

Houston County Sheriff's Office Detention Center



Hiring Process

15 March 2024

“The purpose of the Sheriff and Staff of the Houston County Detention Center is to provide, in a cost-effective manner, the highest degree of professionalism in the security, safety and service to the citizens of Houston County for both inmates and staff. The Sheriff and Staff of the Houston County Detention Center are professionals committed to the preservation of the basic human rights and dignity of the inmate population, as prescribed by the Constitution of the United States and the Administrative Code of the State of Georgia.”

-Mission Statement Houston County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility Policy Manual-

The mission statement from the Houston County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility Policy Manual sets forth a standard for the staff. Traits identified are professionalism, security, safety, service, and commitment. Furthermore, O.C.G.A. 35-8-8 establishes *minimum* selection standards. It includes criteria on citizenship, age, and education. It also requires applicants be found of good moral character and be found free of any physical, emotional, or mental condition. The requirements in O.C.G.A. 35-8-8 are further defined in P.O.S.T., rules 464-3.

The mission statement also states the staff will provide services *in a cost-effective manner*. One way to reduce cost is to reduce turnover. Leadership, pay, benefits, training, and work conditions are some of the factors that affect turnover. With a strong candidate, these factors are items that can influence their decision to stay with the Houston County Sheriff's Office. With a poor candidate, maximizing all these factors will matter very little. They lack the commitment, work ethic, service mindedness, fitness, ethics, or morals to be successful. To reduce turnover and reduce the chances of lawsuits due to staff behavior, work related injuries, etc., it is imperative that the new hire selection process be enhanced.

After reviewing the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (P.O.S.T.) *Manual for Background Investigators*, and state and federal laws, the following areas should be included in the selection process:

- Application and required documentation review
- Preliminary background check (DDS and state files)
- Personal History Questionnaire (PHQ) review
- Physical Abilities Assessment
- Collection and submission of candidate fingerprints
- Background investigation
- Discrepancy interview
- Report and background packet preparation and submission
- Selection board interview
- Conditional Offer of Employment (COE) letter
- Physical and drug screen
- Submission of board findings to the Sheriff
- Formal Offer of Employment letter

Although rigorous, this process is designed to provide for the best opportunity to select new hires that will represent the Sheriff with the highest level of professionalism and integrity.

APPLICATION AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The candidate should come in and pick up an application packet. The packet should include:

- Application accuracy notice
- Application instructions
- Houston County Application for Employment
- U.S. Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) of 1996 advisement and authorization
- Reference release statement form
- Authorization to release information form
- Willingness checklist
- Lautenberg Act (18 U.S.C. 922) screening form
- Consent to background investigation, physical examination, and drug testing form

APPLICATION ACCURACY NOTICE

IT IS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE TO BE ABSOLUTELY TRUTHFUL IN ANSWERING ALL QUESTIONS IN YOUR INTERVIEWS, ON YOUR APPLICATION AND PERSONAL HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE.

A MIS-STATEMENT OF FACT OR THE OMISSION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION IS GROUNDS FOR AUTOMATIC REJECTION.

WE HAVE FOUND IN THE PAST THAT SOME APPLICANTS HAVE BEEN REJECTED BECAUSE OF A MIS-STATEMENT OR OMISSION WHERE THE FACT WHICH THEY ATTEMPTED TO HIDE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN A REASON FOR REJECTION.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO BE ABSOLUTELY TRUTHFUL IN THESE MATTERS. **I fully understand what I have read.**

Applicant Printed Name

Applicant Signature / Date

Notary Signature / Date

**INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE BEGINNING**

1. A background investigation will be conducted based on the information you provided in this application. It is critical that you fill out this application completely, truthfully, and accurately. If at any point during the background investigation, or thereafter, it is found that you misrepresented, deliberately omitted, or falsified any information, you will be automatically disqualified from further consideration. It is imperative that you list any convictions to include a finding or a verdict of guilt or a plea of guilty and a plea of Nolo Contendere in a criminal proceeding, regardless of whether the judgment of guilt or sentence is withheld or not entered thereon. This includes first offenders (Georgia State Law 35-8-7.1).

Do not leave any blanks in this packet. If an item does not apply, write N/A.

2. If you are a Georgia Certified Peace Officer and / or Georgia Certified Jail Officer (i.e., registered with the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council, P.O.S.T) please attach a copy of your basic certificate(s) displaying your certification number.
3. The following situation WILL prohibit an applicant from serving as a jail officer:
 - a. Conviction in any Court of a felony offense.
 - b. Conviction in any Court of a drug related offense.
 - c. Less than twenty-one (21) years of age by the completion of Basic Jail School
 - d. Any medical, physical, or mental condition which would prevent an applicant from satisfactorily performing assigned duties or complying with regulations of the Georgia POST Council.
4. The following situations MAY prohibit an applicant from serving as a jail Officer:
 - a. Any pending criminal action in any court.
 - b. A military Discharge other than Honorable.
 - c. Seven (7) or more points accumulated against drivers' record at the time of the application.
 - d. Not a citizen of the United States of America.

