

RESOLUTION NO. 6431-2022

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVING THE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR  
POLICE OFFICER TRAINEE

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WHEREAS, nationally and in the State of California, law enforcement agencies including the Sebastopol Police Department are facing significant challenges regarding staffing, retention, recruitment and hiring of highly qualified individuals wishing to enter the profession; and

WHEREAS, the numbers of individuals wishing to begin a career as a police officer has plummeted; and

WHEREAS, finding highly qualified individuals possessing the necessary skills, attributes, sound judgement, humanity, and life history which will help them be successful during a stringent police officer hiring and background investigation process has become increasingly difficult; and

WHEREAS, these factors have led to a much smaller qualified pool of acceptable applicants which has had the effect of causing law enforcement agencies to be competing amongst one another for a very limited pool of applicants; and

WHEREAS, in our North Bay region the option for individuals to attend the police academy in an extended program on weekends and some evenings permitting them to work their existing jobs during the week while working towards their academy certification in their off time has been eliminated for the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS, the elimination of extended police academy programs has left many more mature individuals who are striving for a law enforcement career and who possess valuable life experience and desirable traits, with two choices: get hired by an agency willing to sponsor and pay their way through the police academy while earning a salary because they have the usual adult living expenses, or give up on their goal of becoming a police officer; and

WHEREAS, this has caused agencies to be in a position where they are either recruiting for existing lateral police officers from another department who are wishing to leave for a variety of reasons and who sometimes are hired with underlying and undiscovered traits which make them an unsuitable fit for the new agency; or they must recruit very young adults lacking any substantial life experience many of whom were only able to attend the academy due to their youth and lack of financial obligations because they are able to live at home with family who in essence sponsor and support them while they seek a career opportunity; and

WHEREAS, throughout the State of California and nationally, a recognized solution to broaden the candidate pool and attract high quality individuals with relevant life experience who are well suited to become police officers and assimilate into their communities is to create a police trainee position. This position pays the trainee a salary and covers all associated costs while the person is attending the police academy; and

WHEREAS, once the trainee successfully completes the police academy, they are sworn in to the respective agency as a full-time police officer and they enter the field training officer program; and

WHEREAS, this type of sponsorship realizes additional benefits such as employee loyalty to the sponsoring entity which lends itself to retention, the ability of the entity to identify individuals who will fit in well with the community and its values and personality, and the ability of the entity to mentor, coach and train the individuals to organizational and community values and standards from the very beginning of their careers; and

WHEREAS, The Sebastopol Police Department is dedicated to providing outstanding law enforcement services to the community and is a service-oriented agency that prides itself on integrity, professionalism, and concern for the quality of life in our community; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the department is to identify, recruit and hire the highest quality individuals who will align with our community culture, values, and philosophy and who desire to invest themselves in our organization and the community long-term; and

WHEREAS, the department only seeks individuals who are committed to working in a small city environment and who embrace the opportunity to provide exceptional service to our community and who welcome the chance to embody our service-oriented values and to truly become invested in, and part of our community; and

WHEREAS, both recruitment and hiring play a major role in shaping how police agencies develop, grow, and ultimately succeed; and

WHEREAS, City staff believes that this Police Officer Trainee position will proactively identify and hire the positive—the candidates who possess the values, character traits, and capabilities that Sebastopol is looking for in their employees; and

WHEREAS, the Police Officer Trainee position does not create a new position or allocation but utilizes an existing, previously budgeted and approved allocated position to fulfill an existing need to expand our recruiting efforts and increase our viable candidate pool with minimal fiscal impact; and

WHEREAS, the creation and existence of a Police Officer Trainee position has been a nationally accepted and proven best practice for law enforcement agencies to recruit, hire and train prospective police officers in a manner congruent with organizational and community expectations and values; and

