



Department of Conservation & Recreation Office of Public Safety & Law Enforcement

Public Safety & Law Enforcement Hiring Requirements

Public Safety & Law Enforcement positions are considered sensitive positions and have a high amount of public trust and therefore have extensive qualification requirements. Once a conditional offer of employment is made, a background investigation will be completed by an investigator with the Office of Public Safety & Law Enforcement. This is a review of an individual's work and personal history to determine if an applicant is suitable for certain positions and includes, but is not limited to:

- Academic record and verification of licenses and certifications.
- Employment history.
- Personal and professional references.
- Medical evaluation.
- Psychological evaluation.
- Financial history.
- Credit reports.
- Criminal history.
- Driving record.
- Social Media history.
- A fingerprint-based criminal history report, and
- Other records or information related to the applicant's suitability for the position.

Code of Virginia § 15.2-1705

Per the Code of Virginia § 15.2-1705. Minimum qualifications, a successful candidate for the position of Law Enforcement Ranger must meet the following qualifications to be eligible to apply for the position:

- Be a citizen of the United States.
- Undergo a background investigation including fingerprint-based criminal history records inquiries to both the Central Criminal Records Exchange and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- Possess a high school education or have passed a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education.
- Possess a valid driver's license.
- Undergo a physical examination, conducted under the supervision of a licensed physician, to evaluate the applicant's ability to successfully perform the essential job functions. This includes a broad panel drug screening.
- Be at least 18 years of age (See Additional Requirements Below).



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- Not have been convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to a felony or any offense that would be a felony if committed in the Commonwealth.
- Not have produced a positive result on a pre-employment drug screening, if such screening is required by the hiring law-enforcement agency or jail, where the positive result cannot be explained to the law-enforcement agency or jail administrator's satisfaction.
- Not have been convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, including but not limited to petit larceny under § 18.2-96, or any offense involving moral turpitude that would be a misdemeanor if committed in the Commonwealth; any misdemeanor sex offense in the Commonwealth, another state, or the United States, including but not limited to sexual battery under § 18.2-67.4 or consensual sexual intercourse with a minor 15 years of age or older under clause of § 18.2-371; or domestic assault under § 18.2-57.2 or any offense that would be domestic assault under the laws of another state or the United States.

As outlined by Code of Virginia § 15.2-1705. Minimum qualifications, the Department has determined that subsequent to a conditional offer of employment, applicants will complete a psychological examination conducted under the supervision of a licensed psychiatrist or a licensed clinical psychologist. The psychological evaluation will evaluate the applicant's ability to successfully perform the essential job functions and duties of a law enforcement officer.

Code of Virginia: § 10.1-115

Additional requirements for these positions are outlined in the Code of Virginia: § 10.1-115. Appointment of conservation officers; qualifications; oath state that to “be qualified to receive a conservation officer commission, a person shall”:

- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Have graduated from high school or obtained an equivalent diploma.



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Code of Virginia §2.2-2804

Pursuant to Code of Virginia §2.2-2804, "Any person who has failed to meet the federal requirement to register for the Selective Service shall be ineligible for employment by or service for the Commonwealth, or a political subdivision of the Commonwealth, including all boards and commissions, departments, agencies, institutions, and instrumentalities. A person shall not be denied employment under this section by reason of failure to present himself for and submit to the federal registration requirement if: (i) the requirement for the person to so register has terminated or become inapplicable to the person and (ii) the person shows by a preponderance of the evidence that the failure of the person to register was not a knowing and willful failure to register". Applicants who have not registered as required by Code of Virginia §2.2-2804 must present verification from the Selective Service System that they have met the requirements of §2.2-2804.

Departmental Policy

As outlined in DCR Human Resource Management Policy #303SP Background Check, additional considerations for disqualification include:

- Misdemeanor convictions involving sale, manufacture, or distribution of any narcotic, controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or dangerous drug as defined by law; within the last 5 years or more than once in the applicant's lifetime; no misdemeanor convictions of possession of marijuana within the past 12 months.
- A driving record with no suspension within the past 12 months for moving violations; no convictions of drunk driving or driving under the influence within the past five years and not more than one conviction in the applicant's lifetime; no conviction of misdemeanor hit and run; no more than two traffic violation convictions within one year; and no more than three (3) Department of Motor Vehicles demerit points.

Office of Public Safety & Law Enforcement Disqualifying Information

An applicant may be eliminated from further consideration on a case-by-case basis, for a variety of additional reasons. This following is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of background disqualifiers. References are provided throughout from the Code of Virginia; however, comparable violations of other state code, the United States Code, or the Uniform Code of Military Justice may be disqualifying.



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Criminal History

- Pending litigation or prosecution for criminal offenses must be resolved prior to consideration for employment.
- Admission of felonious behavior.
- Other criminal behavior, whether detected or not, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, including crimes committed as a juvenile.
- Conviction, guilty plea, or no contest plea of a Class 1 or Class 2 misdemeanor or the Code of Virginia equivalent within the last twelve (12) months. Convictions beyond twelve months will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Conviction, guilty plea, or no contest plea of a Class 3 or Class 4 misdemeanor or the Code of Virginia equivalent within the last twelve (12) months.
- Failure to disclose information concerning involvement in any undetected crimes.