Note: An applicant, who has received an official pardon or other similar action for any offense or applicable condition as stated above, is not obligated to disclose the offense or condition in this application. If, however, during a background investigation, facts are discovered regarding the offense or condition, the applicant may be required to produce proof of such pardon or action to remain in consideration for employment.

5. For specific questions about positions with the Houston County Sheriff's Office Detention Center, please call (478) 218-4900.
6. Once completed, signed, dated, and all required documents attached, return the application to the Houston County Detention Center.

U.S. FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT of 1996 ADVISEMENT & AUTHORIZATION

The U.S. Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) of 1996 (15 U.S. Code 1681, Section 604(b) requires that you be notified separately of your rights before any prospective employer may use credit data as part of an employment decision.

You are hereby notified that your prospective employer intends to use credit data as **part** of its decision-making process for the position for which you have applied. Before any adverse actions are taken because of this document, you are advised of the following:

1. Access to your file is limited to persons recognized by the FCRA.
2. Your consent is required for reports that are provided to employers or that contain medical information.
3. You can find out what is in your file, although some information, such as "risk sources" or "credit scores" may be lawfully withheld.
4. You can dispute inaccurate information.
5. Inaccurate information must be corrected or deleted.
6. Outdated information may not be reported (seven years for most information, ten years for bankruptcies).
7. You may seek damages from violators, and.
8. The complete text of this act may be found at www.ftc.gov.

CERTIFICATION: I certify that the Houston County Sheriff's Office has my consent to review the copy of my credit report (including credit score), that I provided, for the limited purpose of my pre-employment background investigation; that I have been informed in summary form of my rights under the FCRA.

Dated: _____ Signed: _____

OTHER INFORMATION

This position may require you to:

Wear a uniform. Do you agree? YES _____ NO _____

Work rotating shift. Do you agree? YES _____ NO _____

Work overtime. Do you agree? YES _____ NO _____

Work nights. Do you agree? YES _____ NO _____

Work weekends. Do you agree? YES _____ NO _____

Work holidays. Do you agree? YES _____ NO _____

Have you ever had experience working shift work? YES _____ NO _____

If so, where, and when:

If you have ever been fingerprinted by a police agency other than for an arrest, give details below. Your answer will be checked with the FBI and other agencies.

Agency / Date / Purpose

Do you drink alcoholic beverages? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, when was the last time?

Have you ever used marijuana? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, when was the last time? _____

Have you ever used any other illegal drugs, opiates, pills, etc.? YES _____ NO _____

What were the circumstances:

Do you now or have you ever associated with anyone that uses drugs? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, explain:

Have you ever been fired or permitted to resign employment for breach of trust, embezzlement, theft, or other crime? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, what were the circumstances?

WILLINGNESS CHECKLIST

In the past, many people have taken the job of Detention Deputy without carefully considering the requirements of the work. It is in your best interest to answer each question honestly. For each job requirement on the list below, circle "YES" if you are willing to do it. "NO" if you are not willing.

Do you believe an inmate can be rehabilitated? YES NO

Do you believe that you can set aside any personal prejudices and be fair in dealing with inmates convicted of serious crimes? YES NO

Are you willing to work a twelve (12) hour shift? YES NO

Are you willing to work alternating weekends? YES NO

Are you willing to work all holidays which are not on your regular days off? YES NO

In the event of an emergency, such as a shift vacancy,

Are you willing to work on your day(s) off? YES NO

Are you willing to wear a uniform to work every day? YES NO

Are you willing to work in a tobacco free environment? YES NO

Are you willing to participate in training to learn and develop techniques and skills required of a Detention Deputy?
YES NO

Are you willing to use reasonable force when necessary, such as controlling disturbances, breaking up fights, etc.?
YES NO

Are you willing to give first aid, including CPR, to inmates who are ill or injured? YES NO

Are you willing to search (frisk) inmates regardless of their sex and visually search (strip search) the body cavities of inmates the same sex as for things that they are not allowed to have?
YES NO

Are you willing to supervise inmates, regardless of their sex, while they are in the bathroom or shower area?
YES NO

Are you willing to work with inmates who are sick and who may have contagious diseases? YES NO

Are you willing to work in an environment which can be noisy? YES NO

Are you willing and physically able to remain on your feet during your entire shift? YES NO

Are you willing to risk your personal safety to come to the aid of a fellow officer? YES NO

Are you willing to work, unarmed, in a locked area with inmates who are guilty of assaultive crimes (e.g., murder, rape, etc.)? YES NO

Are you willing to work in a situation where you may be cursed at and/or verbally or physically threatened? YES
NO

If you circled "NO" to any of these questions, you are probably not suited for this type of work and should not continue to pursue a position as a Detention Deputy. ***I have read the above and wish to continue with the application process.***

Signature: _____ Date: _____

LAUTENBERG SCREENING FORM

NOTICE! Congress enacted legislation that prohibits certain persons from owning, possessing, storing, or transporting firearms, ammunition, or their component parts. For this reason, it is necessary to screen all employment candidates (and in some cases our current employees in “for cause” circumstances) to determine if they fall within the prohibited group of persons exempted by the Lautenberg Act (18 United States Code, Section 922) from possessing firearms and/or ammunition. The Lautenberg Act makes it a felony for any person in the prohibited group to own or possess firearms or ammunition. Also, Lautenberg makes it a felonious act for any person to provide firearms or ammunition to any person who falls within the prohibited group. Therefore, it would be unlawful for the Sheriff’s Office to “arm” a person who falls within this category.

