossible to continue business as usual. Departments should, as appropriate, seek guidance from their own legal counsel regarding any changes to their current hiring practices.

Questions about this bulletin should be directed to Melani Singley at (916) 227-4258.

MANUEL ALVAREZ, JR.
Executive Director
MA:ms

Background Investigation

Prior to employment, all candidates must undergo a thorough background investigation to ensure good moral character and the absence of past behavior indicative of unsuitability to perform the duties of a peace officer (Commission Regulation 1953). This is accomplished by a thorough review of the candidate's personal history, including the gathering of relevant documentation; contacts with references, neighbors, and employers; and criminal history checks.

Any modifications to the background process should be at the direction and the discretion of the hiring department and documented thoroughly. As with any change in policy or procedure, close consultation with legal counsel is advised.

Candidate Background Interviews

Departments should make every effort to continue conducting in person face-to-face background interviews with the candidates to review their personal history statement forms, obtain appropriate waivers and consent forms, and review documents. If this is not feasible, and the department authorizes the use of remote video-enabled interviews, departments should work closely with their investigators and legal counsel to establish a process that will maintain the integrity and fairness of the background investigation process, while ensuring the health and safety of those involved.

There are many areas to consider prior to conducting remote video-based interviews, including, but not limited to, signing of waivers/consent/release forms, verifying candidate identity, reviewing documents, establishing procedures for controlling the environment (e.g., location, distractions), ensuring candidate privacy and confidentiality, access to appropriate technology, and properly recording and/or memorializing the interview. Although intended for psychological evaluations, the guidance provided on conducting remote psychological evaluations and the complementary teleconference checklist included with this bulletin may provide additional areas to consider when developing policies and procedures for conducting remote interviews. Please note that background interviews do not and should not include medical questions and/or information, thus HIPAA-compliant platforms are not necessary nor required. Additionally, POST does not require detection of deception examinations (e.g. polygraphs); therefore, departments should determine how best to handle these types of examinations.

Documentation

Requisite documentation for the background investigation includes proof of citizenship, age, driver record, education, dissolution of marriage, military history, and credit checks. Most of this information can be obtained electronically, thus changes to current practice should be minimal. Any delays in obtaining documentation (such as copies of official transcripts or official DMV records) should be noted and followed-up with immediately, as they become available.

Proof of citizenship and age requires the department to review original documents and attest to authenticity of copies. If this is not feasible under current circumstances, copies of documents may be submitted by the candidate; however, the department must review the originals prior to appointment, attesting to the authenticity of the copies in the background file.

Criminal History Checks

Criminal history checks include required state and federal fingerprint checks[1] and a review of criminal history information from local departments where the candidate has worked, lived and/or attended school.[2] This area is of critical importance to ensuring that the candidate is legally eligible for employment and to assess job-relevant behaviors that are compatible or incompatible with the peace officer position. Candidates will continue to be required to submit their fingerprints through the live scan process at an available location: https://oag.ca.gov/fingerprints/locations, the hiring department, or other local law enforcement agency. Live scan vendors are working diligently to limit exposure and ensure the health and safety of applicants.

Local criminal history checks can be accomplished through communicating directly with the local departments to obtain written documentation and/or letters regarding the candidate's criminal history. In most situations, this is accomplished via email, mail or fax, thus eliminating the need for direct contact with individuals.

Contacts with References

Personal contacts with references including relatives, personal references, and employers may not be feasible given the Governor's mandate. Alternatives to face-to-face contacts may be mitigated via phone, email and/or distribution of questionnaires. POST provides sample questionnaires in Appendix C of the Background Investigation Manual and on the POST Website. Documentation of contacts with references and any changes to standard procedure should be noted in the background investigation file. For employment checks where in-person reviews of personnel files are required, departments should work directly with the employers to determine the best method for review.

Neighborhood Checks

Physical neighborhood checks should continue, if possible. If face-to-face interviews with neighbors are not feasible, minimally, departments should independently acquire neighbor's addresses and distribute questionnaires. POST provides a modifiable sample neighborhood interview questionnaire. Departments shall continue to document responses and follow-up, if/as necessary.

[1] Government Code sections 1030 and 1031(c) and Commission Regulation 1953(e)(3)(B)-(C)

[2] Commission Regulation 1953(e)(3)(A)

In addition to providing the requisite background information, any changes to procedures, including details on alternative steps taken and/or issues that occurred during this interim period should be documented.