WHEREAS, the Council has reviewed the need to approve the job description, pay rates and ranges for the Police Officer Trainee position.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Sebastopol finds, determines and declares that the creation and approval of a Police Officer Trainee job classification provides a viable means to enhance recruiting efforts while expanding the candidate pool and identifying the most suitable candidates for hire consistent with community and organizational values and expectations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the creation of the Police Officer Trainee classification accomplishes the aforementioned benefits with minimal fiscal impact to the existing budget of the City of Sebastopol by utilizing the existence of a previously budgeted, approved and allocated position; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Sebastopol City Council hereby declares that the job description, pay rates and ranges are approved for the Police Officer Trainee classification and this classification is approved for recruitment and hiring based on departmental needs whenever there is a vacant, previously budgeted, approved and allocated police officer position in the Sebastopol Police Department; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Police Officer Trainee classification shall be an additional option to be utilized for recruitment and hiring but this shall not preclude the Sebastopol Police Department from conducting a recruitment either separately or in conjunction with a police officer recruitment for lateral police officers or academy graduate level police officers. The Police Officer Trainee classification is simply an additional means to recruit and hire the most qualified and best suited candidates in order to provide our community with highest caliber policing services congruent with our community values and expectations whenever an allocated position is vacant and is approved for hire; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager or his designee is authorized to take whatever other action is authorized under the Sebastopol Municipal Code and state and federal law, subject to authorization required from the City Council, consistent with this Resolution and its basic purposes; and

The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved, and adopted at a meeting by the City Council on the 17th day of May, 2022.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by City of Sebastopol City Council following a roll call vote:

VOTE:  
AYES: Councilmembers Gurney, Rich, Vice Mayor Hinton and Mayor Slayter  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Councilmember Glass  
ABSTAIN: None

APPROVED:   
Mayor Patrick Slayer

ATTEST:   
Mary Gourley, MMC, Assistant City Manager / City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

  
Larry McLaughlin, City Attorney

**City of Sebastopol  
Job Description**

**Job Title:** Police Officer Trainee  
**Division:** Public Safety  
**Department:** Police Department  
**Location:** Police Building  
**Labor Unit:** Unrepresented  
**Shift:** As Assigned  
**Reports To:** Chief of Police  
**Prepared By:** Lt. Ron Nelson  
**Approved By:** City Council  
**Approved Date:** May 17, 2022  
**FLSA Status:** Exempt

**PURPOSE**

The Police Officer Trainee is a non-sworn, training-level classification requiring no prior law enforcement experience. A Police Officer Trainee performs a variety of entry level police support duties in a learning capacity; assists and observes Police Officers and civilian police personnel; attends the Police Academy to obtain a P.O.S.T. Certificate of Completion; and performs related work which may require public contact but not the enforcement of laws. Incumbents will be sent to a basic police academy at the City’s expense in addition to receiving a full salary while attending the academy. Police Officer Trainees attend a POST certified Police Academy which follows a standardized curriculum in order to provide them with basic training in various aspects of policing, many of which are prescribed by law and/or statute.

The Police Academy training is designed to provide them the necessary skillsets to ready them for consideration for promotion to a probationary Police Officer position within the city and begin the Sebastopol Police Department’s Field Training Officer program. Attendance and successful completion of a Police Academy is a legal requirement to be hired as a police officer within the State of California and is a requirement for a City of Sebastopol Police Officer Trainee to be considered for promotion to Probationary Police Officer with the City of Sebastopol.

**DISTINGHISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

This is a pre-entry level law enforcement classification in which incumbents learn and gain additional qualifications in preparation for a career as a sworn peace officer. Appointment to this classification is expected to lead to development of knowledge, skills and abilities which can be applied upon successful appointment to the Police Officer classification. Upon attainment of the appropriate P.O.S.T. certification, incumbents in this class will be considered for appointment to the Police Officer classification; such appointment is expected by the completion of the probationary period. The Police Officer Trainee is distinguished from Police Officer in that the latter is the working level class with enforcement powers requiring sworn peace officer status.

Please note: Candidates must be at least 21 years of age by date of appointment as a full-time police officer.

