



Police Officer in Training Oral Interview FAQs

Oral Board Interview

Successful applicants will participate in an interview designed to evaluate job–related skills and abilities such as oral communication, interpersonal skills, and judgment. In addition to general questions, applicants will be presented with hypothetical scenarios and asked to explain how they would respond to each situation.

The Department of Personnel and Resource Management (DPRM) will send each candidate an electronic version of the Personal History Statement (PHS) and detailed instructions prior to the Oral Board Interview. The completed 32 page PHS must be submitted to the DPRM at the scheduled Oral Board Interview.

Q: Where are the oral interviews held?

A: The location can change based on various factors, but typically they are held at the City of Oakland 150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza or Eastmont Substation located at 2651 – 73rd Ave, Oakland, CA 94605.

Q: Can I select my Oral Interview appointment?

A: No. Due to the large number of applicants being scheduled, the Department of Human Resources Management (DHRM) is unable to allow individuals to select their own appointment. The date and time will be randomly assigned to qualified applicants.

Q: What if I can't make my appointment?

A: Due to the large number of applicants being scheduled, the City of Oakland, DHRM is rarely able to reschedule an appointment. You are strongly encouraged to make every effort to attend your scheduled interview. In the event that you are unable to attend your scheduled appointment, there is also the option of “standby”. We do typically have some last minute no-shows and will allow applicants to wait for an available interview slot. Standbys will be taken on a first come, first served basis however, there is no guarantee that we will be able to accommodate you.

Q: Should I arrive early for my interview?

A: You should arrive at least 10 – 15 minutes early so you have sufficient time to check-in for your appointment.

Q: What if I am late for my appointment?

A: If you are late, you may not be allowed to interview. Consider factors such as traffic, parking, and location familiarity when determining how much time to allow for travel. You

should plan to arrive early and then spend any extra time you may have relaxing before your interview.

Q: What happens when I arrive at the interview site?

A: At the site, you will check-in and be given a name tag with a number; no applicant names will be used during the interview. You will then be randomly assigned to an interview panel and allowed to review the names of the people on your panel. In the event that your panel includes someone you know personally, you will be reassigned to a different panel. You will also be required to sign a confidentiality agreement stating you will not discuss the contents of the interview. Violation of this agreement is grounds for removal from the selection process. After check-in, you will be escorted to an interview room where you will wait outside the room until the panel is ready for you. The interview will last approximately 20 minutes. Once you are finished, you will go to the "check-in" area to return your name tag and retrieve any belongings you may have brought with you.

Q: What should I wear?

A: Applicants must dress in business attire (suits, slacks and shirts). Do not wear a uniform or other attire that identifies your current department affiliation, rank, years of service, etc.

Q: What should I bring with me?

A: The only item you are required to bring is your valid legal photographic identification (driver's license, military ID, passport, etc.). You will not be allowed to take any materials or bags into the interview room or take notes during the interview. In addition, the oral board panelists are not allowed to accept resumes, transcripts, or any other materials. An area at check-in will be available for you to leave any belongings you may have, but you are encouraged to bring only necessary items.

Q: Who is on the panel?

A: The panel consists of three members: a sworn officer, a city employee and a civilian community member. All panelists have been selected based on their professional commitment and dedication to public safety and the community.

Q: What will the panelists ask me?

A: The Oral Board will ask a series of job-related questions intended to identify applicants who are most suitably qualified to continue in the selection process. The interviewers may also ask follow-up questions in order to clarify your responses. The oral examination is designed to evaluate job-related skills and abilities such as oral communication, problem solving and decision-making, ability to deal with people, and composure and tolerance. There is no single "correct" or "best" answer to each question. It is important that you be yourself, relax and don't try to second-guess the interviewers. As you answer the question, remember that the board knows that you are not a Police Officer and that you may not know anything about the law or agency rules and regulations.

Q: When will I get the results of my interview?

A: You will be notified of your results by email or mail approximately three weeks after the interview. If you have not received your results the week before the next step in the recruiting process, you should call the Recruiting Unit at 510-238-3339 or the Public Safety Hotline at 510-238-6465.

Q: What is the passing score?

A: The passing score may vary based on a variety of factors, but typically applicants must pass the oral interview with a score of 70% or higher to advance in the hiring process.

Q: What happens if I don't pass the oral interview?

A: Applicants who do not achieve a passing score in the oral interview will not advance any further in the hiring process. However, candidates are welcome to reapply to the Oakland Police Department at a future hiring process. You will need to reapply by submitting a T-score waiver to verify that your POST exam score was taken within the last 12 month of the oral board interviews.

Q: Is there a waiting period before I can reapply?

A: There is a thirty (30) day waiting period from the time you took the last recruitment activity (written exam, oral interview or physical ability test) before you can re-apply

Q: If I complete all the stages, am I guaranteed a job?

A: The Oakland Police Department is seeking those applicants that are the best-qualified and most likely to be successful as an Oakland Police Officer. In considering an applicant, many factors are considered including: the applicant's performance and demeanor during the hiring process; the applicant's prior education, training, preparation, and commitment; the results of the background and psychological suitability assessment; and the needs of the City and the Police Department.