It is, or should be obvious, that law enforcement officers must be capable of carrying and being proficient with the use of firearms to be able to perform their routine duties in this state.

For these reasons, it is essential for the Sheriff’s Office to know all candidates and current employees are free from the Lautenberg prohibition. Therefore, it is necessary and imperative that you answer the following questions truthfully while under oath. Your written responses and signature must be witnessed by a representative of the Houston County Sheriff’s Office.

Candidates for employment may choose to refuse to complete this form but in so doing, they must understand that they will effectively withdraw their application for employment with the Houston County Sheriff’s Office. Candidates who choose not to complete this form and thereby wish to withdraw their application from consideration for employment should write “refused” on the form, sign it, and have it witnessed by a Sheriff’s Office representative. Current employees undergoing administrative inquiry may not refuse to complete the form under oath without subjecting themselves to disciplinary action which may include suspension, demotion, or termination.

I (print full name, date of birth, social security number, and driver’s license number)

_____ the undersigned in consideration of future or continued employment with the Houston County Sheriff’s Office voluntarily agree and consent to answer the following questions truthfully, while under oath.

CONSENT TO BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION, PHYSICAL EXAMINATION, AND DRUG TESTING FORM

To: Sheriff Cullen Talton
 202 Carl Vinson Pkwy
 Warner Robins, GA 31088

SIGNATURE	SSN
PRINTED NAME	DRIVERS LICENSE STATE AND NUMBER
PHYSICAL ADDRESS (No P.O. Boxes)	DOB
CITY, STATE, ZIP	SEX RACE HGT WGT

Accept this instrument as my personal request and authorization to conduct a comprehensive personal background investigation, including pending charges of any description, a complete traffic history, criminal history (including first offender status, if applicable). Credit history report, medical records, full and complete disclosure of educational institutions, financial statements, and records, wherever filed; Veteran's administration; employment and pre-employment records, including background reports, polygraph examinations or reports, efficiency rating, complaints, or grievance by or against me. Furthermore, I voluntarily, FULLY CONSENT TO UNDERGO PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND URINALYSIS DRUG SCREEN TESTING. I am fully aware, and consent that the information gathered in this screening process, be known to the officers and employees of the Houston County Sheriff's Office, as well as the officers and employees of the Houston County Personnel Department and the Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training Council. I am aware that such information is required for application for P.O.S.T. certification, and employment with the Houston County Sheriff's Office. I certify that any person(s) who may furnish such information concerning me shall not be held accountable for giving this information; and I do hereby release said person(s) from all liability which may be incurred because of furnishing such information. Therefore, I AGREE THAT THE INFORMATION ACQUIRED IN THIS INVESTIGATION BE USED FOR EMPLOYMENT, TERMINATION, OR DISCIPLINARY DETERMINATIONS, and that such information becomes a matter of public information and is accessible to the public under existing laws.

In consideration of making application for employment, and in complete understanding of the foregoing facts and possible results, I agree to hold to all elements of this release waiver, and further agree TO HOLD HARMLESS, SHERIFF CULLEN TALTON, AND ALL OTHER EMPLOYEES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, AND HOUSTON COUNTY, FROM ANY CIVIL LIABILITY OF ANY KIND OR DESCRIPTION, INCLUDING ACT OF OMISSION OR COMMISSION.

This declaration is made freely and voluntarily without fear of punishment or promise of reward, and with full and complete understanding of the terms and consequences of my action.

A photocopy of this release form will be valid as an original thereof, even though the said photocopy does not contain original writing of my signature.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE	DATE
NOTARY PUBLIC SIGNATURE	DATE

LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following is a check list for your convenience. We urge you to use it, as an incomplete application cannot be processed. Upon completion of the application, refer to this checklist to make sure no information has been omitted. Initial in the space provided for each item. Write N/A for items that do not apply to you.

- _____ All questions are answered.
- _____ The questions not applying to me are marked "N/A".
- _____ I have attached Copies of the following documents:
 - _____ Birth Certificate or proof of citizenship
 - _____ Copy of valid driver's license
 - _____ Copy of High School Diploma or GED
 - _____ Copy of Social Security Card
 - _____ DD-214 LONG FORM (If applicable), showing character of service
 - _____ Copy of P.O.S.T. Law Enforcement and / or Jail Certification (if applicable)
 - _____ Recent color photograph
 - _____ Copy of credit score with applicant's name
 - _____ Application is signed and dated
 - _____ Valid email address where you can be reached
 - _____ Emergency contact information, in the event you cannot be reached
 - _____ Arrest report (if applicable) and Disposition (if applicable)
 - _____ Other state's driver's history (if applicable)

THIS APPLICATION WILL BE ACTIVE UNTIL THE CANDIDATE IS DECLARED INELIGIBLE OR FOR 6 MONTHS WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.