



REPORT
FROM

THE PERSONNEL
DEPARTMENT

TO: Personnel, Audits, and Hiring Committee	DATE April 9, 2024
REFERENCE: PERSONNEL, AUDITS, AND HIRING COMMITTEE REPORT relative to Los Angeles Police Department Communications Division staffing levels, call load, and recruitment.	COUNCIL FILE CF 23-0255
SUBJECT: Response to Council File 23-0255, Dispatch Centers / Staffing Levels / 911 Response / Hiring Process / Recruitment / Police Service Representative	

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Los Angeles City Council (Council) receive and file this report.

BACKGROUND

On September 27, 2023, the Personnel Department (Personnel), with the assistance of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), submitted a report in response to Council's instructions to provide the status of its hiring process related to recruitment, communication strategy, and hiring obstacles related to the Police Service Representative (PSR) classification.

On January 9, 2023, City Council adopted the Public Safety and Personnel, Audits and Hiring Committees' Reports relative to Los Angeles Police Department Communications Division staffing levels, call load, and recruitment. The Public Safety Committee moved to note and file the September 7, 2023, Board of Police Commissioners Report. The Personnel, Audits and Hiring Committee moved City Council to:

1. NOTE and FILE the September 7, 2023, Board of Police Commissioners and September 27, 2023, Personnel Department reports, inasmuch as these reports, are for information only and no Council action is required.
2. INSTRUCT the Personnel Department to report in 90 days with revisions to the Police Service Representative (PSR) recruitment, evaluation, and hiring process with a specific goal of reducing the time from application submittal to the entry of applicants into a class.

DISCUSSION

The Personnel Department is committed in its ongoing effort to recruit and provide a list of qualified individuals to be hired as PSRs. In the last several months, Personnel has explored improvement opportunities in the areas of recruitment, evaluation, and the hiring process.

The Police Service Representative hiring process begins with the recruitment of high quality caliber applicants. Since Personnel's September 27, 2023 report to the Personnel, Audits and Hiring Committee, significant enhancements have been made to the marketing strategy for PSR candidates. Those enhancements include an expanded digital advertising plan and development of focused social media messaging. These efforts have resulted in nearly doubling the average number of applications received from 15.5 to 28 per day.

An assessment of the hiring process was conducted with the intent to reduce the time frame requirements from application to appointment. That assessment included analyzing the hiring bulletin for procedural improvements, flow charting, statistical analysis, determining system delays and identifying process improvements.

In addition, the current time frame for each hiring step was also evaluated. The assessment revealed that 42 weeks is required for candidates to complete the hiring process. Detailed below are the results of the analysis with improvements that will reduce the total hiring process time to 29 weeks.

- **Application Filing Period** - Current time frame is four (4) weeks

The application filing period is the time frame applicants may submit their application for the job classification. Previously, the PSR job bulletin was open continuously for candidates to apply and administratively closed every four weeks. This procedure allowed for developing a sufficient applicant pool and assigning them into manageable groups.

Subsequently, the application filing period has been revised and reduced to a succession of two week periods. Furthermore, the PSR job bulletin has also been revised to an intermittent continuous frequency. This frequency has a two-fold benefit as it allows for the application period to remain open during selected time frames while also allowing the publication of the multiple-choice test administration periods. Applicants can now anticipate when the next step of the hiring process will be, which may increase the multiple-choice test attendance rate. **Time saved is two weeks.**

- **Application Review Period** - Current time frame is four (4) weeks

The application review period is the time frame needed for Personnel to verify that applicants are qualified to proceed in the hiring process. The Police Service Representative examination attracts well over 1000 applicants in each two week period. This show up rate is significantly higher than many other examinations. In favor of moving PSR candidates expeditiously, application review will only consist of removing duplicates. Because candidates are permitted to reapply for the PSR exam and retake the CritiCall test as often as needed, Personnel no longer needs to review whether a candidate has previously taken the multiple-choice test during this period. **Time saved is three weeks.**

- **Test Sign-up and Preparation** - Current time frame is two (2) weeks

Test sign-up and preparation are the exam intervals designated for qualified applicants to schedule their multiple-choice test. This **two-week** period offers applicants the flexibility of selecting time slots within the two weeks that are convenient to their schedules and the opportunity to prepare for the multiple-choice test. The exam is held at the Medical Services Division 15 times per month and may accommodate up to 60 candidates per session. The test sign-up and preparation period remains **two weeks, with no changes to the time frame.**

- **Administration of Multiple-choice Test** - Current time frame is four (4) weeks

The administration of multiple-choice tests is the time frame allotted for qualified applicants to participate in the written assessment exam. With the Entry Level Dispatcher Selection Test Battery (ELDSTB), Personnel coordinates with the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) in the delivery of the test materials. The administration of the ELDSTB and subsequent interview requires careful coordination between Personnel and POST. The process begins with Personnel publishing the job bulletin and marketing the job opportunity to the public. Applicants would respond to the job posting and receive a notification of the test date at a later time. The administration of the ELDSTB may take up to four weeks including the time for the test materials from POST to arrive.