Medical Evaluation

Prior to appointment to a peace officer position, candidates must be found medically suitable to exercise the powers of a peace officer.[3] Commission Regulation 1954 requires departments to establish *"medical screening procedures and evaluation criteria used in the conduct of the medical evaluation … based on the peace officer duties, powers, demands, and working conditions as defined by the department."* POST provides guidance in establishing specific medical standards through the Medical Screening Manual for California Law Enforcement.

Although there is no alternative to the physical examination of a candidate, one of the areas of concerns recently expressed is the recommendation in Chapter X: Respiratory System (rev. 2014) for the use of spirometry as a routine test to assess respiratory function in candidates. Due to the COVID-19 virus, the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) has recently recommended a temporary suspension of spirometry testing unless medically necessary. Since the Manual is a guidance document, rather than regulatory, departments are free to determine the appropriate testing protocols to ensure candidate medical suitability prior to appointment. Supplementary tests recommended in the Manual (such as exercise stress tests) may be viable alternatives to the spirometry; however, in this specific instance, hiring departments should work with their physicians to determine appropriate testing protocols to assess candidate pulmonary function.

As the current situation evolves, departments should continue to communicate with their physicians to assess individual situations and determine appropriate medical protocols and evaluation criteria to ensure medical suitability of their candidates, prior to appointment.

Psychological Evaluation

Commission Regulation 1955 requires that every peace officer candidate be *"evaluated to determine if the candidate is free from any emotional or mental condition that might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer [Government Code section 1031(f)], and to otherwise ensure that the candidate is capable of withstanding the psychological demands of the position."* The candidate must be found psychologically suitable, prior to appointment.[4]

[3] Government Code section 1031(f) and Commission Regulation 1954(e)(1)(D)

[4] Commission Regulation 1955(f)(1)(D)

Commission Regulation 1955 further lists the required components of the peace officer psychological evaluation. Two of these components pertain to information the hiring agency must provide the evaluator ahead of the evaluation: (a) the peace officer duties, powers, demands, and working conditions of the position, and (b) personal history information, which includes the candidate's relevant work, life, and developmental history based on information collected during the background investigation.[5] In a remote evaluation context, both of these requirements can be met easily by use of secure email transmission.

The three remaining components are the responsibility of the evaluator: (a) the administration, scoring, and interpretation of a minimum of two written psychological instruments;[6] (b) a psychological interview of the candidate;[7] and (c) obtaining psychological records and relevant medical records, if warranted and obtainable.

As a result of COVID-19 and the Governor's mandate, POST has received many inquiries regarding the psychological evaluation, including options for conducting psychological evaluations remotely (i.e., without close physical proximity between a peace officer candidate and the evaluator). Before modifying any current practices, psychologists should communicate with the hiring department regarding their concerns and their intention to adapt their procedures due to the current pandemic. Where circumstances warrant and at the direction and discretion of the hiring department, POST offers the following guidance for remote administration of the psychological evaluation.

Guidance Regarding Remote Administration of Written Assessments

For information concerning options and procedures for remote administration of written assessment instruments used in an evaluator's psychological evaluation, evaluators should contact the test publishers.

Guidance Regarding the Remote Administration of the Psychological Interview:

Evaluators are strongly advised to be thoroughly familiar with the American Psychological Association's *Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology* and the following legal requirements for telehealth services and the electronic delivery of psychological services in California:

- Notice to California Consumers Regarding the Electronic Delivery of Psychological Services
- Telehealth: Summary of Changes - Assembly Bill 809 (Logue) – Statutes of 2014
- Standards of Practice for Telehealth

[5] This information may be augmented by responses on a personal history questionnaire collected as part of the psychological evaluation.

[6] Commission Regulation 1955(e)(2)

[7] Commission Regulation 1955(e)(4)

In addition to the laws and guidelines listed above, evaluators are urged to consider the following issues when conducting psychological evaluations remotely:

1. **Informed consent and disclosure**
   - Be sure to follow state law and professional standards of ethics and practice when obtaining informed consent remotely.
   - Consider any new information that you may need to include in your informed consent and disclosure document and procedures that may be unique to remote assessments (e.g., recording of the assessment by either the evaluator or the candidate).
   - If your procedures vary from those previously approved by the hiring agency, be sure to obtain the department's approval in advance.
   - Confidentiality requirements apply equally to telehealth sessions, so be sure to use HIPAA-compliant procedures and technology.
2. **Testing/interview environment**
   - It is the evaluator's responsibility to ensure that the conditions of test administration indicated in the test manual for each written assessment instrument must be preserved for the test results to be valid. At a minimum, this involves ensuring that the candidate's testing and interview environment is free of distractions, conducive to valid assessment, and protective of test security (e.g., by prohibiting the use of cell phones and other recording devices during the session).
   - When administering written assessment instruments remotely, monitor the test session and the examinee's interaction with the test materials to ensure confidentiality and test session integrity.
   - If feasible, conduct the testing in the presence of a trained test proctor to assist with logging in and starting the assessment, maintain the proper environment, verify examinee identification, and resolve or report any technical problems.
   - If the use of a trained test proctor is not feasible, consider using a live HIPAA-compliant video connection to monitor the test taker during the telehealth session.
3. **Technical issues**
   - Make sure the audio and video connectivity are working as expected and make arrangements with the candidate at the start of the remote session concerning actions to take in the event of the loss of connectivity or other problems.
   - Practice the mechanics and workflow of administering remote written assessments and operating the web-based video platform you will be using in a video-based interview.
4. **Professional issues**
   - As when conducting an evaluation in a face-to-face context, make a professional judgment as to whether you were able to obtain the necessary information to make a reliable and valid determination of the candidate's psychological suitability.

- Inform the hiring agency when distractions, technical problems, or other unanticipated issues preclude you from reaching a determination with adequate professional confidence.
- State in your written report when any portion of the psychological evaluation was conducted remotely.

Checklist for Conducting Psychological Interviews via Teleconference

General considerations:

Remote (teleconference) interviews may not be appropriate for all candidates. Consider conducting only in-person interviews for candidates who:

1. Are emotionally vulnerable.
2. Live with a known abuser.
3. Do not have access to a space that will ensure privacy and confidentiality. (This can be due to a crowded living space, thin walls, young children in the home, or serving as a caretaker.)
4. Do not have access to a computer/tablet/smartphone meeting the technical requirements for connectivity.

Consider offering a candidate who meets the above criteria the option to be interviewed via teleconference from an office at the hiring agency, or in a separate room at the psychologist's office.

Prior to the teleconference interview:

1. Send the candidate informed consent forms and instructions on how to access the teleconference via email.
2. Make sure the candidate knows how to get the teleconference started (including downloading in advance any web client software needed for the teleconference).
3. Make sure that your software is updated and that you have enough practice using the teleconference software.
4. Confirm that your equipment (audio and visual) is working properly. Check your background and remove distractions and personal items as appropriate.
5. Disable examinee recording.
6. Ensure that you have reviewed the background information and psychological test results before the interview, as required by POST Commission Regulation 1955.

Prior to or at the start of the teleconference interview:

1. Confirm the candidate's identity (e.g., by having the candidate show his/her/their driver's license or other photo ID).
2. Establish a back-up plan, including alternative means for communicating with one another, such as via phone, if the audio/visual connection is lost.

3. Disclose whether you will be recording the teleconference (consent is required) and clarify that the candidate does not have your consent to record the interview.
4. Ensure that informed consent/disclosure/authorization has been obtained and properly documented.
5. Verify the candidate's privacy (i.e., ask if anyone else is in the room, all doors are closed) and free from distractions.

After the teleconference interview:

1. Document in your interview notes any technical or other problems that may deviate from the standard of care.
2. As with in-person interviews, make a professional judgment as to whether you were able to obtain the necessary information to make a reliable and valid determination of the candidate's psychological suitability.
3. Inform the hiring agency when distractions, technical problems, or other unanticipated issues preclude you from reaching a determination with adequate professional confidence.
4. State in your written report when any portion of the psychological evaluation was conducted remotely.

The use of measures of explicit and implicit bias for predicting discrimination

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Measuring prejudice and bias

Selecting peace officers based on their having low levels of pre-existing prejudice may be particularly important for preventing **discrimination** (i.e., unfair treatment or behaviors directed toward people on the basis of their group membership) in policing. In large part, this is because intervention or training efforts to reduce prejudice in an enduring way after hiring have shown only limited effectiveness. We define **prejudice (or bias)** as an attitude (or response) toward a group and its members that creates or maintains status differences between groups (Dovidio et al., 2010). Specifically, interventions and training have relatively small prejudice-reduction effects in large samples (average Cohen's d = .19), and very little of this research has been conducted in field settings or examined the persistence of prejudice reduction over long time periods (Paluck, Porat, Clark, & Green, 2021). Research on the impact specifically of diversity trainings, which educate people about racial bias, also shows limited success. While diversity trainings are consistently effective for changing attitudes and beliefs about diversity (Bezrukova, Spell, Perry, & Jehn, 2016), research in naturalistic ("real-world") settings has a mixed record for reducing actual discriminatory behavior (e.g., Chang et al., 2019; Worden et al., 2020).

