Onward And Upward

New Standards for Police Recruitment

As a Trooper, your salary will be in excess of $46,000 within five years! And the benefits won’t only be financial. You will positively impact the community where you serve. You’ll also receive a month of paid vacation a year, excellent dental and health care coverage, and a great retirement package. Why settle for a boring job when you can enjoy an exciting, challenging and rewarding career in the Michigan State Police?

Your Success Depends On You!
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LINKING THE DOTS

Chapter Objectives

- Explain the basic recruitment and selection standards for police officers and how they have developed over the last fifty years.

- Develop an understanding of the difficulties of specific selection requirements on minority populations both historically and presently.

- Explain the effect of legislation on recruitment and selection standards.

- Compare the benefits of academic education and police training from an academy.

- Understand the benefits and problems with affirmative action policies in policing.

- Describe five assessment areas upon which officers are promoted and explain the effect of affirmative action on promotion.
Every police department seeks to recruit, select, train, and maintain the best officers possible. However, what characteristics of an officer are “the best”? Ideal qualities of a police officer have evolved and adapted as society has changed. During the Political Era, the only important characteristic of new recruits was that they belonged to a particular political party. Until fifty years ago, the “ideal” police officer was a strong, white male who would listen to commands from superior officers. Both racial and gender minorities were significantly underrepresented until the 1970s, when legislation was passed requiring equal opportunities for them in the field of policing. Still, approximately 76 percent of police officers in local departments are white and 89 percent are male (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2002).

This chapter discusses the current standards for recruitment, selection, training, and promotion in police departments and how these standards have evolved. No specific formula exists for recruiting and maintaining the ideal officer, and many of those who were once considered ideal may experience stress, burnout, personal problems, and ultimately may cause more harm than good.
Recruitment of Candidates

The job of a police officer involves stressful situations and entails interactions with many individuals in the community. It also requires quick decision making and good judgment. Police duties vary from writing reports to maintaining order to responding to criminal situations, all of which require critical thinking skills. Because of the range of duties, officers should possess certain traits: physically agility, the ability to cope with difficult situations, well-developed writing skills, good communication skills, sound judgment, compassion, strong powers of observation, and the ability to both exert and respect commands of authority. Unfortunately, it is difficult to find an ideal candidate with every one of these qualities (Sharp 1994).

Recruitment standards vary depending on the area being policed, and each department will aim to recruit the best person for a particular community. Each department recruits officers in different ways, though there are some standard recruitment techniques. These include passing out flyers in common areas of the community; going to job fairs at universities; advertising with newspaper, radio, or television; and, in larger cities, putting up posters in subways and on billboards (Strandberg 1996). Many of the larger police departments have cadet programs or internships in exchange for college credit, both of which serve as recruitment tools (Leach 1998). The key to recruiting a qualified group of individuals is advertising to a large audience. Within that broad group, each department is likely to find what it is seeking in terms of educational standards, diversity, and residency.

Who Is the “Ideal” Law Enforcement Officer?

Throughout this textbook, the authors have discussed the duties of police officers, the tasks they must perform while on the job, and how their role has changed throughout history. Now it is time to consider who you think would make an ideal police officer. Consider the following questions:

- What would be your ideal composition of police officers in a department with regard to background, age, race, education, agility, and gender? Explain.
- From where would you recruit officers?
- What type of selection process would you have?

It is difficult to define the characteristics of an “ideal” police officer. It might be better to ask how departments might recruit, select, and train officers in order to produce an ideal police department, creating opportunities for promotion and encouraging retention. This chapter will help you to analyze these issues while utilizing knowledge gained from the previous chapters.

Should police officers be held to higher ethical standards than individuals in other professions?
- How would you retain officers in your police department?
- What would be your standards for promotion?

It is difficult to define the characteristics of an “ideal” police officer. It might be better to ask how departments might recruit, select, and train officers in order to produce an ideal police department, creating opportunities for promotion and encouraging retention. This chapter will help you to analyze these issues while utilizing knowledge gained from the previous chapters.
Chapter 14: New Standards for Police Recruitment

Minimum Requirements

There are few articulated standards for officer selection, because every department sets its own standards. Most departments require that the officer, at a minimum:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Have a driver’s license in the state (or be eligible for one)
- Have no prior felony convictions
- Pass a written exam, a medical exam, an interview, a physical agility test, and psychological screening

Individuals who become police officers must have or be eligible to receive a driver’s license because their primary duty is patrol, and they must be able to drive to respond to incidents. Police officers must also be able to possess a firearm. In order to qualify to own a firearm, a person must be at least twenty-one years old. For that reason, a police officer will not have full police powers until at least that age, and most police departments do not even allow recruits to enter the police academy until they are at least twenty-one. Convicted felons also are prohibited from possessing a firearm, which thereby bars them from becoming police officers. Individuals with domestic violence convictions are no longer able to possess a firearm, thereby prohibiting them from becoming police officers as well (Clarke 1997).

