

# FORT WALTON BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

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*An Equal Opportunity Employer*



# INTEREST PACKAGE

# Chief's Letter

Thank you for your interest in becoming one of the professionals of the Fort Walton Beach Police Department.

The City of Fort Walton Beach has been ranked as one of America's "Ten Best Places to Live" by *Money* magazine. Ours is a family-oriented community offering some of Florida's best schools, a high standard of living, low cost of living, and endless recreational opportunities.

Our department of 56 sworn officers and 21 civilians serves a community of approximately 22,000 permanent residents and many more guests that are seasonal.

We are a progressive department, seeking only candidates of the highest caliber. We offer our officers a modern fleet of vehicles, advanced communications and information technology, opportunity for advancement and diversity of experience, competitive pay, and attractive benefits. Our strategies for deterrence and detection reflect our progressive attitude. We pride ourselves on the excellent relationship we maintain with the community we serve. Community Oriented Policing, Crime Prevention Program and our Citizens Police Academy are each essential to this relationship. We are currently seeking accreditation by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

Again, I thank you for your interest. If you desire more specific information about our department or application process, feel free to contact Captain Tony Taylor, (850) 833-9554.

## Application Procedures

The Fort Walton Beach Police Department considers applicants who have successfully completed Florida police standards certification and have passed the Florida law enforcement certification examination. There are certain exceptions for applicants previously certified in other states or with federal agencies. Contact Captain Tony Taylor, (850) 833-9554, if you feel you may qualify for an exception.

1. Information on obtaining certification can be obtained from:

Okaloosa-Walton College  
Public Safety Department  
100 College Boulevard  
Niceville, FL 32578  
Contact: Anthony Boyer, Training Center Coordinator @ (850) 729-5378

George Stone Vocational Center  
2400 Longleaf Drive  
Pensacola, FL 32526  
Contact: Sylvia Larson @ (850) 944-6775  
**\*Cross-over class available for Officers with out-of-state certification**

Gulf Coast Community College  
5230 W. Highway 98  
Panama City, FL 32401  
Contact: Michael Dwyer @ (850) 769-1551 ext 5608  
**\*Cross-over class available for Officers with out-of-state certification**

2. Applications are available from:

City of Fort Walton Beach  
Attn: Human Resources Department  
107 Miracle Strip Parkway S.W.  
Contact: (850) 833-9507

## Minimum Requirements

1. Be at least 19 years of age.
2. Be a citizen of the United States.
3. Be a high school graduate, or its equivalent.
4. Shall not have been convicted of domestic violence or any felony or misdemeanor involving perjury or false statement. Any person who, after July 1, 1981, pleads guilty or nolo contendere to or is found guilty of a felony or misdemeanor involving perjury or a false statement shall not be eligible for employment or appointment as an officer, notwithstanding suspension of sentence or withholding of adjudication.
5. Be a nonuser of tobacco or tobacco products commencing with date of hire.
6. Received an honorable or better discharge from any of the Armed Forces of the United States, if applicable.
7. Be fingerprinted by the employing agency and processed by the FDLE and the FBI.
8. After conditional offer of employment, have passed a pre-employment physical examination, drug screen; polygraph test, psychological evaluation and background investigation.
9. Have good moral character as defined in FAC Rule 11b-27.
10. Complete an Affidavit of Applicant form (CJSTC-68).
11. Have completed police basic recruit training or high liability proficiency (if exempt from basic recruit training) and pass the Florida State certification examination.
11. Comply with continuing training or education requirements.
12. Pass a physical ability test.
13. Possess a valid Florida driver's license.

## Career Progression and Opportunities

The Fort Walton Beach Police Department seeks to provide continuous advancement opportunities and career-broadening challenges throughout the officer's career.

