



Police Career Opportunities:

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

The mission of the Ferguson Township Police Department is to **enhance the quality of life throughout the Township by working cooperatively to preserve the peace, enforce the law, reduce the fear and incidence of crime and provide a safe environment for the residents and visitors of the community.** The Police Department provides police services to 19,500 residents. Ferguson Township is located in the southwestern corner of Centre County and contains approximately 50 square miles of land area. A majority of the municipality is undeveloped with a strong heritage of agriculture. The Township is bordered on the south and west by Huntingdon County. Most of the Township is located in the valley floor between the Tussey Mountain and Skytop Ridges. The Township is also home to Pennsylvania's premiere agricultural research university, Pennsylvania State University. Most of the University's agricultural lands and field research is conducted at the Russell E. Larson Research Center located in the western part of the Township.

The Department consists of 22 sworn officers, two administrative assistants, one part-time ordinance officer and one part time crossing guard. Sworn staff consists of the Chief, four sergeants, two corporals, 11 patrol officers and four detectives. The department responds to all 9-1-1 emergency calls as well as non-emergency police calls, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A total of 7,900 events were answered in 2017.

Critical Attributes

Ferguson Township police officers must be self-motivated and highly ethical, as well as display sound judgment, compassion, and common sense. Applicants should be prepared to demonstrate these attributes during the screening process. Police officers must be prepared to take orders, assume a great deal of responsibility, act independently, endure stress, function in physical danger, communicate well, combine physical and mental resources, and maintain a professional, self-assured presence and respectful attitude at all times.

New officers are assigned to the Patrol Division. Patrol duties include directing traffic, enforcing traffic laws, conducting investigations, field interrogations and interviews, responding to complaints and requests for assistance, initiating arrests, issuing warnings and citations, writing reports and testifying in court. These duties will be frequently performed in adverse working conditions including inclement weather, during long hours, on flexible shifts, and during life-threatening or stressful situations.

Salary and Benefits

Effective July 2018, the starting salary for a police officer is \$50,756 per year for officers attending the training academy. The starting salary for officers who are already certified under Act 120 is \$56,396 per year. Wages are prescribed by the terms of an Agreement between the Township and the Ferguson Township Police Officers' Association. The Agreement provides annual increases during the first five years of employment, and then longevity pay in addition to base salary.

Ferguson Township police officers enjoy an excellent benefit package. The Township's insurance includes health, dental, prescription drugs and vision care. Each police officer is provided with up to \$80,000 of group life insurance coverage. Police officers are covered by the Ferguson Township Police Pension Plan.

In lieu of paid holidays, officers receive fourteen personal days per calendar year. Additionally, officers receive five days of vacation after the first year of continuous service, ten days after two years, 15 days after 5 years and 20 days after 15 years.

Tuition assistance is available to those officers who wish to earn college credits in a related degree program.

All uniforms and equipment are provided and maintained by the Township.

Minimum Standards

Applicants must meet the following minimum standards:

- **Citizenship** - Applicants must be citizens of the United States.
- **Age** - Applicants must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age on or before the date of the written test.
- **Driver's License** - Applicants must possess a valid Pennsylvania driver's license prior to appointment or, if not a resident of the Commonwealth, be prepared to obtain a Pennsylvania operator's license within 30 days of appointment.
- **Education** - Applicants must be high school graduates or the equivalent. A college education is preferred however not mandatory.
 - **Physical requirements** - In general, the health of applicants must be excellent. Physical or medical conditions that could reasonably be expected to impair the performance of essential functions shall be cause for rejection.
 - Weight must be in proportion to height.
 - Visual acuity must be 20/200 or better in each eye without corrective lenses, and correctable to at least 20/20 in one eye and 20/40 in the other.
 - Normal color vision.
- **Criminal record** - Applicants must be free of conviction for crimes punishable by imprisonment for greater than 90 days. Less serious convictions, including traffic, will be examined and may be cause for rejection.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process begins with a passing score on the written test, followed by an interview/behavioral assessment and physical agility test. Typically these tests are administered on different days. Applicants must bring to a valid photo driver's license to each test, and a signed Physician's Approval Form, Liability Waiver Form, and appropriate clothing for the agility test. Applicants will not be allowed to take the physical agility test without the signed Physician's Approval and Waiver Forms. The applicant is responsible for the expense of the Physician's examination. Locker rooms will be available to applicants.

The physical agility test will consist of four exercises. The exercises include 300 meter run, bench press, sit-ups and 1.5 mile run. Applicants must be able to attain or exceed the 30th percentile of the Pennsylvania Municipal Police Officer Education and Training Commission physical fitness standards. These may be viewed on the Physical Fitness Chart available on the website listed below. The physical agility test is scored as a pass or fail. Applicants that are unable to achieve the 30th percentile on **all** exercises will be excused from further processing.

Applicants attaining a satisfactory score will be scheduled for an oral interview. The interview is conducted under the direction of the Chief of Police. The scores from the written test and oral interview will be weighted to determine the final list for employment eligibility, pending a passing score on the physical agility test.

The top candidates will undergo further vetting to include an extensive background investigation, drug screening, and medical and psychiatric evaluations.

PROBATION AND TRAINING

Municipal Certification

Appointees who are not certified for municipal law enforcement by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are immediately scheduled for training leading to certification. Ferguson Township officers are enrolled in a Pennsylvania Municipal Police and Education Training Commission certified twenty-two week Police Academy with classes Monday through Friday. Additional information about the academy can be found at <http://www.mpoetc.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/mpoetc/7545>.

Field Training Officer (FTO) Program

Following completion of the certification process, or if certified, immediately upon appointment, new officers will participate in the department's Field Training Program. The program is devised to assist new officers in making the transition from what they learned in the academy to performing general law enforcement patrol duties competently in the field. The Field Training Program introduces a newly assigned officer to the personnel, procedures, policies and purposes of the department as well as providing the initial formal and informal training specific to the day-to-day duties of a police officer. Field Training Officers (FTO's) train and monitor the new officer during the training period. While assigned to a Field Training Officer, new officers are trained in various subject areas and, as each area is mastered by the trainee, that subject is checked off by the training officers. Following completion of the checklist of topics, the trainee is subjected to a practical examination by veteran police officers and supervisors, who determine whether the new officer is adequately prepared for solo patrol. The Field Training Program usually takes 14 weeks to complete.

Probation

Each new police officer serves on a probationary basis for the first year of service.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Ferguson Township is an equal employment opportunity employer. Women and members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. For further information, please contact Ferguson Township Police, 3147 Research Drive, State College, PA 16801 (814) 237-1172 or email: police@twp.ferguson.pa.us