Moreover, prejudice and bias (involving responses to members of another group *relative to* members of one's own group) can be **explicit** in the sense that they are attitudes or beliefs about a group and its members that people know they hold and are willing to express. Prejudice or bias can also be **implicit**, in the sense that they may often be activated without intention or awareness. Implicit biases tend to be relatively less controllable, less conscious, and retrieved more quickly and efficiently from memory. Research on reducing implicit bias specifically has not identified interventions that are consistently effective for creating long-term change (Lai et al., 2016). Even when interventions are effective for reducing implicit biases in the short-term, those reductions do not guarantee a corresponding reduction in discrimination (Forscher, Lai, et al., 2019). The limited available evidence for the use of training to reduce prejudice, bias, and discrimination highlights the importance of selecting peace officers who will treat all members of the community fairly and equitably. The peace officer selection process can be informed by studies in other contexts demonstrating relationships between measures of bias and discriminatory action.

The development of implicit measures of prejudice and bias (representing differences in the favorability of the associations for one group over another) was stimulated by concerns that people were systematically misrepresenting their "true" attitudes on explicit measures because of concerns about being socially "correct" or wanting to conform to expectations in a particular setting (i.e., social desirability bias). Researchers were also noticing that beliefs about

or perceptions of groups and their members were not necessarily deliberate or controlled (e.g., Devine, 1989). As noted earlier, whereas explicit measures ask people to directly report their feelings or beliefs about a group, measures of implicit bias reveal feelings or beliefs through performance on a task that does not appear to be related directly to prejudice. The **Implicit Association Test (IAT),** which is the most commonly used implicit measure, assesses response times to positive and negative words that are presented in combination with specified social groups (e.g., Black and White people, gay and straight people). The IAT draws on an extensive literature demonstrating that faster response times reflect stronger mental associations (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Despite some critiques (e.g., Blanton, Jaccard, Strauts, Mitchell, & Tetlock, 2015), the IAT is well-validated (Greenwald et al., 2021) and has largely superseded older indirect measures of attitude such as sentence completion tasks or projective tasks like the Thematic Apperception Test. Measures of implicit bias, such as the IAT, reveal that evaluations of groups and their members can be automatically activated, suggesting that prejudicial attitudes need not involve intention or personal endorsement. Although people may sometimes not be aware that they hold implicit biases, implicit biases are not necessarily unconscious. Implicit biases may sometimes be characterized by a lack of control (e.g., an intrusive thought) or by their speed or efficiency (e.g., a split-second reaction). For example, a peace officer's racialized feeling of suspicion about a Black man in a predominantly White suburb may be a bias that the officer is aware of consciously, but it may nonetheless be implicit due to the difficulty of ignoring that racialized feeling and the speed at which it comes to mind. Measures of explicit and implicit intergroup bias are positively related, but usually only moderately so.

In addition to measures of prejudice toward specific groups, measures of general ideologies about intergroup relations, such as **Social Dominance Orientation** (SDO; Sidanius et al., 2017) and **Right-Wing Authoritarianism** (RWA; Altemeyer, 1998) can reflect biases toward a range of other groups without delineating a specific group in the scale's items. People in the US and in numerous other countries who score higher in SDO or RWA tend to be more prejudiced in the attitudes they hold and more discriminatory in their behavior toward traditionally marginalized groups in their society (Duckitt & Sibley, 2017).

Relationships between bias and intergroup behavior

Preferences for collective security, control, stability, and order (i.e., RWA) and for hierarchy, power, and dominance (i.e., SDO) tend to increase in social contexts involving threat or competitiveness from or toward other groups, respectively (Duckitt & Sibley, 2017). There also is evidence that individuals seek roles in an institution expected to be compatible with their SDO levels (Sidanius et al., 1994), and this finding may explain why some studies report that police officers, and particularly White police officers, tend to score high on measures of SDO (Sidanius, Liu, Shaw, & Pratto, 1994; replicated in data provided by Xu, Nosek, & Greenwald, 2014) and show a range of prejudices that increased with training and experience in policing (Gatto et al., 2010; see also Pratto et al., 2006).