Education

Many police departments now have educational standards for recruits. Nearly all departments require officers to have at least a high school diploma, and many require at least some college credits. Such high standards in education were not
Recruitment of Candidates

always mandated, however. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the majority of male officers lacked a high school diploma. The male officer was expected to understand English well enough to speak intelligently and to be able to read and write reports (Schulz 1995). The standards for women were different from those for men. The International Association of Policewomen (IAP)—the female equivalent of the International Association of Chiefs of Police that was begun by Alice Stebbin Wells in 1916—suggested that policewomen have minimum educational qualifications equivalent to high school graduates (Schulz 1995). The IAP also suggested that this should be combined with experience in social service or educational work of two years or as a trained nurse. This educational double standard existed until 1972, when Congress amended Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (discrimination policies). With this legislation, educational standards for men were not raised; rather, educational standards for women were lowered.

Although there was no formal requirement for a college-level education for police officers in most agencies, organizations such as the Wickersham Commission began pushing for higher standards of education as early as 1931. In 1967, the Kerner Commission recommended that police officers should have a four-year college degree. Also around this time, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) began to emphasize the need for police officers to attend college, going so far as to implement a grant system for individuals who were or planned to be police officers upon graduation. The Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) lasted for more than a decade and was responsible for a mass increase in degrees in criminal justice.

Despite the efforts of the LEAA, which ended its LEEP program in the early 1980s, the rise of educational standards only became apparent in the 1990s. Table 14.1 shows how educational standards across the United States in 1997 were nearly double the standards in 1990 (Reaves & Goldberg 1999). Still, less than one-quarter (23.8 percent) of all police agencies require their recruits to have some level of college education.

Experts continue to debate whether higher education makes an officer better at his or her job or whether vocational experience (e.g., from the police academy, from being on the street) is all that is necessary. Cao and Huang (2000) found that educational standards did not make a difference in the number of complaints filed against officers. Additionally, some believe that education alone does not make a good police officer; an individual is only a good police officer if

<table>
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<th>Table 14.1</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Requirements for New Officer Recruits in City, County, and State Agencies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-year degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
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he or she possesses all the other characteristics that make a good police officer (e.g., keen powers of observation, physical agility, ability to handle stressful situations), though education can help one who does possess these qualities (Molden 1999). (See also Chapter 3.)

Other researchers, however, believe that education is beneficial to officers in a number of ways. Higher education may increase officers’ decision-making skills and help them handle difficult situations through negotiation, as opposed to force. Fewer complaints are filed against officers who have a college degree, and those with some college education have fewer disciplinary problems than those with a high school education (Carter and Sapp 1988). Additionally, well-educated officers, as a whole, seem to have better knowledge of the law, human behavior, and social situations and have better communication and writing skills (Ferriera 1997). Police officers with college degrees believe that they are more prepared for the job those without degrees in many areas, including interpersonal skills, problem solving abilities, and the quality of their work (Krimmel 1996). However, no documented studies have shown that a college education alone makes for more effective police officers or better crime fighters.

**Technology**

The increasing use of technology in policing is another reason why education is now an important feature of job recruitment. Not only has computer technology been adapted into the daily routine of many police officers, but they must also be able to understand technological advances, such as crime mapping and Comp-Stat. By looking at computerized maps of the city, the police can pinpoint geographic areas where the majority of crime occurs (Bratton and Knobler 1988). This technology is used to hold police officers accountable for crime increases or reductions. Over one-third of all large police departments are using some sort of crime-mapping technology today, it is likely that this number will increase significantly in the near future because of the dramatic drop in crime in some of the cities that use such technology (see Chapter 13).

Technology also is used to assist in criminal identification. Computers are now used to generate composites for identifying suspects, with a library of facial features and accessories to help the witness construct an accurate picture of the perpetrator (Senna and Siegla 2002). Computer technology not only assists in accuracy, but also in efficiency. For instance, an automatic fingerprint system helps identify unique marks and ridges with accuracy and speed. For these reasons, it is important that police officers be knowledgeable about such systems.

**Legal Knowledge**

Although education may not assist the officer in all aspects of his or her job, it may increase an officer’s knowledge of legal issues. Legal knowledge is integral to the job of a police officer. It was argued in Chapter 5 that officers should have an understanding of constitutional law, criminal law, criminal procedure, rules of evidence, and even civil law in case he or she is the subject of litigation. Training in the police academy covers the legal issues central to the duties of a police officer, such as the Fourth Amendment and an individual’s right to be free from illegal searches and seizures. Many criminal justice programs in college, however, cover legal issues more extensively and give police officers a broader understanding of the issues they may encounter on a daily basis.
Residency

In addition to education requirements, some departments have residency requirements mandating that officers live within the jurisdiction in which they are policing. This is a recommendation that surfaced from many of the commissions in the hope that by living in the communities they police, officers will be better equipped to understand and thereby interact with its citizenry. There are many benefits to officers living in the community where they police, such as knowing the problems in that community that need to be addressed and being able to identify with residents of that community.

However, there are a few drawbacks to a police officer living in the community that he or she polices. First, the police officer may not be able to live in the area in which he or she is policing if it is an extremely wealthy community. A second drawback to residency requirements is the possibility of corruption. If an officer is patrolling or responds to a situation that involves an acquaintance, he or she is less likely to uphold the law with that individual. Despite these drawbacks, the general consensus is that it is best for an officer to live in or near the area he or she is policing.

