

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 2017 Recruitment

### Eligibility

1. **Do I need 60 credits before I apply?**
  - a. Yes, you must have completed 60 credits prior to applying (police academy credit counts towards 60 credits)
  
2. **Do I need Act 120 (the police academy) to apply?**
  - a. No, if hired, the Lower Merion Police Department will send you to the police academy and you will be paid a salary while there. The department pays the tuition but you would be responsible for purchasing academy uniforms.
  
3. **What is your tattoo policy?**
  - a. All personnel are prohibited from displaying any tattoo(s) on any part of their body that would be normally visible to the public while wearing any uniform of the day, including short sleeve shirts.
  
4. **Will prior drug use disqualify me?**
  - a. Investigators conducting the polygraph examination will explore and document any current or past use of illegal drugs. The following guidelines shall be followed:
    - i. Marijuana/Synthetic Marijuana: No usage in the twelve months prior to the date of application. Zero tolerance for usage upon reaching the age of 25.
    - ii. Zero tolerance for Heroin, Methamphetamine, LSD or any injected illegal substance (steroids excluded)
    - iii. Schedule I, II, or III drugs, excluding those named above: No usage in five years prior to date of application. Zero tolerance for usage upon reaching the age of 25.
    - iv. Steroids: No usage in five years prior to date of application, excluding steroids prescribed by a medical doctor. Zero tolerance for usage upon reaching the age of 25.
    - v. Prescription medication for non-medical purposes: No recreational use in 3 years prior to the date of application.
    - vi. Huffing of the internal use of another chemical or substance (e.g., household cleaner, glue, gas fumes, bath salts, etc.) for any other purpose than it was intended: No usage in the 3 years prior to date of application. Zero tolerance for usage upon reaching the age of 25.
    - vii. Zero tolerance for any illegal manufacturing or distribution of any drug.

**5. Is there a residency requirement to be a Lower Merion Police Officer?**

- a. Applicants must establish permanent residence within the five county metropolitan area, including Montgomery, Delaware, Bucks, Philadelphia, and Chester counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania within six months following regular appointment.

## Hiring Process

**6. How long is the hiring process?**

- a. Upon successful completion of the written examination, oral examination, and physical agility test candidates are ranked based on their combined written and oral examination score. Depending on departmental needs, a certain number of applicants will move on to the background phase. Applicants will be required to complete a more in-depth Part 2 application and submit to a polygraph. Backgrounds are then conducted on the top applicants. Depending on the number of positions available and the number of applicants who successfully pass the background investigators will continue down the list of eligible candidates until either all the positions are filled or the list expires (two years). The length of the hiring process will vary for each successful candidate based on departmental needs and the candidates ranking.

**7. What are the next steps after the written, oral and physical agility tests?**

- a. Depending on departmental needs, a certain number of applicants will move on to the background phase. Applicants will be required to complete a more in-depth Part 2 application and submit to a polygraph. Upon successful completion of the polygraph examination applicants will be assigned to an investigator for the background. Investigators will consider the applicants past criminal history, driving history, social media accounts and credit report. Interviews will be conducted with family members, references, past employers, and neighbors. If the applicant is recommended for employment after the background investigation they will receive a conditional offer of employment and will be required to submit to a second polygraph examination. Applicants will then undergo a medical examination and psychological examination.

## Act 120 Training

**8. What is life like in the police academy?**

- a. The Municipal Police Academy at Montgomery County Community College is a 772 hour program designed to prepare an individual for certification to practice Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The academy is not residential and classes are generally held during business hours Monday through Friday (modifications may be made to accommodate firearms training).

**9. Where can I find additional information about the police academy?**

- a. Additional information regarding the Municipal Police Academy at Montgomery County Community College can be found [here](#).

## Employment at Lower Merion Police Department

### 10. What is the process after a recruit graduates from the academy?

- a. Upon completion of the academy, officers will be assigned to the Staff & Inspections Unit for an estimated two-week period during which they will receive initial training on Department policies. Officers will then be assigned to one of the four patrol platoons where they will ride with a Field Training Officer (FTO) 24 shifts; totaling 288 hours. Officers will be evaluated by their FTOs on a weekly basis. Upon successful completion of FTO officers will be assigned to solo patrol.

### 11. What is the shift schedule for patrol officers?

- a. While the Lower Merion Police Department offers a vast array of specialty positions and units, all newly hired officers will be assigned to uniformed patrol duties. Patrol officers work 12 hour shifts; rotating every two week from day work to night work. Patrol officers are required to work every other weekend and certain holidays depending on their rotation.

### 12. How long is probationary period?

- a. The probationary period lasts one year from the date of hire for candidates who are already Act 120 certified. For candidates who need to obtain Act 120 Training, the probationary period will last one year from the date of completion of Act 120 Training.

### 13. Will I have to be tased and/or OC sprayed?

- a. Yes. In order to receive certification to carry the department issued Electronic Control device (aka Taser) and OC spray (pepper spray) all officers must experience their effects first hand.

### 14. Will I have the option to ride with a partner during my patrol shift?

- a. Aside from FTO, officers will be assigned to solo patrol.

## Veterans

### 15. Does Lower Merion Police Department offer veterans preference?

- a. Yes. Veterans' preference will be given to those eligible claimants who successfully pass all written, oral and physical agility examinations.

### 16. I'm a member of the Reserves or National Guard, will I be provided paid time off to fulfill my military duty?

- a. Yes. The Lower Merion Police Department, in accordance with Pennsylvania Law, provides 15 days of paid military leave annually.