Explicit and implicit bias predispose people to act with a negative orientation toward a group and individual members of a group. Across a broad range of situations and behaviors,

measures of explicit and implicit bias both reliably (but only weakly or moderately) predict discrimination, and three of the four meta-analyses studying the topic indicate that they do so uniquely from each other (Cameron, Brown-Iannuzzi, & Payne, 2012; Greenwald, Poehlman, Uhlmann, & Banaji, 2009; Kurdi et al., 2019; Oswald, Mitchell, Blanton, Jaccard, & Tetlock, 2013). Most of the relevant research has been in controlled laboratory settings. However, field studies in naturalistic work settings have demonstrated consistent and continuing racial discrimination in hiring (Quillian, Pager, Hexel, & Midtbøen, 2017) that is predicted by individual levels of prejudice (e.g., Glover, Pallais, & Pariente, 2017; Rooth, 2010). That said, intergroup behaviors are determined by multiple forces, not only by personal prejudice and bias but also by situational constraints or expectations, perceptions about how one should behave, the amount of investment required to pursue alternative courses of action, and cost-benefit analyses for different behaviors. As discrimination is multiply determined (e.g., affected by normative pressures, context, and opportunity), both explicit-discrimination and implicit-discrimination relationships tend to be small to moderate.

Moderators of the relationship between bias and behavior

There is no single unconditional relationship between bias and behavior (Gawronski, 2019). The relative validity of explicit and implicit measures for predicting behavior depends on the topic, the context in which the behavior occurs, and the type of behavior being examined (Dovidio et al., 2009; Lai & Wilson, 2020). For example, the ***M*otivation and *O*pportunity as *DE*terminants of attitude-to-behavior processes (MODE) model** suggests that explicit measures would be better at predicting deliberate responses than implicit measures, as deliberate responses are more subject to conscious control and awareness. In contrast, implicit measures would better predict spontaneous behaviors (Fazio & Olson, 2003, 2014). The pattern of findings reported by Kurdi et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis of 217 research reports is partially consistent with the MODE model. Consistent with predictions for explicit measures, Kurdi et al. found that explicit measures better predicted intergroup behavior in contexts in which participants had greater control of their behavior and were more aware that discrimination was being measured. However, inconsistent with predictions derived for implicit measures, Kurdi et al. found that implicit measures systematically predicted deliberative and spontaneous behaviors to a comparable degree.

Thus, implicit bias has a general influence on discriminatory behavior, unrelated to the spontaneity of the action. This may be because even when considerable deliberation is involved implicit bias may guide what people notice and how they recall and interpret information at a relatively early stage of processing. For example, when police officers are placed in situations in which crime is emphasized, they attend more quickly to faces of Black men than of White men, and be more likely to falsely identify Black men in lineups (Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004). Police officers also display less respect when interacting with Black than White motorists in traffic stops (Voigt et al., 2017). The spontaneity of these actions suggests the influence of implicit processes, but direct research on the role of individual differences in implicit bias in such behaviors comes primarily from outside of policing. For example, research in medicine finds that physicians with stronger implicit racial biases respond in a less friendly and respectful way when interacting with Black patients (Penner, Blair, Albrecht, & Dovidio, 2014).

In addition to differences in how well explicit and implicit biases predict various outcomes, the degree to which explicit and implicit biases align for individuals also matter for behavioral prediction. Measures of explicit and implicit biases are weaker predictors of intergroup behavior when they are less strongly related with each other (Cameron et al., 2012; Greenwald & Lai, 2020; Greenwald et al., 2009; Kurdi et al., 2019). This may reflect a form of ambivalence. When biases are aligned, explicit and implicit biases may mutually reinforce each other to guide behavior. When biases are misaligned, explicit and implicit biases may "compete" in guiding behavior. This competition would then reduce the causal influence of both explicit and implicit biases.

Explicit measures, personnel selection, and policing behavior

We also conducted a literature review to examine whether five popular measures of explicit biases had been used in research on personnel selection (i.e., Social Dominance Orientation, Right-Wing Authoritarianism, **Ambivalent Sexism Inventory, Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men, Bias Awareness**). We did not find evidence that any of these measures had been used or adapted for selecting personnel, in policing or elsewhere.

In addition to the literature on the use of the five common measures of bias in personnel selection, we reviewed literature on the use of these measures for predicting the beliefs and actions of members of law enforcement. Only a couple of the measures had been used with law enforcement populations (e.g., Bernstein et al., 2003; Sidanius et al., 1994). Most of the researchers using these measures only examined the average levels of bias among police officers or trainees relative to other samples; they generally did not investigate whether the measures predicted beliefs or behavior relevant to policing. There were, though, two exceptions. One exception was research by Swencionis et al. (2021) who found that White officers (but not non-White officers) with higher levels of Social Dominance Orientation had a relatively larger number of use of force incidents). The demographic status (e.g., race or ethnicity) of those residents were not examined in that study for discriminatory application of force, however. The other exception found that officers who endorsed Hostile or Benevolent Sexism were more likely to endorse myths about rape (e.g., beliefs that rape happens suddenly at night with aggression and clear evidence of resistance) that would interfere with effective policing (Murphy & Hine, 2019).

