



# OACP

## Constable Selection System (CSS)

***Discover the New World of Police Testing Recruitment in Ontario***

Policing as a career is a truly rewarding experience that offers opportunities like no other career path. The CSS has been re-designed, improved and modernized to become more efficient and affordable while being more accessible to candidates. In Ontario Police Chiefs take great pride in ensuring they hire the very best candidates to join their profession. Chiefs know the importance of ensuring that the people they hire will be the role models their communities deserve. In a society that is constantly evolving Police Constables must be able to deliver policing services in a manner that is fair and equitable to everyone.

# ONTARIO ASSOCIATIONS OF CHIEFS OF POLICE CONSTABLE SELECTION SYSTEM (OACP CSS)

## BELOW IS A QUICK OVERVIEW FOR POLICING IN ONTARIO

The Constable Selection System is a partnership between many of the Ontario Police Services and the OACP (Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police). Many police services in the Province of Ontario will expect candidates to have completed the CSS process and have a valid OACP Certificate before they will accept their application.

### What It Means to Be A Police Constable

A requirement for a successful career in policing is the ability to work with people to ensure public safety through crime prevention and law enforcement. Police work requires that a constable be able to build relationships in the community, showing sensitivity to and concern for the needs of people from all races, cultures and backgrounds.

The Police Services Act describes four key areas of responsibility for a police constable:

- preserving the peace;
- preventing crimes and providing assistance to others in their prevention;
- assisting victims of crime;
- apprehending and charging offenders and executing warrants.

In addition, a police officer is responsible for:

- referring individuals to community services and agencies;
- educating the public.

Police work can be demanding. A police constable must work shifts, including evenings, nights and weekends, throughout the year. This is not a job that everyone will like or can do well.

One of the goals of policing is to reflect the diversity of the communities served. This goal enables police services to improve and deliver services that are responsive to their needs. Police services to this end are looking for men and women from all backgrounds and walks of life, including people of all races, cultures, sexual orientation, and religious beliefs. Everyone who has a strong interest in becoming a police constable and who feels they meet the qualifications described in this information package is encouraged to apply.

## THINKING ABOUT A CAREER IN POLICING?

If you are interested in a career in Policing, start your process off by going on the official OACP Certificate website at [OACPCertificate.ca](http://OACPCertificate.ca). Here you will find all the necessary information to become a Police Officer. Once you feel you are ready, you can start your phase 1 testing under the "Start your Career" tab.

For people who are truly interested in serving the needs of the community, police work is rewarding. The job challenges you each day in complex ways. Whether you are dealing with the security concerns of a store merchant, talking with a senior citizen, or befriending a group of local kids, you will find that a police constable has a great deal of responsibility to the public. Fulfilling this responsibility will give you a sense of accomplishment and the confidence that you are making a contribution.

## **Training as A Police Constable**

Once you have successfully proceeded through the CSS pre-screening process and been offered an employment opportunity with a police services, you will undergo an intensive standardized training program at the Ontario Police College in Aylmer. This training program is designed to provide you with an understanding of the policing role in society, give you a sound knowledge of the law and procedures, and develop your skills to deal with various situations. Throughout this training program, there will be tests and then a final examination.

Some of the subjects and activities covered in the training program include federal and provincial statutes, firearms, defensive tactics, firearms safety, cross-cultural training, police procedures, crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques. An important component of the program is physical fitness training in which you will be required to meet specified physical fitness standards.

In addition, some police services provide further training at their own facilities. You will be required to pass such training before becoming eligible for appointment as a police constable.

Professional development related to various aspects of policing will continue throughout your career.

## **What You Can Expect**

Once you have been appointed to the rank of constable, you will progress through four classifications, from fourth class constable to first class constable. Your initial employment will include a period of probation. With good performance and availability of opportunities, you will be eligible to apply for promotion to higher ranks.

As a police constable, you are eligible for a competitive salary. Benefits vary across police services, but they generally include paid vacation, medical and dental plans, life insurance plans, employee assistance programs and opportunities for professional development.

## **What It Takes to Become A Police Constable**

### **Minimum Requirements**

To be considered for a career in policing, you must meet certain minimum requirements as outlined in the Police Services Act.

### **Specifically, you must:**

- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada;
- be at least 18 years of age;
- be physically and mentally able to perform the duties of the position, having regard to your own safety and the safety of members of the public;
- have successfully completed at least four years of secondary school education or its equivalent. (Note: official transcripts and diplomas will be required). Where education has been completed outside Ontario, official proof of equivalency must be obtained by contacting the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training;
- be of good moral character and habits, meaning that you are an individual other people would look upon as being trustworthy and having integrity.