Diversity

Perhaps the greatest recruitment push resulting from the various commissions has been toward greater minority representation within law enforcement agencies. Although there has been some improvement in this area, ethnic representation in most police forces is still disproportionate. Racial and ethnic minorities represented 23.6 percent of local police departments in 2003, compared to just 14.8 percent in 1987 (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2006). Specifically, African Americans represented over 10 percent of the population in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000) and 15 percent of the police officers. However, they are not represented proportionately across the country. Hispanic officers accounted for 11 percent of the police force, although they comprise over 12 percent of the population. Women, who account for 46.5 percent of the U.S. population, accounted for only 14 percent of full-time sworn personnel (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2004).

When recruiting a diverse police force, one must question why an individual seeks to become a police officer. Historically, policing was a job for white males. Women who were hired as police officers worked more as social workers, and it took many decades for them to become crime fighters. Several studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s analyzed why women were interested in entering a male-dominated career such as law enforcement. In 1978, Ermer found that job security was the primary factor in women choosing a law enforcement career, because the starting salaries at the time were higher than for most other equivalent jobs. Meagher and Yentes (1986) also found job security to be an important factor in choosing policing as a career, although they found this to be true for both men and women. They studied whether men and women join the police force for the same reasons, and they found that, contrary to perceptions, there are many similarities between the two groups. Whereas men are perceived to join for reasons of excitement, authority, and the ability to fight crime, they actually claim to join primarily to help people—a reason why women are perceived to (and do) join the force (Meagher and Yentes 1996). Lester (1983) supported these reasons, finding that women tend to join the police force because of the nature of police work, the variety of assignments, and the salary benefits.
Police departments can use a number of methods to recruit ethnic and racial minorities as well as women. Many larger departments have recruiting officers. Ideally, the recruiting officers should represent the minorities that the department is trying to attract (Milgram 2002). Recruiters should attend community meetings in an effort to interact with the individuals they are trying to recruit. Such positive interactions are necessary, because many individuals from minority groups lack trust in the police due to negative personal interactions and negative media attention. Recruiters can also seek out college students and even high school students for internships, cadet programs, youth programs, or other community programs in order to develop their interest in eventually becoming a police officer. In order access a cross section of the community that includes all minority groups, it is necessary to take these additional steps beyond the traditional methods of recruitment.

**Selection of Candidates**

Once recruited, a candidate must go through an extensive selection process in order to be hired as a police officer. This is a lengthy, competitive process, involving multiple phases. In most police departments, the candidate must pass a written exam, an interview, a physical exam, a psychological exam, a background check, and a polygraph.

The selection process has been modified considerably over the past quarter century, due in large part to equal opportunity criteria. The Court has heard several cases related to hiring standards for police, and it has mandated that the process not be arbitrary or discriminatory in any way but rather focus on job-related criteria. Several selection procedures have been modified as a result of these cases. For instance, the physical agility tests used in the selection process were originally designed in a way that was prohibitory toward women; therefore, very few women were able to pass the physical agility phase of the selection process. Similarly, it was difficult for candidates from other states or who spoke English as a second language to pass the written exam, and so these issues are now addressed in exam preparation courses.

**The Written Exam**

The written exam is generally the first phase of the selection process once a formal application has been submitted. The test varies by department, but it might be a civil service exam, an exam produced by the individual police department, or one produced by a private testing company. The exam does not test specific legal or criminal justice knowledge, but rather evaluates the candidate’s basic reading, writing, and comprehension skills. The exam will likely contain a number of different sections, whereby the candidate must be able to understand and write in English, write a sample essay, understand basic mathematics, memorize facts, show sound reasoning and logic, and analyze potential scenarios. Candidates’ scores are ranked, and those who score above a particular benchmark will be able to move to the next phase of selection.

Because of the exam’s focus on the ability to read, write, and comprehend the English language, some otherwise-qualified minority applicants may be eliminated from the candidate pool (Rafilson 1997). Some departments have at-
tempted to avoid this predicament by offering exam preparation. One suggestion has been to offer non-native-English speakers extra time to complete the written test (National Crime Prevention Council 1995).

**Background Checks**

Once a person sends in a formal application to become a police officer, the police department performs a background check on the applicant. The primary purpose of the background check is to determine if the candidate has been convicted of any felonies or serious misdemeanors and to make sure that he or she is of “good moral character” (Fagin 2003). Police departments consider a number of factors in relation to a police candidate’s moral character. The candidate should not only be free of prior criminal convictions, but also should not partake in drug use, violent activity, excessive alcoholism, or display prejudicial attitudes of any kind. Though these factors would not necessarily disqualify individuals from attaining other jobs, police officers often are held to higher moral standards than the general population. The reason for this is that police officers must abide by a code of ethics and exhibit moral behavior in their job. When officers lack ethics, they may digress into corruption and mistreatment of the individuals they are policing. Most police departments explain in their recruitment brochures the type of moral behavior that is expected from potential candidates. For instance, the Los Angeles recruitment flyer reads:

You must have no felony convictions or any misdemeanor conviction which would prevent your carrying a gun. You must not have a history of criminal or improper conduct, or a poor employment, military, or driving record which would affect your suitability for law enforcement work. You must also have a responsible financial history and a pattern of respect and honesty in your dealings with individuals and organizations. A valid California driver’s license is required prior to appointment.