The Personnel Department is replacing the ELDSTB with CritiCall, a Dispatcher Pre-Employment Testing software. CritiCall is a self-administering and self-scoring cloud-based test used by over 1,800 public safety agencies. The primary benefit of converting to CritiCall will be technological modernization, which

ultimately will result in the savings in time, staffing and logistical resources. Candidates will experience less delays due to shipping test materials, waiting for test booklets, and test results. A digital based testing process will enhance efficiency and effectiveness while decreasing exam processing time. Ultimately enhancing the candidate's experience and Personnel's service delivery.

With the implementation of CritiCall physical test materials are no longer needed, which shortens the processing time. It is anticipated that CritiCall will be implemented in mid-April 2024 at which time candidates will be eligible to receive their multiple-choice test within two weeks of signing up for the exam. **Time saved is two weeks.**

In addition to the implementation of CritiCall, other measures related to the multiple choice test will be enacted to reduce candidate hiring steps and attract lateral transfers. They include waiving the multiple-choice test requirement for candidates who have: (1) Completed the POST Public Safety Dispatchers' Basic Course, or (2) Completed the ELDSTB with a test score that meets the City of Los Angeles passing score requirement.

- **Processing of Multiple-choice Test** - Current time frame is seven (7) weeks
Processing the multiple-choice test includes the time needed to ensure the scores are correctly recorded, candidates are timely notified, and provided an opportunity to prepare for the interview portion of the examination. In addition, this period allows Personnel to ensure that candidates who failed the PSR interview within the last 180 days will not be invited for a new interview. With the ELDSTB, this step may take up to seven weeks to include returning all test materials to POST. This process may include multiple mailings between agencies if the test materials are not initially accepted, and also time for POST to process and score the examinations. With the implementation of CritiCall, multiple-choice test scores are expected to be readily available, and will reduce the processing of multiple-choice test to three weeks. **Time saved is four weeks.**
- **Candidate Interview Period** - Current time frame is two (2) weeks
The candidate interview period is dedicated for individuals who passed the multiple-choice test and are eligible to continue in the process. These interviews have been conducted virtually since December 2023. The transition from in-person to virtual interviews have not impacted the speed of the exam; however, it does provide convenience for candidates. It is expected that candidates will be assigned an interview panel within two weeks or less of passing the multiple-choice test. **No changes to the time frame.**
- **Interview Scores Finalized and Establishment of Eligible List** - Current time frame is three (3) weeks
Finalizing the interview scores include the time needed to compute the final general average and ensure accurate notification to the candidates. This step also includes the candidate review periods as indicated in the Civil Service Commission Rules. The implementation of the continuous PSR examination is in accordance with the Civil Service Commission Rules Section 4.25, which allows the eligible list to be established while protests are pending resolution. Consequently, score computation and candidate notification will require approximately one week. **Time saved is two weeks.**
- **Background Investigation and Medical Evaluation** - Current time frame is 12-16 weeks
Police Service Representative background investigations are conducted by the Civilian Employment Section of the LAPD. As such, the Personnel Department has no authority over the reduction of time frame for background investigations.

The medical evaluation is conducted by the Medical Services Division of the Personnel Department. This evaluation is a thorough medical assessment of the PSR Candidates' health to confirm their ability to safely perform the essential functions of the job. Medical evaluations are conducted in relationship with the background investigation and time commitments are accounted for in that area. Generally, medical

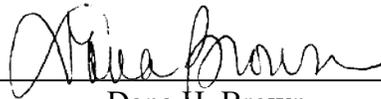
evaluation results are completed within five days of appointment. The completion of a typical PSR background investigation and medical evaluation requires approximately 12-16 weeks. **No changes to the time frame.**

CONCLUSION

Being able to thrive in today's competitive recruitment environment requires a commitment to improvements to the hiring process. The Personnel Department has identified and implemented measures that will reduce applicant processing time from application to appointment. Those revisions include:

- Shortening the filing period to process candidates in smaller, more frequent batches.
- Procedural adjustments to reduce hiring step turnaround time.
- Transition from the paper and pencil ELDSTB structure to the web-based CritiCall test.
- Planned waivers to the multiple-choice test.

Implementing the aforementioned initiatives will enhance the candidates experience by reducing the time and steps required to be appointed. Those focused and significant changes will decrease the PSR hiring process by approximately **three months**. While the reduction of time is substantial, there still remains opportunity for further process improvements. The Personnel Department will diligently work with the LAPD to identify hiring process enrichments, while simultaneously attracting the most qualified candidates.



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