Domestic Assault

Pursuant to United States Code, Title 18, section 922(g)(9), anyone who has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence may not possess any firearm or ammunition.

Conviction, guilty plea, or no contest plea of domestic assault under Code of Virginia §18.2-57.2 or any offense that would be domestic assault under the laws of another state or the United States.

Traffic Violations

- Any conviction, guilty plea, or no contest plea of driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, refusal to take blood or breath test, eluding police, racing, or leaving the scene of an accident within the last 5 years.
- Reckless Driving or any suspension/revocation of driving privileges within the last 5 years for any reason will be reviewed on a case-by case basis.
- Any extensive history of traffic violations will be reviewed on a case-by case basis.

Drug Related Issues

- Unlawful distribution, sale, use, or possession of any illegal drug, including but not limited to heroin, cocaine, hallucinogens, methamphetamine, etc. or any derivative thereof (except marijuana). Possession or use of any illicit drug beyond the last 5 years will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Admission of use or possession of any Schedule I substances as defined by the Code of Virginia 54.1-3448, 54.1-3450, 54.1-3452, and 54.1-3454.



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- Admission of use or possession of any Schedule II, Schedule III, Schedule IV, or Schedule V drugs as defined by the Code of Virginia 54.1-3448, 54.1-3450, 54.1-3452, 54.1-3454 unless prescribed by a licensed physician.
- Illegal use or possession of marijuana within the last five (5) years will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Use of marijuana from date of application, regardless of location of use (includes states/countries where usage may be legal).
- Illegal use or possession of anabolic steroids within the last three (3) years.
- Illicit use of non-prescribed medication from date of application, including but not limited to Adderall, Xanax, etc.
- Illicit use of club drugs, such as, but not limited to: Ketamine, GHB, Rohypnol, or MDMA (ecstasy) with three (3) years or less from the date of application.
- Illicit use of aerosols, sometimes referred to as huffing (paint) or whippits (nitrous oxide) or used Khat within three (3) years prior to date of application.

Integrity Issues

- Failing to disclose any act which would be considered criminal under federal or state law once a conditional offer has been accepted, including traffic violations.
- Dishonorable, undesirable, or bad conduct discharge from any military service.
- De-certification of law enforcement or jailor status by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, according to the Code of Virginia 15.2 1707, or similar status in other states.
- Resignation from employment for issues which, if substantiated, could have resulted in De-certification of law enforcement or jailor status by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, according to the Code of Virginia 15.2-1707, or similar status in other states.
- Brady/Giglio Disclosure: Applicant should not have any sustained investigative findings or been placed on a judicial list related to integrity issues if the applicant has been formerly certified or is currently certified as a law enforcement officer.
- Untruthfulness, falsification, or the intentional withholding of any information on any application, certificate, credential, interview, test, or documents associated with the position.
- Cheating on any examination or testing associated with government licensure, the position being applied for, or any other law enforcement position.
- Criminal or unethical behavior unsuitable or inappropriate for a Law Enforcement Ranger as determined by the Chief.



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- Untruthfulness and/or the intentional withholding of information on any application, interview, or paperwork associated with the position (e.g., deliberate inaccuracies or incomplete statements). Relying on others to complete any portion of the process.
- Background investigation revealing information which indicates less than acceptable job performance with past employers.
- Incidents of past physical or mental abuse of anyone.
- Incidents of past abuse, neglect, or mistreatment of animals (wild or domestic).
- Incidents of past abuse of public lands, resources (natural or historic).
- Obtaining a score that is below the established standard on any test or evaluation administered during the selection process.
- No applicant shall be, shall have been or shall become a member of any organization which advocated the forceful overthrow of the United States government, or any other organization cited as being subversive or un-American by the United States Attorney General.
- No applicant shall be, shall have been, or shall become a member of a criminal organization or have associations with groups that promote biased ideologies.

Financial Issues

- To conform to the intent of Code of Virginia §20-79 and § 63.2-1900, the Department must ask each new employee to disclose whether he or she has an income withholding order to pay child support. No applicant shall have an arrearage(s) for child support.
- No applicant shall have an arrearage(s) for taxes (property, income, etc.), or other debt (court ordered or owed to a municipality, county, state or federal government or agency thereof).
- Credit history with a current unsatisfactory rating or histories of bankruptcy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. d. Continual or unexplained poor financial responsibilities will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis (e.g., unpaid collections or unsatisfactory judgements where no payment plan has been established).

Application Issues

- Failure to follow the directions provided or failure to submit a thoroughly complete application, composite history, and other required paperwork by the assigned deadline.
- Failure to comply with deadlines to return requested information to the background investigator or representative of the Department.
- Failure to comply with applicant's appointment(s) without prior notification.



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- Refusal, or failure without reasonable cause, to cooperate with any required step of the hiring and selection process, including but not limited to meeting with the background investigator, interview panel, psychologist (or their staff), or physician (or their staff), completing evaluative forms or releases; or submitting photographs of body art/tattoos.

Other Issues

- Any body art, tattoo, or other modification (such as branding) that violates current Department policies, or, when images of such are reviewed, supports, or condones groups or language that promotes criminal or biased ideologies.