



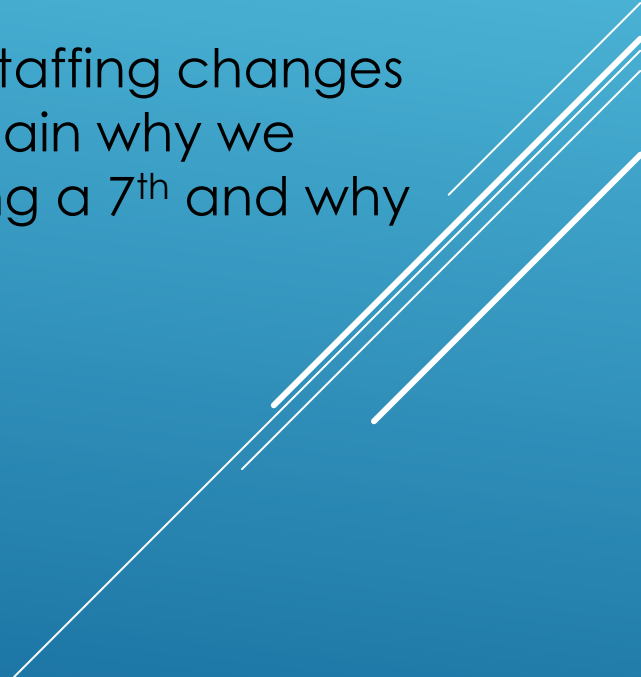
► Overview of Recruitment and Staffing in the Princeton, MA Police Department

► April 2024

**PRINCETON POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**

# POLICE DEPARTMENT RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING

The department would like provide an overview of our recent staffing changes and the process we go through to hire. We hope this helps explain why we asked the Selectboard for an 8<sup>th</sup> patrol officer before even hiring a 7<sup>th</sup> and why it takes so long to hire a new officer.

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# CURRENT STATE OF THE PRINCETON POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING

- As of 4/9, the Princeton PD has 7 out of 8 authorized full-time positions filled and 3 part-time positions filled
- Without additional hiring, the staffing levels could decrease this summer to 5 full-time and 3 part-time officers due to 1 FT officer becoming eligible for retirement and the expected resignation of another FT officer. This would be the lowest level in several years.
- Current recruitment efforts include:
  - 1 full-time officers: Posted 1/30/24
  - Part-time officer(s)

# RECENT STAFFING CHANGES

- Officer Chase: Full-time officer left for Sterling March 2021
- Officer Doyle: Full-time officer hired April 2021
- Officer Seymour: Part-time officer promoted to full-time July 2022
- Officer Porcaro: Full-time officer left for Sterling August 2022
- Officer F. Russell: Part-time officer promoted to full-time October 2022
- Chief Patriarca started January 1, 2023
- Officer Nuttal: Part-time officer sworn in July 2023
- Officer Seymour: Full-time officer left for W. Boylston PD November 2023
- Officer Nuttal: moved from part-time to full-time on December 1 2023
- Officer Costa: Full-time officer started 1/16/24
- Officer Nuttal: Moved from full-time to part-time on 2/11/24, now full-time in Spencer
- Officer Sargood: Moved from part-time to full-time on 3/21/24
- Officer Cecchi: part-time left to be Chief at Framingham State Univ, March 2024

# CHALLENGES IN RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

- Hiring process for police officers takes approximately 4-6 months from job posting to hire and is the same whether full or part-time.
- There is a nation-wide shortage of police officers entering and remaining in the field, which reduces the pool of qualified candidates and increases attrition rates
- Princeton strives to remain competitive with pay and benefits, but the size of the department does not offer the same growth opportunities larger towns and cities can
- Princeton PD's lean staffing requires reliance on forced overtime, which increases stress on officers and their families and which can lead to lower morale and higher attrition rates

# HIRING TIMELINE FOR MOST RECENT HIRE - ACADEMY TRAINED


Step	Details	Timeline
Job Posted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Seeking Academy-trained full-time officer</li></ul>	7/1/23
Initial & Ongoing Review of Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>76 applications are screened as received. 60 didn't have the Academy, 7 eliminated quickly, 9 worth pursuing.</li><li>Initial interviews with Chief and 2 officers (2 no-shows)</li><li>2 candidates move to next step</li></ul>	Interviews 11/16/23
Background Check on Candidates by Certified Background Investigator (CBI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Candidates sign releases and fill out packet</li><li>CBI thoroughly investigates candidate's employment, residential, military, education, infraction/discipline/criminal and personal history</li></ul>	2 - 3 months
Conditional Offer of Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conditional offer extended to candidate</li><li>Candidate completes psychiatric and medical examination</li><li>Additional interviews and investigation following up on background check discoveries</li></ul>	Offer signed January 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Offer Acceptance, Onboarding, & Field Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requisitions submitted for uniforms and equipment</li><li>4-week field training (town-specific)</li></ul>	6 weeks



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)


- Why is the recruitment timeline so long?
  - The recruiting timeline for police officers is 4-6 months on average due to the extensive background check performed by a Certified Background Investigator (CBI). Larger departments have a dedicated CBI or team of CBIs performing this function. In Princeton, Officer Doyle has attained this certification and is responsible for the background checks in addition to her investigations, patrol, and outreach duties. Officer F. Russell has recently attained CBI certification and begun assisting.
- What does the CBI look for?
  - Does the person have the integrity, honesty, work ethic, diligence, common sense, temperament and skills to work in Princeton?
- How is this uncovered?
  - Though an exhaustive and sometimes intrusive review of 10-20 years of all aspects of the candidate's history: work, personal, military, educational, social, and residential.
- What can we do to address this?
  - Outsource our background checks? Form an intermunicipal agreement with other small towns to share CBI resources? Add Detective hours to increase turnaround time?

# IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

- Could take over 6 months to have a academy trained officer on the street
  - Could take well over 13 months if we hire an applicant with no academy (if there is an academy class available)
  - Police services re-focused on hiring process leaving less time for investigations and patrol
  - Staffing shortfalls made up through overtime
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# IN SUMMARY

- Maintaining our preferred level of staffing is very challenging
  - Hiring takes a lot of time away from other policing activities
  - It can take 6 months to fill an opening, leaving the Department shorthanded and very dependent upon overtime.
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