**SUPERVISION EXERCISED AND RECEIVED**

General direction is provided by a Police Sergeant or other sworn Police manager.

**TYPICAL JOB DUTIES** include, but are not limited to, the following. Other duties may be assigned.

Attends a basic POST certified academy designed to provide an overview of the criminal justice system including knowledge of laws, police procedures, law enforcement techniques, first aid, and physical fitness.

Undergoes training to develop an awareness of the functions and responsibilities of Police Officers and how they relate to field operations.

Academy and field training includes classroom and outdoor instruction, demonstration, testing, and practical exercises in activities such as:

- Instruction and testing on the California Penal Code sections.
- Conducting criminal investigations.
- Gathering, preserving, documenting and cataloging evidence.
- Crime scene preservation and processing.
- Physical fitness training and defensive tactics instruction.
- Wellness and lifestyle training.
- Training on interacting with angry, emotionally disturbed, or special needs persons.
- Narcotics, criminal street gangs, organized crime enforcement.
- Education on community policing, sexual harassment, discrimination, and hate crimes.
- Instruction on proper handling and firing of firearms and range qualification.
- Instruction and testing on traffic enforcement, DUI enforcement, and the California Vehicle Code.
- Instruction on the use of police radios and associated radio codes.
- Overview of the court system including court preparation and testimony.
- Answering telephone calls and dispensing public information.
- Basic police report writing and editing which may also include instruction in grammar, spelling, police and legal terminology.
- Observing law enforcement activities such as maintenance of order, crime prevention and protection of citizens and property.
- Review of standard public safety rules, regulations, and procedures, as well as those specific to the Sebastopol Police Department and the City of Sebastopol.
- Training and evaluation on emergency vehicle operation including defensive and reactive driving, maneuvering, low speed driving, high speed driving, pursuit driving and other law enforcement driving skills.
- May be tasked to perform police support assignments such as dispatching, recording complaints, and issuing parking citations, assisting citizens at the police department.
- As a police department employee and city emergency worker, trainees may be utilized as needed during emergency situations which may include wildfires, floods, earthquakes, civil unrest, or other unforeseen emergencies.

- Makes every reasonable effort to continually improve the manner in which the job is performed and increase the quality of service to the public.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, and ABILITIES**

As an entry level position Police Trainees will have little to no knowledge regarding the actual job tasks and functions of a police officer. During the Police Academy and upon academy graduation Police Trainees must learn, retain, and possess:

Knowledge of:

- Modern police methods and procedures, including patrol, crime prevention, traffic control, investigation and identification techniques, standard radio broadcasting, compiling information and authoring police reports.
- Criminal law, including apprehension, laws of arrest and custody of persons committing misdemeanors and felonies.
- Rule of evidence pertaining to the search, seizure, and preservation of evidence in traffic related and criminal cases.

Ability to:

- Successfully complete Police Academy requirements.
- Observe accurately and remember names, faces, numbers, incidents, and places.
- Think and act quickly in emergencies, and to judge situations and people accurately.
- Learn standard operating procedures of a police headquarters' radio-telephone and keyboard-type communications equipment.
- Understand and interpret laws and regulations.
- Prepare clear, concise, and comprehensive written reports.
- Become proficient in self-defense techniques, and in the care and use of firearms.
- Follow oral and written instructions.
- Deal courteously and effectively with the general public.
- Establish and maintain cooperative and effective relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Meet the physical requirements established by the department.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the minimal qualifications. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

### **EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE**

Possession of a High School diploma or equivalency such as a general education degree (GED) or High School Equivalency certificate. Though not required, completion of some college is desirable.

### **CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS**

Possession of a valid California Class C driver's license and a satisfactory driving record are conditions of initial and continued employment.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

### **POST Pellet B: POST Entry-Level Law Enforcement Test Battery**

Further information on the POST Entry-Level Law Enforcement Test Battery is available on the POST website at <https://post.ca.gov/LE-Entry-Level-Test-Battery-Applicant-FAQs>.