The person who is in charge of conducting the background investigation should be professional and unbiased and should exhibit the characteristics the agency is seeking. Although the background investigation will consist of a specified set of questions, such as whether the candidate has ever been convicted of a crime, the background investigator should also be aware of moral and ethical issues that may potentially screen out candidates for a policing job. For instance, the candidate should not express prejudicial views about any particular race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual identity.

**The Interview Process**

The interview process is designed to evaluate a candidate’s suitability for becoming a police officer. The interview panel might consist of three to five skilled interviewers in a variety of fields (e.g., policing, psychology). The interview can be structured, unstructured, or a combination or both. In a structured interview, the candidate is asked a series of questions regarding the job and his or her specific abilities. Structured questions usually require specified answers to direct questions (e.g., do you drink alcohol?). The other alternative is to conduct a semistructured interview, with open-ended questions on particular topics (e.g., how much alcohol do you consume weekly?). Although
structured interviews allow for a better comparison of candidates on specific
topics, open-ended questions are likely to elicit more information.

Although the interview panel might need to eliminate candidates at this
stage because of particular answers they have given (e.g., admitting to drink-
ing excessive quantities of alcohol daily), the purpose of the interview is to
assess other issues, such as level of professionalism, social and communica-
tion skills, level of reasoning, appearance, composure, and poise. Whereas the
written exam is designed to measure basic comprehension skills, the interview
attempts to elicit information about the candidate’s ambition to become a po-
lice officer and how he or she would handle scenarios that a police officer
might encounter. The candidate is scored based on his or her answers and
compared to other candidates on a range of criteria. Though the candidate
must pass all phases of the selection process in order to be hired as a police
officer, the interview process is critical in the assessment of the candidate’s
attitudes, appearance, and demeanor.

**Psychological and Polygraph Tests**

The purpose of the psychological screening process is to measure intelligence
and to identify personality characteristics and any mental disorders that may
lead to problematic behavior in the future. Studies show that between 80 and 90
percent of police departments use some sort of psychological screening tool to
determine whether the candidate is fit to become a police officer (Langworthy
et al. 1995; Reaves and Goldberg 1999). It is important to screen out individu-
als who may exhibit mental or personality deficits, because police officers inter-
act with individuals on a daily basis and often in high-stress situations.

The most common psychological assessment tool used is the **Minnesota
Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)**. The primary purpose of the
MMPI is to assess an individual’s psychopathology and determine whether he
or she should be diagnosed with a mental disorder. It also identifies problems
with social adjustment, neuroses, psychoses, phobias, and delusions; it is used
in many occupations to determine whether candidates are suitable for high-risk
positions. It has recently been revised and in its second edition, and it consists
of 567 true/false questions about attitudes, beliefs and ideas. It is reliable and
valid, and it has built-in censors to detect whether the test taker is lying.

Some police departments use multiple psychological tests or tests other than
the MMPI. One other common inventory is the California Psychological Inven-
tory (CPI), which contains 434 questions relating to personality that aim to
measure individual difference variables. The Rorschach test also is common.
Originally published in 1921, it consists of ten inkblots that are meant to iden-
tify particular personality traits. This is a controversial test. Some psychologists
consider it to be subjective; therefore, it usually is used as a supplement to other
screening tools.

Approximately 61 percent of U.S. police departments use a **polygraph**, or
lie detector examination, in the selection process (Bureau of Justice Statistics
2004). Information obtained by a polygraph test is not legally admissible in
court because it is only 85 to 90 percent accurate (Board on Behavioral, Cogni-
tive, and Sensory Sciences and Education 2003). However, it is used in the as-
essment process to determine whether the candidate is being deceptive. It
works by recording involuntary physiological changes in the body that occur
The polygraph is one device used to select police candidates. Integrity and honesty are necessary qualities in a police officer. When a person is partaking in conscious deceit. It simultaneously measures respiration, changes in blood pressure and pulse rate, and electrical resistance of the skin.

Physical Agility

Measuring a police candidate’s level of physical agility is a crucial part of the selection process, although the physical agility test has been controversial and has undergone significant changes since its inception. Until the 1970s, the physical agility test required substantial upper-body strength, which kept many women from passing the test, thereby eliminating them as police candidates. These tests, which consisted largely of pushups, pullups, and situps, measured rapid reflexes, speed and coordination, dexterity, endurance, and strength. The Supreme Court invalidated such tests, however, saying that these were not related to the job as it is performed.

In 1972, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act declared that all applicants for a position requiring physical strength and agility must be given an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to perform the work in question. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines on sex discrimination barred the refusal to hire a female applicant because of characteristics attributed to women as a class. Both of these regulations suggest that women must be given a chance to show that they can do the required duties of the police job and that physical tests must not be applied in a manner that is discriminatory to women. Police agencies must demonstrate the job relatedness of criteria, and for that reason the physical agility tests have changed considerably in the past few decades.
Physical agility tests have changed significantly since the 1970s. At that time, it was difficult for women to pass the agility tests, which required a lot of upper-body strength.

San Francisco is one example of a city that utilized a physical agility test with a substantial disparate impact on the hiring of women. The test, which only about one percent of female candidates passed, consisted of physical skills that were not applicable to the daily situations that an officer would likely face. The tests were considered by the courts to be invalid at measuring the skills of patrol officers. Similarly, the police department in Houston, Texas, had a physical agility test requiring recruits do a pullup on a 7’6” inch wall, and yet there are no walls 7 feet or higher in Houston. Alternatively, Miami assesses the agility potential of the candidate and gives the candidate training if he or she is unable to pass the test the first time. The majority of women who fail the test the first time later complete it successfully (95 percent). Thus, women are able to pass the test at the same rate as male candidates (Longway et al. 2003).