### **In addition, you must:**

- possess a valid driver's licence with no more than six accumulated demerit-points, permitting you to drive an automobile in Ontario with full driving privileges;
- have current certification in CPR and first aid by the time the offer of employment is given;
- be able to pass a security clearance as well as background investigation, credit and reference checks.

**Pardons:** If you have any criminal convictions under a federal statute, you must obtain a pardon. If you have 'Findings of Guilt' which have resulted in absolute or conditional discharges, the records must be 'sealed' by the RCMP.

(This will be done automatically following one year if the absolute discharge is registered after July 24, 1992. For a conditional discharge, this will be done automatically following three years if the conditional discharge is registered after July 24, 1992. Otherwise you must apply to have these records sealed.)

### **Local Needs of Police Services**

Apart from the competencies, police services may also require certain special skills and abilities in order to address urgent issues pertaining to the service or the community. A Local Need may be a second language, a special type or level of computer skills, prior experience in working with victims and working in vulnerable communities.

### **The Selection Process**

The selection process consists of three assessment stages and is open to all applicants who meet the minimum requirements outlined in this package. You will advance through the process upon successfully completing each stage and will be notified of your progress throughout.



## The Three Phase Police Constable Selection Process

### Phase 1 (Pre-Hiring Stage)

Start your process by going on the official OACP testing website at [OACPCertificate.ca](http://OACPCertificate.ca).

Here, you will find a comprehensive website that walks you through the first phase one of the Constable Selection Process. The OACP has partnered with TNT Inc which is an educational and police training service to deliver effective testing and assist Police Services by sharing test results that are gathered during the pre-testing process.

**Fees:** For this phase one process, you will pay the OACP Certificate Testing Fee and commence your certificate application process online. After you have paid the testing fee, you will be provided with an email that outlines Part A.

**There are three parts to this certificate.**

**Part A:** Is the first stage in obtaining your online OACP Certificate. Here, you will be emailed a number of documents which you must complete in order to move on to the next stage.

**Medical Examination Form:** The applicant is required to conduct a medical examination package with an Audiologist/Hearing Instrument Specialist and Optometrist/Ophthalmologist. Both specialists are required to conduct in-depth specialty testing with the applicant to ensure they meet the minimum hearing and vision standards to become a Police Officer.

**Fitness Log:** The applicant is required to complete a fitness log and daily fitness journal for their application package which they will include with their application to a Police Service. This fitness log is to draw attention to the importance of physical fitness in the realm of Law Enforcement. The fitness log allows Police Services to assess the applicant's dedication to wellness and their level of fitness.

**Part B:** General Mental Ability Assessment. The online test administered in the Part B section is a General Mental Ability assessment which will be proctored online through a web-camera. The SSPO (Sigma Survey for Police Officers) was designed to identify candidates who have the cognitive skills to use sound practical judgment in police situations and who are capable of writing meaningful and credible police incident reports. The SSPO (Part B Exam) is broken into two major sections, Section A which measures: spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and grammar. Section B consists of 30 questions and is based on Police Problem-Solving.

**Part C:** Personality Assessment. The online test administered in Part C is a personality assessment which will also be proctored online through a web-camera. This personality-based selection is designed to provide employers with an efficient and effective method for identifying suitable job candidates. This assessment measures an employee's propensity to engage in both positive, as well as counterproductive work behaviours.

**Expiry Date - OACP Certificate:** Once the applicant has submitted the necessary documentation in Part A, successfully completed Part B and then completes Part C, they will be provided with an OACP Certificate. The expiry date for the OACP Certificate is **one year** from the date it was received. If the applicant passes the expiry date the entire Part 1 process has to be repeated along with corresponding fees.

## Phase 2 (Police Hiring Initial Stages)

**Information Session:** Police Services offer sessions where the recruiters conduct a presentation to a number of potential applicants. These sessions typically consist of background information about the service, police duties and also some insight and the benefits which that service has to offer. Many Police Services offer physical preparation sessions for the PREP test (<https://youtu.be/zWBPodHpieQ>) which an applicant must pass while in training at the Ontario Police College. Certain Police Services also require applicants to attend an information session prior to applying to their service. Information sessions can be attended **before or after Phase 1**.

**Application Package:** As an applicant, you will be required to submit a full Police application online or in person. In this application package, you may be required to submit the following:

- Government issued ID (i.e. driver's license, passport, birth certificate, OHIP card, etc.)
- Copies of Official transcripts and Certificates (high-school, College, or University)
- Applicants educated outside of Canada may be required to produce an Ontario equivalency assessment document.
- Reference letters
- Previous workplaces within the last 5 years
- Driver's abstract record from the Ministry of Transportation (Ontario)
- Criminal Record Check (CPIC query)
- Medical Examination Package (provided in Phase 1)
- Fitness Log (provided in Phase 1)

**Please note you may be required to produce more personal information than what is noted above.**

**Introduction/Pre-Background Questionnaire:** As part of an introduction, some Police Services may want to meet you in-person before you proceed with your Phase 2 assessment. During this, you will be required to complete a Pre-Background Questionnaire (PBQ). This is typically an extensive questionnaire (can require 1-2 hours to complete) that asks questions about your personal and work life. Police Services have an obligation to understand who they are hiring as a Police Constable. Much of the PBQ is to verify your credentials mentioned in the application. As an applicant, you must understand that a lack of honesty or any kind of deception will result in your immediate disqualification from the Constable Selection System.