To be considered for this recruitment, you must have already taken the POST Law Enforcement Test Battery (PELLETB) and received a T-score of 42 or higher within the last twelve (12) months. If you do not already possess a valid T-score, please visit the Santa Rosa Junior College Public Safety Training Center website at: <https://pstc.santarosa.edu/> or <https://theacademy.ca.gov/tests> for testing information or to review upcoming test dates.

***IMPORTANT: You must attach your T-Score letter with a score of 42.0 or higher dated within the last 12 months to your application at the time of submittal. If you are unable to attach to your application, you must email as an attachment to [bduncan@rgs.ca.gov](mailto:bduncan@rgs.ca.gov)***

**Citizenship:** Must be a citizen of the United States (or a permanent resident alien who is eligible for, and who has applied for, citizenship at least one year prior to application for employment. Application for citizenship shall not have been denied.)

**Age:** The candidate shall be at least 21 years of age by the final date of the Police Academy.

**Weight:** Weight shall be in good proportion to the height of the individual.

**Hearing:** The candidate shall have normal hearing.

**Vision:** The candidate shall possess normal color vision. Each eye must be free of any abnormal condition or disease and acceptably corrected to 20/30.

**Physical and Mental Condition:** The candidate shall be of sound physical condition; in good health, and free from chronic disease, impairment of bodily function, loss, or impairment of the use of any digit; be of adequate physical stature, and possessing strength, endurance, and agility demonstrable in tests of physical performance and/or a pre-employment medical screening exam. The candidate shall be of good mentality and emotional maturity and free from history of psychosis or psychoneurosis, or other disabling defects, as demonstrable in pre-employment psychiatric testing.

**Character and Background:** The candidate must successfully complete a background investigation as a condition of initial employment with the Sebastopol Police Department. The investigation must show that the candidate possesses traits including initiative, alertness, integrity, reliability, courtesy, and good judgement; and has not been convicted of any felony; or misdemeanors involving moral turpitude.

**Spanish Speaking** ability is highly desirable, but not required.

## WORKING CONDITIONS

Positions in the class are occupied by uniformed police trainees and may require the trainee to be armed at times during training and attendance at the Police Academy. Shift schedules and job assignments may be

changed on short notice based upon the needs and discretion of the Police Academy schedule and needs of the Sebastopol Police Department. The duties involve both field and classroom or office work and may require public contact including difficult or tense situations.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Work may include prolonged sitting, moderate to heavy lifting (from 25lbs-100lbs +), running or sprinting, grappling, or wrestling, striking with limbs or an impact weapon, regular physical training regimens, reaching, climbing, stooping, twisting, grasping, crawling, pulling, and pushing activities. The position also emphasizes speech, hearing, and vision attributes.

### **POLICE ACADEMY ATTENDANCE**

The Police Officer Trainee position is a training-level job classification. As such, the primary condition of employment is that the Police Officer Trainee will attend and successfully complete the required coursework and curriculum while meeting the Police Academy standards for continued attendance, and ultimately obtaining a POST certification of completion or graduation certificate from the Police Academy they attend.

At any point in time during the employment period, should a Police Officer Trainee be unable to continue attending, or be unable to complete the Police Academy based upon academic disqualification and/or failure to pass and successfully remediate any knowledge domains or required curriculums or activities, or as a result of any violations of either the Police Academy rules, or rules or policy violations of the City of Sebastopol and/or the Sebastopol Police Department, or should they be forced to withdraw for any reasons, personal or otherwise, it will be deemed a failure to complete the probationary employment period and is grounds for immediate separation from employment. This includes being unable to physically complete any required curriculums or exams due to injury or being unable to physically complete required tasks. This does not include unforeseen circumstances such as natural disasters, pandemic related closures, or other unplanned situations outside of human control or activity which would force the temporary suspension of curriculum, or closure of the Police Academy facilities.