Most agility tests now consist of an obstacle course that simulates a potential police experience. Throughout the course, candidates must complete activities such as climbing a 4- to 6-foot wall, crawling under a bar that is about 24 inches high, dragging a 150- to 170-pound dummy, sprinting, and climbing stairs, ropes, or ladders within a specified amount of time. Whether this time is the same for all candidates or whether it varies depending on the candidate’s characteristics (e.g., male or female, different heights, etc.) depends on the jurisdiction.

The key to passing the physical agility test appears to be in the training. With modifications in training, women are as likely to pass the new agility tests as men. Modification does not mean that standards of physical fitness must be lowered. However, females can emphasize their lower body weight, because they generally have less upper-body strength than men. Women also tend to be weaker with firearms, largely because their hands are smaller, thereby making it difficult to grip the firearm with the same strength as men. With extra train-
ing to strengthen their grips, however, they can improve their accuracy and agility with firearms.

**Research on the Job Performance of Female Officers** When police departments began to modify their physical agility tests, police officers and researchers alike questioned whether women could perform the duties of a police officer as well as men. In the 1970s, many studies were conducted to study women’s performance on the job. These studies showed that in nearly every area of law enforcement, women performed as well as their male counterparts (Bloch and Anderson 1974). By the mid-1980s, studies looked at different issues, including the attitudes of male officers toward female officers and the way that female officers perceived their roles in the department.

Many studies throughout the 1970s focused on how policewomen compared to men in a variety of areas (e.g., urban versus rural) and with a variety of tasks (particularly patrol). Researchers published articles that showed the following results (Fry and Greenfield 1980; Johns and Barclay 1979; Martin 1979):

- Policemen and policewomen perform similarly on patrol, and there is no discernible difference in how they handle incidents.
- Women often are assigned to different types of duties than men. Generally, they are assigned to lighter duties than their male counterparts or they are assigned to lower-crime areas.
- Policewomen are similar to policemen in how they respond to and handle arrests and summons.
- Policewomen and policemen are different in three key areas: policewomen do not draw their weapons as frequently; they use less physical force; and they are better at handling domestic violence and house calls.

**Affirmative Action**

Physical agility tests were not the only barrier to women becoming police officers, and police departments were strikingly lacking in women and minorities in the 1960s. Because policing was almost universally a white male profession, states and the federal government began enacting laws that created political pressure for law enforcement to hire racial and gender minorities. **Affirmative action** policies required that police departments do more than simply create equal opportunities for everyone. They mandated that the police department take extra steps to hire minorities. Many affirmative action policies established **quotas** for minorities, or a specified number of jobs that a department was required to fill with minorities. The purpose of affirmative action was to ensure that individuals who previously had been excluded from particular types of employment would have access to these jobs. Law enforcement agencies that did not comply with affirmative action policies could face civil suits from the parties being excluded, and they could also face a loss of funding from major grant bodies if their hiring and promotional policies were deemed unlawful. Affirmative action policies are controversial, because despite the positive motivation behind them—equal opportunity in the workplace—they also bring charges of **reverse discrimination** (hiring of minorities at the expense of those in the majority). In addition,
some believe that those of minority backgrounds are hired as “tokens” and that such policies conflict with social integration in the police department.

**Legal Issues**

Affirmative action policies began appearing in the 1960s and were largely the result of court-mandated legislation. A number of legislative acts were passed in order to assist women and minorities in attaining jobs dominated by white males, one of which was policing. Table 14.2 presents several acts and the purposes of each.

Although these acts set policies mandating that women and minorities have equal access to employment opportunities, it was the case of *Griggs v. Duke Power* \(^3\) in 1971 that firmly established equal opportunity guidelines. The Court stated that jobs that excluded minorities disproportionately were illegal unless the standards for exclusion were job related. For the first time, the Court declared that the burden of proof was on employers, not recruits, to show that exclusion from a job is due to job-related reasons. This burden of proof test has since been swapped, however, and the burden of proof now lies with the person excluded from the job (*Wards Cove Packing Company, Inc. v. Antonio* \(^4\)).

**Barriers for Women and Minorities**

In the 1970s and 1980s, the percentage of minorities in policing increased significantly. Whereas in 1970 the percentage of African American police officers was 6.35 percent (double the percentage in 1960) (Kuykendall and Burns 1980), by the early 1990s African Americans represented nearly 11 percent of the police force (Bureau of Justice Statistics 1996). This was due to a number of fac-

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**TABLE 14.2**

Acts Requiring Equal Opportunities for Women and Minorities in the Workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<tr>
<td>Equal Pay Act, 1963</td>
<td>Passed by Congress, this act prohibited unequal pay for men and women who did the same work. Prior to its enactment, policewomen were paid far less than their male colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Order, 1969</td>
<td>Passed by President Richard Nixon, this order stated that the federal government could not use sex as a qualification for hiring. This had an impact on federal agencies such as FBI, and the municipal police departments were soon to follow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, 1972</td>
<td>This prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or sex for recruitment, hiring, working conditions, promotion, or benefits in any governmental agency. Prior to this, it was nearly impossible for women and minorities to attain a job in policing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Control Act, 1973</td>
<td>Ensured that police departments did not discriminate against women in employment practices. It did so by withholding funds from the LEAA, the major funding body of the municipal governments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990</td>
<td>Ensured that agencies did not discriminate against any person otherwise qualified for a job because of a disability.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
tors, including the demand for black police officers after the race riots in the 1960s, the civil rights movement, and affirmative action policies (Kuykendall and Burns 1980). This increase in African American police officers was critical in improving police–community relations in minority communities.

