

Police Officer Applicant FACT SHEET

The following information is provided to you in an effort to inform you the City of Sterling and its police department. The information contained herein is not intended to constitute an offer of employment nor is it a guarantee of benefits. Some items contained herein are subject to change without notice. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Sterling Police Department at 815-632-6600.

The Board of Fire and Police Commission make all appointments to the Police Department (with the exception of the Chief of Police and Deputy Chiefs).

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| Citizenship | Applicants must be legally authorized to work in the United States at the time of application as permitted by 65 ILCS 5/10-2.1.6. |
| Age | Applicants must be at least twenty (20) years of age, but shall not be appointed until said applicant reaches twenty-one (21) years of age. All applicants must be under thirty-five (35) years of age, unless exempt from age limitation as permitted by 65 ILCS 5/10-2.1-6. |
| Driver's License | Applicants must possess a valid driver's license at the time of application. Applicants must possess a valid Illinois driver's license at the time of hire. |
| Orientation | Applicants must attend the orientation sponsored by the Fire & Police Commission. |
| Written Examination | Applicants must attain a passing score of at least 70% on the written examination in order to continue with the process. Applicants who fail to achieve a passing score will be notified in writing and eliminated from the current testing process. |
| Oral Interview | Candidates will be required to participate in an oral interview with the Fire & Police Commission. Candidates must attain a score of 70% on the oral interview in order to be placed on the Final Eligibility List. Candidates who fail to successfully complete the oral interview process will be notified in writing and eliminated from the current testing process. |
| Selection Timeline | |
| Reapplication | Candidates who fail any part of the application process may not reapply for a period of one (1) year from the date of disqualification. |
| Character Background | Candidate must successfully pass a character and background investigation. The background investigation must be successfully passed in order to move forward in the testing process. Candidates who fail to complete and pass the character background will be notified in writing and eliminated from the current testing process. Police department staff or another investigative agent may be used by the Fire & Police Commission to perform the character and background investigation. Candidates will be fingerprinted. The |

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| | investigation may include, but not be limited to, verification of qualification credentials such as age, citizenship, and driving records. Such investigation may also examine the candidate's work record, criminal conviction history, educational experience, personal references and other factors relating to the candidate's background and life experience. |
| Education | Candidates must possess a high school diploma or equivalent at the time of application. |
| Physical Agility | All applicants must be able to successfully pass the State of Illinois POWER test prior to admission into the basic law enforcement training academy. If the applicant does not meet all the standards, he/she will not be allowed to enter the basic law enforcement training academy. |
| Polygraph Exam | Candidates will be scheduled for a polygraph examination. This will be a pass/fail basis. The results of the polygraph examination shall not be a single determinant of qualification for employment, but shall be used as an adjunct to the character and background investigation. A candidate who fails to complete and pass the character and background investigation will be notified in writing and eliminated from the current testing process. Areas covered will include honesty regarding elements of your application, work history, criminal convictions, alcohol and illegal substance use or abuse, criminal activity, and gang affiliation. |
| Training | Once hired, a new recruit officer will attend a 16-week basic training at an accredited basic training academy. The police department pays tuition. Recruit officer must maintain a passing average at the academy AND pass the state examination during the last week of the academy. Failure to pass either can result in immediate termination of employment from the department. Upon completion of basic training, officers will return to the department for field training. |
| Field Training | Upon completion of the academy, recruit officer will begin a period of "on the job" training. During this period, recruit officer will work with field training officers and will be taught various aspects of the job while being evaluated. |
| Work Schedule | Patrol officers work twelve (12) hour shifts, 7:00 am – 7:00 pm and 7:00 pm – 7:00 am. Officers are scheduled to work 14 days a month or 2,184 hours a year. |
| Benefits | The City of Sterling offers a comprehensive benefit package including health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, vacation, personal time and sick time. |
| Deferred Comp | City of Sterling employees may participate in a deferred compensation plan. |

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| Pension | All sworn officers are eligible to participate in the Police Pension Fund. The officer must make a written application to the Pension Board to participate. The Pension Board will make a decision on whether to accept or reject the application based on criteria provided in the Illinois Compiled Statutes. |
| Retirement | Police Officers are eligible to retire pursuant to the benefits of 40 ILCS 5/3-111. |
| Uniforms | All newly appointed recruits will be provided with all necessary uniforms and equipment. |
| Appearance | All employees are expected to present a professional appearance. Tattoos are allowed and do not have to be covered as long as they are not on the face, neck, or hands and do not include anything racist, sexist, sexually explicit, violent, or are associated with gangs or extremist groups. Sterling PD administration reserves the right to require a tattoo be covered or concealed with a sleeve or dressing at their discretion. |
| Salary | As of May 1, 2026 – starting salary is \$70,229.14 and the top patrol salary is \$92,531.04. Employees are paid bi-weekly with twenty-six (26) pay periods per year. |
| Holidays/Vacation | Officers are eligible for vacation (after 1 year of employment) and personal days. |
| Comp Time | Officers may earn comp time. The maximum balance is 80 hours. |

THE CITY OF STERLING IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.