1. Officers remain in probationary status during the initial (12) twelve months of service.

2. Recruit officers are required to complete a minimum of fourteen weeks in field training under the supervision of a Field Training Officer (FTO). The recruit spends the first two weeks of this period observing the FTO and becoming familiar with the geography of Fort Walton Beach. During the next ten weeks, the recruit gradually assumes the role of primary officer within an assigned patrol zone, though he will always be accompanied by the FTO. During the final two weeks, the recruit is expected to work without the assistance and supervision of the FTO. The recruit receives written daily feedback during the field-training program. Most recruits successfully complete field training, but it is not unusual for the fourteen-week field-training period to be extended, either at the direction of the Field Training Sergeant or at the recruit's request.
3. The officer will typically be ineligible for special duty assignments or responsibilities during the first year of service. Career broadening opportunities available to our officers later include, but are not limited to Field Training Officer, Detective, Community Oriented Police Officer, D.U.I. Enforcement Officer, and Tactical Response Unit Member.
4. Advancement is competitive in nature and is based upon performance evaluations, written examinations, and oral boards.
5. Officers continue to have opportunities to attend specialized law enforcement classes throughout their careers at no personal expense.

## Pay

The City of Fort Walton Beach offers police officers competitive direct compensation.

1. Our basic salary range:
  - Police Officer                   \$32,444 - \$56,258
  - Police Sergeant               \$40,199 - \$69,705
  - Police Captain:               \$50,529 - \$87,617
2. A 3 1/2 percent step increase plan and cost of living adjustments are typically received annually. (2008/09 Fiscal Year – Step Increase Suspended).
3. Court appearances and mandatory extra duty (parades, disaster, call-outs) are paid at the officer's current pay rate and are included in the computations for each pay period for the purposes of calculating overtime. Officers are ineligible for compensatory time in lieu of overtime pay.
4. Salary incentives are offered for special duty assignments. These assignments include Field Training Officer, Detective, Community Oriented Police Officer, and D.U.I. Enforcement Specialist.
5. The City of Fort Walton Beach matches Florida's post-secondary education incentive payments to a maximum of \$260 per month (\$130 state + \$130 city).
6. Superior performers may be awarded a special merit increase. Award of this increase is made upon the recommendation of the officer's supervisor during the officer's annual performance rating and the concurrence of the Chief of Police and City Manager.

## Benefits

The City of Fort Walton Beach provides police officers with a benefits package designed to ensure security for them and their families.

1. Officers are currently offered individual or family medical and dental insurance plans at competitive rates. Life insurance (\$20,000) is provided at no cost to the officer.
2. Officers are offered at their expense, low-cost accident, illness, and disability plans to supplement worker's compensation entitlements.
3. The City of Fort Walton Beach recognizes 10 paid holidays.
4. Officers accrue 80 hours of vacation leave annually. There are scheduled increases at the 5, 10, and 15-year career marks.
5. Officers accrue 80 hours of sick leave annually.
6. Officers participate in a retirement plan funded by the officer and the City of Fort Walton Beach. Officers are vested after 10 years.
7. The City of Fort Walton Beach offers tuition reimbursement for successfully completed job related college courses. The percentage of reimbursement is on a sliding scale, based upon the academic grade received.
8. Uniforms (minus underwear, socks, shoes, and gloves) are provided at no cost. Leather/nylon gear, firearms, handcuffs, impact weapons, and chemical agents are provided at no cost.
9. Officers are eligible for membership in the Endeavor Credit Union.
10. The City offers a deferred compensation program (457K) in which an officer may participate.

## Selection

The selection process is, by necessity, thorough and demanding. If at any time during the process you are disqualified, you will receive written notification detailing our justification.

1. Complete the City of Fort Walton Beach employment application and the Fort Walton Beach Police Department pre-employment questionnaire. Return them to Human Resources within the allotted time.
2. Human Resources will forward your application and pre-employment questionnaire to the police department for a preliminary review.
3. The background investigator will conduct criminal history inquiries on you through the NCIC/FCIC/FBI. Your driving record will also be examined.
4. Questionnaires will be sent to your personal and employment references.
5. A physical ability test and a battery of written examinations will be administered.
6. The background investigator will interview you.
7. The background investigator will complete a report with a hiring recommendation for the Chief of Police to review.

8. If you are recommended, your employment package will be returned to Human Resources for processing. Human resources will schedule you for psychological testing, polygraph examination, medical examination, and a drug screen, as positions become available.
9. All appointments are contingent upon final recommendation by the City Manager.

## CONCLUSION

As may be apparent by our comprehensive application, we are interested in employing top quality, above average applicants. Our hiring process is an important factor contributing to our ability to remain one of the premier law enforcement agencies in Northwest Florida.

Your interest is greatly appreciated. We hope to hear from you soon.