The role of affirmative action policies was significant in facilitating this change (Walker 1985). Because of affirmative action policies, police agencies specifically sought out individuals from classes of people who were historically underrepresented or were discriminated against. The rate of racial minorities, particularly African Americans, increased significantly. Although many of these policies became effective in the 1970s, it was the cumulative effect of these policies that made an impact by the 1980s (Lewis 1989).

Affirmative action policies also had a significant effect on the number of women in police agencies at this time. According to Susan Martin (1989), by the late 1980s women comprised 10.1 percent of the force; where there were affirmative action policies but no court order, they comprised 8.3 percent of the force; where there were no affirmative action policies, they comprised 6.1 percent of the force. Today, women make up 20 percent of police applicants, 20.6 percent of persons accepted into training, and 19.2 percent of those who complete training. Thus, the number of women accepted is not disproportionate to the number of women who apply. Minority women comprise 45 percent of women who apply and 44 percent of women who complete training.

However, these employment increases had some negative consequences. Both racial and gender minorities accepted under affirmative action policies were considered tokens, the thinking that the department had been legally required to accept them due to affirmative action policies. Had police departments not accepted women onto the force, they would have faced legal repercussions. Unfortunately, those on the force often treated the “tokens” differently from officers from the dominant race and gender. This often led to discrimination in selection, assignments, and evaluations, as well as exclusion from the police culture and harassment.

Policewomen at this time found it particularly difficult to fit in, and they had to change their characteristics in order to socially interact with the male officers. Susan Martin wrote a classic article on the role dilemmas of female police officers in 1979, which also analyzed the effects of affirmative action policies on these officers. She noted two distinct roles of female officers: that of the policewomen, or the defeminized officers who emphasize their physical skills, and the policewomen, or the depersonalized officers who emphasize their femininity.

Martin (1979) explained that the defeminized woman seeks acceptance by acting in an exceptional manner. She does not identify with the other women, but rather with her male counterparts. She tries to fulfill the same work norms as them and not stand out in any way that would allow them to put her down personally or professionally. She shows professional competence above that of many colleagues and closely adheres to the norms of behavior governing male police officers. The defeminized woman adopts coping strategies to maximize her effectiveness as an officer. She acts with self-confidence and tries to not only to meet the production norms of the department, but to surpass them. She accepts the fact that women have to try harder than men, and she goes out of her way to show courage and willingness to take action, even if it is dangerous. She is comfortable on the street and enjoys patrol, is generally ambitious, and tries to make political friends to get ahead. She denies or minimizes the existence of
discrimination against women by the department and is likely to blame the other female officers for the problems they encounter. Finally, she does not feel that her work threatens her gender identity outside of the department.

The depoliticalized woman, in contrast, plays up her femininity. She functions as a junior assistant to the policemen, even though she has an equal title to them. She consistently acts in a feminine manner and is satisfied to do less work that her counterparts. She does not like patrol and is not comfortable on the street. Instead, she prefers the social work aspect of policing. She does not necessarily believe that women are physically equipped to be on patrol and feels that it is better to do work that is not dangerous, because the pay is the same either way. When she is on patrol, she relies on the male partner to do most of the patrol work. Unlike the de feminized officer, the depoliticalized officer emphasizes her femininity, thereby making police work difficult. She is not interested in a career and promotions within the department, has no desire to supervise men or add additional responsibilities, and does not want more shift work. She has few chances for promotion; however, she knows this and is not disappointed when she does not receive the promotion. Finally, she is critical of the de feminized policewomen because she feels they have objectionable morals, like the policemen.

Policewomen are in a paradoxical situation. If they don’t de feminize themselves, they will fit a feminine stereotype and not allow themselves room for promotion. If they do de feminize themselves, they will be competing with men for their promotional opportunities and they become a career threat. Several studies have analyzed this socialization problem. Sherman (1975) showed that if women do not sacrifice at least some of their femininity, they will not be accepted by the male officers. Gross (1984) showed that female academy recruits displayed masculine characteristics and few feminine characteristics. This may be due to the fact that they are subjected to standardized behavior in training, which is essentially masculine.

In their study on women’s perceptions of policing, Daum and Johns (1994) found that most policewomen felt accepted by civilians and other female officers. However, 42 percent did not feel accepted by other male officers. Also, 55 percent of the policewomen felt as though their male supervisors did not accept them. On other factors, 76 percent thought they performed the job as well as the policemen, 68 percent felt they had to do more work than their male colleagues to be given the same credit; 58 percent of the women thought they faced tougher standards of conduct than the men (including grooming standards). Fifty-seven percent saw no difference in morale for female or male officers; however, 35 percent thought that morale was lower for women. Some of the women wanted the department to recognize that women have special needs, while at the same time they do the job as well as the men. Others did not want any pampering or special attention at all.