Finally, we examined the extent to which measures of bias were related to discrimination (see prior sections). Research on the relationship between bias and discrimination tends to focus on undergraduate student samples or discrimination in non-law enforcement workplace settings, suggesting that more research is needed in law enforcement, personnel selection, and screening.

Implicit measures and discrimination in policing

Researchers studying implicit measures have not directly examined personnel selection or discrimination in actual policing behavior. Instead, the research on implicit measures and discrimination in policing has often been focused on simulations of decisions to shoot armed or unarmed men. In the most common form of these simulations, participants engage in a computer

simulation in which they observe images of White and Black men in everyday places like parks or city sidewalks (Correll, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2002; Payne & Correll, 2020). Some of the men are armed with guns, while others are unarmed and carrying mundane objects like wallets or cell phones. Participants are instructed to press a button to "shoot" if the man is holding a gun or another button to "don't shoot" if the man is not holding a gun. In this simulation, civilians tend to mistakenly shoot unarmed Black men at higher rates than unarmed White men. Civilians also tend to react faster to unarmed Black men than unarmed White men. Follow-up research on the intersection between race and gender has found that Black women are not more likely to be mistakenly shot than White women or White men in these simulations, suggesting that Black men are uniquely associated with violence and danger (Plant, Goplen, & Kunstman, 2011).

Police officers' racial biases in decisions to shoot are more variable. Implicit bias as assessed using the IAT does not reliably predict racial biases in decisions to shoot in these simulations (Andersen, Di Nota, Boychuk, Schimmack, & Collins, 2021). However, racial biases in these types of simulated encounters are well-documented and depend upon the life experiences of the police officers. On average, officers with policing experience do not tend to show a racial bias in decisions to shoot (Correll et al., 2007). This average obscures variability in officers' biases. Officers who have less childhood contact with Black people or are assigned to gang and street-crime units that regularly deal with minority gang members tend to show higher levels of racial shooting bias (Sadler, Correll, Park, & Judd, 2012; Sim, Correll, & Sadler, 2013). New police recruits also tend to show evidence of a racial shooting bias, suggesting that certain on-the-job experiences may be important for mitigating racial shooting biases (Ma et al., 2013). Administrative policing records from Chicago also provide evidence supporting the critical role of life experience in police use of force (Ba, Knox, Mummolo, & Rivera, 2021). Hispanic and Black officers in Chicago are generally less likely to use force than their White counterparts, and they are especially less likely to use force when policing majority-Black areas and Black community members. Finally, the situation matters: Officers who are more tired show stronger racial bias in decisions to shoot, whereas officers who are more alert show less racial bias (Ma et al., 2013). Simulations that more closely mirror real-world deadly force encounters, which provide more detailed information about the situation and the suspect, generally show less racial bias in decisions to shoot (Andersen et al., 2021; Cox, Devine, Plant, & Schwartz, 2014; James, Vila, & Daratha, 2013).

Other factors related to explicit and implicit bias

When there is clear and direct evidence of explicit or implicit bias (e.g., via a measure of Social Dominance Orientation), other factors are not relevant for assessing the bias of an officer candidate. However, when direct evidence of bias is ambiguous or weak, other factors that are related to explicit or implicit bias become more important in assessment. In addition, even when there is some direct evidence of prejudice or bias, these factors can override these predispositions, reducing the likelihood that people will act in a discriminatory way. Here, we describe some of these relevant factors.

First, experiences of **intergroup contact** (i.e., interactions with people of other groups) has been correlated with a range of positive intergroup outcomes such as reduced prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination (Pettigrew, 1998). Second, chronic **motivations to respond without prejudice** have been linked to reduced discrimination, which highlights the importance of self-control in preventing discrimination (Butz & Plant, 2009). In particular, intrinsic motivations to be unprejudiced out of a commitment to egalitarian values are particularly potent for combatting expressions of bias. In comparison, extrinsic motivations to be unprejudiced due to concerns about reputation tend to have a more mixed track record for combatting bias. Third, **social norms about prejudice** can powerfully reduce the expression of prejudice in daily life (Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002). Perceiving that being prejudiced or acting in discriminatory ways violates prevailing social norms motivates individuals to regulate their biases. Experience in regulating these responses can produce internalized standards of fairness (e.g., "To be a good police officer, I need to be unprejudiced") and arouse concerns about belonging (e.g., "To fit in with the other officers, I need to be unprejudiced"). Finally, higher levels of **executive function**, or cognitive control over one's own behavior, has been linked to reduced expressions of implicit bias in behavior (Ito et al., 2015).