**Local Focus Interview:** The Local Focus Interview is used to provide some insight of the applicant and also to assess your knowledge of the Police Service in which you are applying to. You can prepare for this interview by developing your interview skills and seeking information about the service online. For this interview you may be asked some questions like:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are some of your strengths and weaknesses?
- What do you know about the \*\*\*\*\* Police Service?
- Who is our Police Chief?
- How many divisions/districts do we have?
- What is our police jurisdiction?
- Tell me about something that has happened in the news recently.

***(Please note, these sample interview questions are purely speculative. You may or may not be asked these!)***

**Essential Competency Interview:** The Essential Competency Interview is a behavioural style interview. This interview is designed specifically to give the Police Recruiters an understanding of how your behaviour is demonstrated in certain scenarios. This tends to be a very intensive and exhaustive interview which can last 2-3 hours. For this interview, please ensure you are aware of the Police Services Essential Competency Interviews (ECI) (i.e. there are a variety of free based websites on Google you may search that provides a plethora of information on this) which can help give you some insight on what might be asked. For example, for this type of interview, you may be asked questions like:

- Give us a specific time you worked with a team to accomplish a common goal.
- Give us a specific example of when you had to utilize your analytical thinking skills.

***(Please note, these sample interview questions are purely speculative. You may or may not be asked these!)***

**Additional testing:** (i.e. driving, scenario, exercise) Certain Police Services require applicants to conduct additional testing in the midst of the Phase 2 - Phase 3 process. This testing varies between Services. You may encounter this testing stage at any point during your process. As Services implement different ways to assess their applicants, some of the stages you may encounter are:

**Driving Assessment:** applicant may conduct an in-person driving test with a Police Recruiter.

**Scenario:** The applicant may be placed in a scenario where they respond appropriately to a threat in front of the Police Recruiters.

**Physical Fitness:** The applicant may be required to conduct a physical test with the Police Recruiters and meet the required level of fitness. Some Police Services require the applicant to conduct the Ontario Police Fitness PIN test in-person, see (<https://youtu.be/P3n-LJ7ETZI>) for information on what is required.

### **Phase 3 (Police Hiring End Stages)**

**Background:** The Background stage is a very necessary and important step in the process of selecting a Police Constable. As a Police Officer, you will be granted arrest and search authorities by legislation to exercise your duties legally by law. As such, Police Services must rigorously assess an applicant's background to determine suitability. During this process, a background investigator will be assigned to thoroughly investigate the applicant. During this process, the applicant will be required to disclose the following:

- Criminal Record
- Police Contact
- Driving History
- Credit History
- Education History
- Employment History
- Alcohol and Drug Use and much more

**Psychological:** All potential Police applicants are required to conduct a psychological assessment. This may include a face to face interview with the Police psychologist or an overview of the results received from a psychological written test like the MMPI-2 (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory). At this stage, you will be asked a number of personal and uncomfortable questions. The purpose of this stage is to properly assess your personality traits and psychopathology.

**Note:** It should be noted that all information gathered in the pre-testing phase by the OACP will be shared with police services upon request to better assess suitability of applicants.

**Medical Assessment:** A thorough medical examination is conducted at this stage by the Police Service's Physician. You will be required to complete a medical history questionnaire and a comprehensive physical examination by the Physician. The Physician is to identify any potential medical conditions that may prevent the applicant conducting Police duties in a safe and effective manner.

**Conditional Offer:** The applicant may be provided a conditional offer of employment if they have successfully completed all required stages. The applicant will then be required to attend and successfully pass the Ontario Police College for training and then start their 12-month probationary period as a Police Constable with their Police Service.

### **Ontario Police College**

The Ontario Police College is the post-hire training institution for all Police Constables across the Province of Ontario. Here, the applicants will be taught sound knowledge of laws and procedure in which front-line Officers are required to apply to their daily performance in the field. Applicants are taught basic police training concepts, the theoretical aspects of Policing and elite emergency management skills. Here, you will consistently experience challenges, excitement, teamwork and pride. Once you have completed your 12 weeks training here, you will participate in a graduation ceremony. Once completed, you will return to your Police Service, receive additional training and commence your career on active duty.