Both African American and white male officers tended to have negative views about policewomen at the outset of the affirmative action selections, marginalizing women on the force. Women tended to be placed on early shifts where the duties were light or they were made to go on dead-end calls, issue tickets, work as dispatchers or desk attendants, or take missing persons reports.

Two major barriers for women in policing is sexual harassment and poor maternity leave policies. Daum and Johns (1994) found that 62 percent of the women they spoke with had experienced some form of sexual harassment in the form of jokes, inappropriate touching, requests for sex, sexually degrading com-
ments, or gestures. Policewomen are generally not happy about their police force’s maternity policy, claiming that despite legislation there is discrimination against women who are pregnant. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act was passed in 1978, with an amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act 1964. This prohibited against discrimination “because of or on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions,” and the purpose of the Act was to allow for women to participate equally in the workforce while still being able to have a child, because the right to a family life is a fundamental right. The police department cannot discriminate against a woman based upon pregnancy, though the department can legally change the policewoman’s duties in order to not harm her or her child (Higginbotham 1993).

There has been much litigation concerning the assignment of duties to pregnant women or the leave that these women are forced to take when they are pregnant, and courts have not been consistent in their rulings. The courts often refer to the case of O’Laughlin v. Pinchback. In this case, a pregnant corrections officer was told that she was discharged because her work assignments endangered her health and that of her unborn child and because she couldn’t perform her duties adequately. The courts said that this was a violation of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act for two reasons: first, because there was no evidence that she couldn’t do her duties or respond to security threats just as other employees would; second, because there was no medical evidence that this was dangerous to the health of her unborn child. Though the legislation in this area has come a long way, women still lack equality in a male-dominated field.

Training

Once a police candidate has passed through the selection process, he or she is hired on probation, a trial period of one or two years during which the officer is evaluated. This probationary period begins with training at the police academy, a school where officers learn on-the-job techniques prior to receiving full police powers. Officers must train at the academy for up to 1,100 hours, and they receive full pay and benefits from the time they enter the academy (Reaves and Goldberg 1999). While in the academy, the officer receives educational as well as practical physical training. The officer must learn constitutional law and criminal law specific to the state in which he or she is policing.

Police academies vary by jurisdiction, although there are certain standard instructional categories. All police academies have lectures from which the officers learn about the law and the criminal justice system. They receive physical training, training in the use of firearms, and training in the systems of patrol and traffic. They must also learn about the police department, its policies, and its relationship to other agencies (e.g., state/county/federal agencies). This training serves a number of purposes; namely, it standardizes the training of all officers in the jurisdiction while encouraging the safety of the officers and the community they will be policing. The extended time in training should aid the officer’s confidence in his or her ability to utilize police powers, use quick decision-making skills, and use the appropriate level of discretion when approaching a situation.

Once out of the academy, the police officer is assigned a field training officer (FTO). The FTO assists the new officer in applying the knowledge and skills learned at the academy. The FTO also assists the new officer to acclimate into the police culture, or experience the socialization process. Socialization involves
Education is part of the training process for police officers. They must learn about sociological, psychological, and legal issues, as well as critical thinking and writing skills.

learning the values, social processes, and behaviors associated with the police institution. It involves the patterns of interaction that depend on the relations of individuals in particular settings. Because the police culture is so unique, new officers are likely to adapt their personalities to those of other police officers who have experience on the job. It is during the rookie period that officers might develop an “us versus them” attitude. However, FTOs can have a significant influence over new officers and assist them in dealing with the inevitable stress and cynicism of the job.

It is even more difficult for women to adapt to the socialization process, and both women and minorities might be excluded from the police subculture and face harassment. Affirmative action and equal opportunity policies can mandate equal hiring amongst groups, but it does not assist in the socialization process.

Retention

Many individuals are drawn to a policing career because of the job opportunities. These include salary and benefits, job security, and opportunities for promotion, although the job also leads to stress and burnout for many of the officers. The key to job retention is to accentuate the positive aspects of the job (e.g., positive community relations, helping people) and provide services that can help to reduce the level of stress experienced by police officers. In studies assessing job strain, Johnson (1991) showed that women experienced more internal burnout whereas men experienced more external burnout. Johnson described internal burnout as being emotionally exhausted by the job and external burnout as lacking compassion due to emotional hardening. In practical terms, policemen would be more likely to take out the stress of the job on oth-
ers, such as the individuals they are policing. The tangible result of internal burnout was that policewomen described having difficulty or no desire to wake up each day and face the duties of their job. Despite the problems women face, Daum and Johns (1994) point out that 80 percent of women plan to stay in the department until retirement, and 71 percent said that if they had to do it all over they would again choose to be police officers.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (2001) has examined the issue of recruitment and retention of female police officers and has issued guidelines for police departments on how to increase retention of female officers. It explains that retention of female officers is more difficult than male officers, because they face additional challenges such as sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and isolation. The guidelines go on to explain, however, the advantages to departments who retain women on the force. These advantages include:

- Women are competent. Female officers are as competent as their male counterparts.
- Women are not likely to use physical force. Subsequently, they are less likely than men to be accused of excessive use of force.
- Women help focus on community-oriented policing tactics. This helps build positive police–community relations.
- Women help in domestic violence incidents. The highest volume of calls to the police is related to domestic violence, and female officers assist in the response to these calls.
- Less discrimination and harassment. The more female officers there are in a department, the less likely female officers will be harassed, because they will have a higher representation in the department.
- Changes in policy. The increasing number of women in departments creates the need for a previously male-only profession to modify outdated policies in relation to selection criteria, performance standards, and supervision.