Limitations to the measurement of explicit and implicit bias in personnel selection contexts

Conceptual Limitations

Based on our broader understanding of the research, we identify limitations of using explicit or implicit measures of bias as determining factors in personnel selection, except in their extreme expressions. First, many measures of explicit bias often contend with tendencies to engage in **socially desirable responding** (Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997). This means that many participants may censor themselves and report lower levels of prejudice than what they really believe. Under situations with high evaluative stakes like personnel selection, these motivations to self-censor may be further amplified (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). That could mean that higher levels of self-reported bias may be capturing honesty or a lack of awareness of norms about expressing prejudice rather than levels of prejudice alone.

Second, measures of implicit bias are currently not diagnostic of individuals due to their relatively low **test-retest reliability**. In comparison to measures of explicit bias which have an average test-retest reliability of .75 (Gawronski, Morrison, Phills, & Galdi, 2017), the Implicit Association Test has an average test-retest **reliability** of .49 (Lai & Wilson, 2021). This means that a single administration of the Implicit Association Test will predict only 25% of the performance in a follow-up Implicit Association Test (on average). There are ongoing efforts and possible approaches to increase the reliability of implicit measures for diagnostic use, but such approaches have not yet been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals (for a general guide to best practices in Implicit Association Test measurement, see Greenwald et al., 2021). In addition to test-retest reliability, there are also other potential issues for screening such as the possibility of deliberate faking (Fiedler & Bluemke, 2005), the interpretation of scores as a measure of absolute preference (Blanton et al., 2015), and noisiness in measurement due to contamination from non-prejudice-related processes (Calanchini & Sherman, 2013).

Third, the expression of explicit and implicit bias is often better understood through the characteristics of the social environment rather than an individual's chronic level of prejudice. For police officers, situational factors like time pressure, the experience of identity threat, and sheer inexperience on the job are all linked to the expression of racial bias (Swencionis & Goff, 2017). Ambiguity and personal discretion are particularly relevant factors in policing. In their day-to-day work, police officers must contend with high degrees of ambiguity (e.g., determining who fits a suspect description or who poses a potential threat) and have high discretion (e.g., deciding whether to search in a traffic stop). This is important because the propensity to discriminate is more likely when there is high ambiguity in how to make a decision and decision-makers have high discretion to act on bias. Consistent with this proposition, policing records show evidence of biased discretion during traffic stops and police interactions in California. Officers chose to search individuals that were perceived to be Black at over twice the rates of individuals that were perceived to be White. However, the probability of finding contraband during the search (i.e., the discovery rate) was higher for individuals that were perceived to be White (Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, 2021), indicating evidence of racial discrimination.

Social psychological experiments further demonstrate the critical role for ambiguity and discretion in discrimination. For example, White individuals evaluated Black and White job candidates that varied in the strength of their qualifications (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). When the candidates' qualifications were clearly strong or clearly weak, people did not racially discriminate. Racial discrimination was only evident when the qualifications were more ambiguous (i.e., a mix of qualities that fit and did not fit the position).

That said, an integrated perspective that considers the interaction between the person and the situation may sometimes be relevant. For example, Son Hing et al. (2008) found that people who had stronger implicit bias against Asians less strongly supported the hiring of a moderately qualified Asian applicant. In contrast, implicit bias against Asians did not affect decisions when the Asian applicant was highly qualified, presumably because there was less ambiguity and less discretion. Thus, even when the effects of implicit (or explicit) bias may be limited on average, considering how attitudes influence behaviors in different types of situations (a person x situation perspective) can yield conceptually meaningful and practically important findings.

Limitations of using measures of general social skills to predict discrimination

There are a broad range of social skills or personality traits that are important for social functioning generally (e.g., empathy, theory of mind, perspective-taking, a tendency to think before speaking, Agreeableness, Openness to Experience). These social skills tend to have broad positive influences for how people treat others in everyday life. However, the effects of these broad social skills on prejudice and discriminatory behavior (i.e., *group-based differences* in how we treat others) are often weaker and more contingent. For example, the relationship between measures of dispositional empathy and explicit prejudice is weakly negative overall (McFarland, 2010). In practice, however, dispositional empathy can manifest in more care toward *one's own group* (e.g., supporting war in another country in defense of one's nation) rather than more care toward

other groups (e.g., opposing war due to the consequences for civilians in that other country; Bloom, 2017; Peak et al., 2016). To address this discrepancy, some interventions have been developed to tune these social skills for addressing prejudice, such as efforts to increase empathy or perspective-taking toward members of marginalized groups (Shih, Wang, Trahan Bucher, & Stotzer, 2009; Stephan & Finlay, 1999).

