

West Chester Borough Police Department
2026 Hiring Campaign
FAQs

What is the process to get hired?

We follow a Civil Service process. After submission of the application, qualified applicants are invited to a written test. Candidates who score 70% or higher on the written test are invited to take the physical agility test. The physical agility test is scheduled on the same day as the written test, a few hours after the written test. The physical agility test is pass/fail. Candidates who pass both the written text and the physical agility test will be ranked by written score. The Civil Service Commission will then determine how many candidates are moved to the Oral Review Board. Candidates who pass the Oral Review Board will then be moved to the background investigation.

What is the timeline for hiring?

Ideally, after completion of all of the testing, background investigation, and all other pre-employment processes, new officers would be hired by June of 2026.

What is the physical agility test comprised of?

The test follows the MPOETC standards. They can be found here:

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/mpoetc/programs/training/basic-police-officer-training/physical-fitness>

What if I have no prior police experience?

Candidates need not have any prior experience or academy training. Candidates who are hired and do not have academy training will be sent to the police academy and paid their full salary while attending the academy.

Does the West Chester Police Department hire lateral transfers?

All candidates must apply and go through the same hiring process as described above. Candidates who are currently Pennsylvania police officers with ACT 120 training would not need to attend the police academy. The starting salary for new officers who have prior experience is higher than for new officers with no experience. West Chester Borough is currently exploring the possibility of implementing the pension service credit for prior police service as allowed by PA Act 49 of 2024.

What if I'm an officer in another state?

Officers from other states, if hired by a Pennsylvania police department, may be eligible to take the waiver assessment test. Details can be found at the MPOETC site:

<https://www.pa.gov/services/mpoetc/apply-for-the-partial-waiver-assessment-test-for-law-enforcement>

What are the terms of the police pension?

Pensions are vested at 12 years. Full pension benefits are available at retirement upon superannuation of 25 years of service and 50 years of age. An early retirement option is available at 20 years of service. Annual pension amounts are determined by 50% of the average annual gross earnings over the last 36 months of employment.

What is the salary?

The starting salary for a police officer with no prior experience is approximately \$56,000. Officers with prior experience start as high as approximately \$84,000. The current top salary for a patrol officer with 5 years of service with the West Chester Police Department is approximately \$143,000. All officers receive a one-time \$10,000 hiring bonus after 90 days of employment or completion of the police academy training.

What are the benefits?

Officers receive up to 5 weeks' vacation, depending on length of service. All officers receive paid holiday time, sick time, and personal leave. Health, vision, and dental insurance for officers and dependents is provided. 457b Retirement Savings Accounts are available, as well as Health Savings Accounts. Officers are eligible to participate in a wellness incentive program, earning additional pay for wellness related activities.

What is the work schedule like?

Currently, patrol officers work a 12-hour shift, rotating every two weeks between days and nights. Officers assigned to the detective division, special services division, and the administrative division work either 8- or 10-hour shifts.

What is the rank structure like and what opportunity is there for advancement?

Every squad of officers is led by a Sergeant and a Corporal. The administrative section is made up of three lieutenants and the police chief. At full staffing, there is one chief, 3 lieutenants, 6 sergeants, 6 corporals and 29 officers.

Our criminal investigative division is comprised of a sergeant, a corporal and several detectives. Detectives are assigned to narcotics, juvenile, and major crimes.

What are the grooming standards (beards) and tattoo restrictions?

In general, with the exception of a neatly trimmed mustache, facial hair is prohibited. Non-offensive tattoos that are visible while in uniform are acceptable so long as they are not on the head, face, or neck.