Standards for Promotion

The promotion process for police officers is very competitive (Garner 1998). Officers may be promoted through several methods. Although promotion processes differ across jurisdictions, officers must typically take a written exam and participate in an interview; they are then assessed on qualities relating to the job. The written exam, although not common across all departments, is particularly common in the larger urban departments, such as those in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. The written exam usually is in a multiple-choice format; although it is meant to be objective, there has been a lot of litigation against it for its alleged bias against minorities. For instance, in the case of Acosta v. Lang the court stated that if the answers of the candidates are as good or better than the established answers, they must be accepted.

During the interview, a board of several (generally three to six) members asks the candidates a variety of questions. These questions range from information about their background and personal characteristics to judgments about policing situations. After the interview, the candidates are assessed, during
which time they are observed, tested, rated, and evaluated. Areas of assessment generally include:

- An “in-basket” exercise, that tests the officer’s ability to perform desk tasks and paperwork
- An oral presentation, where the candidate presents an overview of his or her work history and personal strengths
- A creative writing project, where the candidate prepares and delivers a paper on a specialized topic
- A peer-group rating exercise, where the candidate rates his or her peers based on specific criteria
- Group dialogue, where the candidate acts as the leader of a group discussion

The purpose of these assessment tools is to determine how well the candidate would perform at a supervisory level. The promotion is not based on these factors alone, but they are considered in combination with the performance evaluation. Performance evaluations for each candidate look at, among other things, quantity and quality of work, work habits, human relations, and adaptability to new situations.

Until the mid-1980s nearly all of those promoted were white males. However, since then, there has been an increase in the number of women in the ranks above patrol officer. Affirmative action policies helped the promotion of female supervisors considerably. In the 1980s, in departments where there were court ordered affirmative action policies, females comprised 3.5 percent of supervisory positions; where there were affirmative action policies with no court orders, they comprised 2.4 percent; where there were no specific affirmative action policies, they comprised 2.2 percent of the supervisors (Martin 1989). Price and Gavin (1979) noted that promotional opportunities for women at this time were limited, and the police management hierarchy was rigid and restricted at the top. They claimed that the most important indicator for promotion was crime fighting abilities and a good arrest record, qualities associated with male officers.

Many police departments at this time adopted dual promotion lists, or separate promotional instruments for white male officers and all other officers. These lists helped women and minorities be promoted, often for the first time, but it negatively affected their levels of integration with the
other police officers. These lists generated tension in police departments. The white male and female officers felt resentment toward officers of racial minorities, feeling that they received advancement only because of a court-mandated policy rather than merit. Alternatively, black officers felt that the promotional exams were culturally biased and that was why black officers received lower exam scores. The cultural bias of promotional exams continues to be a contentious issue.

Between 1980 and the mid-1990s, promotional opportunities for women increased. Women continued to be significantly more likely to be eligible for promotion to sergeant in departments with affirmative action. Today, several factors determine whether women apply for, and receive, a promotion. According to Whetstone (2001), the biggest impact on the number of women applicants for promotion was the number of women already serving there. Female officers who were considered to be effective were often given desirable positions above male officers who were similarly qualified. Additionally, many women choose not to apply for a promotion, but decide to remain patrol officers. Reasons for this include poor work conditions, poor assignment and work-hour flexibility, and lack of child care and family concerns (Whetstone 2001).

Chapter Summary

- Standards for recruitment, selection, and training have evolved significantly over the past 100 years. Policing was originally a “white man’s job,” but legislation in the 1960s began a push for a more representative police force.
- The police began actively recruiting women and minorities, implementing affirmative action policies to help give them equal opportunities to be hired as police officers.
- Though more representative of the community today than ever before, police departments still employ a selection process with controversial requirements.
- Debate continues as to the benefits of higher education, residency requirements, necessary levels of physical agility, and the lengths and types of training.

Linking the Dots

1. How have recruitment and selection standards changed over the past century?
2. Why is it important to have so many selection procedures? Are any of these procedures more important than the others?
3. Compare male and female officers. What are their different strengths and weaknesses?
4. How have legal issues affected the police departments over the last thirty years? How has the law assisted gender and racial minorities? Have these legal requirements hindered minorities in any way?
5. What can police managers do to increase retention?
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KEY TERMS

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REFERENCES


Notes

1. The first edition consisted of 680 questions. It is only meant to be administered to adults, though the MMPI-A is designed for adolescents.

2. Although many departments use the polygraph as an assessment tool, they are prohibited from requiring candidates to submit to a polygraph exam on the basis that the candidate will not be hired without taking this test. The Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988, 29 U.S.C.A. § 2001 was enacted because of concerns that employers were using polygraph exams and relying on information that might be inaccurate, inconclusive, or unfounded lie detector results to make employment decisions.


6. 16 N.Y.2d 668.