Summary and Practical Takeaways

Given the limited evidence of the effectiveness of efforts to train peace officers to become less biased on the job, it is important to instead consider how psychological evaluators can play a role in screening out candidates who hold explicit or implicit biases about race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. Our literature review finds that there is a lack of direct scientific evidence about how to effectively and reliably screen for explicit or implicit bias in a personnel selection context. However, there are many studies (primarily conducted in research settings) which led us to the following conclusions that are relevant for screening peace officer candidates effectively:

1. Discrimination is multi-determined, involving individuals' explicit and implicit biases, the social situation, and the opportunities and consequences for expressing bias. As a result, measures of explicit and implicit bias will only weakly or moderately predict discrimination.

2. We found no studies on the measurement of explicit and implicit bias in personnel selection contexts. However, due to high demand characteristics in these settings, measures of explicit bias particularly (Detrick & Chibnall, 2014) and implicit bias to a lesser degree may be especially subject to faking or other forms of socially desirable responding. Of the explicit measures we reviewed, the Social Dominance Orientation, Ambivalent Sexism Inventory Scale, and beliefs about rape myths showed the strongest evidence for predicting biased policing.

3. When direct evidence of bias is unavailable, ambiguous, or weak, it may be useful to consider, in assessments and/or interviews, related factors such as favorable intergroup contact, motivations to respond without prejudice, perceptions of social norms about prejudice, and executive function. These factors also generally contribute to more equitable behavior and fair treatment of others and can mitigate tendencies to act in discriminatory ways even when some evidence of bias is detected.

4. More distantly related social skills like a general tendency toward empathy or perspective-taking are consistently related to generally more positive treatment of others. However, because these may be applied more readily to members of one's own group rather than to members of other groups, they are not consistently linked to less group-based differences in treatment (i.e., discrimination).

Glossary

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory: Measure of sexism that encompasses hostile sexism (subjectively negative evaluations of women) and benevolent sexism (subjectively positive evaluations of women that reinforce restrictive traditional gender roles)

Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men: A direct measure of prejudice toward lesbian women and gay men

Bias: A response toward a group and its members, relative to one's own group, that creates or maintains status differences between groups

Bias Awareness: Measure of awareness and concern about racial bias

Discrimination: Unfair treatment or behaviors directed toward people on the basis of their actual or perceived group membership

Executive function: Cognitive processes that are necessary for controlling behavior

Explicit bias (or explicit prejudice): An attitude or belief (e.g., stereotype) about a group and its members that people know they hold and are willing to express. Explicit biases are more controllable, more conscious, and/or slower or less efficient to retrieve from memory than implicit bias. Explicit biases are typically assessed directly with self-report measures.

Implicit bias: Feelings or beliefs about a group and its members that are less controllable, less conscious, and/or faster or more efficient to retrieve from memory than explicit bias. Implicit biases may often be activated without intention or awareness. Implicit biases are typically assessed indirectly through performance on an ostensibly unrelated task.

Implicit Association Test (IAT): The most commonly used measure of implicit biases that assesses bias by measuring response times in categorizing social groups (e.g., Black and White people, gay and straight people) with attributes (e.g., good or bad)

Intergroup contact: Interactions between members of different groups

***M*otivation and *O*pportunity as *DE*terminants of attitude-to-behavior processes (MODE) model:** Theory that predicts that implicit attitude measures would better predict spontaneous behaviors and explicit attitude measures better predict deliberative behaviors

Motivations to respond without prejudice: Motivation to act without prejudice, which can distinguish between internal motivation (to be egalitarian) and external motivation (to appear unprejudiced to others)

Norms about prejudice: Perceptions of whether expressing prejudice is normal or accepted within a social situation

Prejudice: An attitude toward a group and its members that creates or maintains status differences between groups

Reliability. A property of a psychological instrument or measurement reflecting its consistency in assessing the quality of interest

Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA): A trait encompassing submissiveness to authority, aggression in the name of authority, and a tendency toward conformity

Social Dominance Orientation (SDO): A trait encompassing support for social hierarchy and a desire for some groups to dominate other groups

Socially desirable responding: Answering surveys in ways that respondents believe will lead others to view them favorably

Stereotype: A belief about characteristics shared by a group of people

Test-retest reliability: A measure of consistency in a psychological assessment across time

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