LWVLGA Questions for the Police Chiefs in our Communities

1. **Please describe the vetting process for candidates who apply to become police officers in your department.**

The La Grange Police Department utilizes a multi-step vetting process. A candidate must pass each step in the process prior to moving onto the next step in the process, and can be eliminated at any point. That process is as follows:

1. Application (quite extensive)
2. Written Exam, which consists of two primary components: A traditional police officer examination and a situational judgment test.  The traditional police officer exam assesses job-related cognitive abilities, personality characteristics and behavioral traits.  The situational judgment test assesses job-related skills associated with interpersonal and problem-solving interactions similar to those an entry-level officer would face on the job. The La Grange Board of Fire and Police Commissioners approves the testing company as well as the time, date and location of the exam.
   * After the written exam is completed, applicants can request preference points based on prior law enforcement experience, military experience an education.
   * The La Grange Board of Fire and Police Commissioners (citizen volunteers) reviews and approves the list.
3. Scenario based interview with the La Grange Board of Fire and Police Commissioners (citizen volunteers)
4. Intensive background investigation, which includes verification of employment (review of personnel records), reference checks, criminal history check, driver’s license check, credit history check, review of social media posts, a contact check with each police department where the candidate resided, fingerprints, neighborhood canvass (speak to random neighbors unannounced), multiple interviews with our Investigators and a review/verification of college transcripts
   * If nothing is discovered during this portion of the background investigation, the candidate is sent for a polygraph exam.
5. Once steps one through four are completed, a recommendation is made to the La Grange Board of Fire and Police Commissioners to either eliminate the candidate or proceed with a Conditional Offer of Employment. If the candidate is granted a Conditional Offer of Employment and accepts, the individual undergoes a psychological exam and an intensive medical exam (stress test, drug screening, vision, hearing test).
6. Depending on the outcome of step five, a recommendation is made to the La Grange Board of Fire and Police Commissioners to either eliminate or hire the applicant and the BOFPC votes on that recommendation.
7. **How often are veteran officers evaluated for compliance with Department policy and what is that process?**

The La Grange Police Department utilizes two different processes to evaluate compliance with departmental directives. The first is the annual evaluation. The evaluation is completed each calendar year and covers topics such as Judgment and Problem Solving, Public Relations and Public Contact, and Compliance with Supervision and Rules.

Secondly, each of the six Sergeants is required to complete one monthly Behavior Observation Report. The Sergeant will randomly pick one officer to observe and evaluate based on an activity (Suspect Apprehension, Traffic Stop, Traffic Crash Investigation, Terry Stop, etc.). Within each activity, there are a number of factors that are reviewed. That report is then submitted to the Deputy Chief for review.

**3.       What percentage of your officers are female? What percentage of your officers are African American, Latino/a, Asian American or other persons of color and how do those percentages compare with the demographics of your community? Are any of your females or officers of color in supervisory or management roles?   Does your Department have a policy promoting diversity in hiring?  Please describe the policy.**

The La Grange Police Department currently has 25 sworn Officers.

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| **Ethnicity of Officer** | **Number** | **Percentage of Department** | **La Grange** |
| Hispanic | 4 | 16.00% | 7.7% |
| African American | 1 | 4.00% | 5.7% |
| Asian | 1 | 4.00% | 1.4% |
| Total # of Minority Officers | 6 | 24% | 16..05% |
|  |  |  |  |
| Female Officers | 5 | 20.00% | 51.90% |
| *Nationally female Officers makeup 12.6% of all Police Officers* | | |  |

The La Grange Police Department currently has one female Squad Leader. This position oversees the shift in the absence of the Sergeant. Previously, the La Grange Police Department had a female Police Chief, Renee Strasser, from 2015 through 2016 but she retired.

The La Grange Police Department’s Recruitment and Selection policy attempts to recruit and select employees from a qualified and diverse pool of candidates. This is done by Identification of racially and culturally diverse target markets and the use of marketing strategies to target diverse applicant pools.

In fact, during the police testing process this past fall (2020), the La Grange Police Department advertised on The Black Collegian Online for applicants.

**4.       Is there a clear and enforced use-of-force continuum that details what weapons and force are acceptable in a wide variety of civilian-police interactions? Please describe those policies. Are police officers required to intervene if they witness excessive force being used by another officer?**

The La Grange Police Department has several policies that addresses Use of Force, which outlines different levels of force as well as what weapons are allowed. This information can also be found on the Village’s Website at [Policy FAQs](https://www.villageoflagrange.com/DocumentCenter/View/2241/La-Grange-Police-Policies-and-Procedures-FAQs) The Village and Police Department posted a number of policies and statements on the Village’s website in June. I would also recommend reviewing [Commitment to the Community](https://www.villageoflagrange.com/460/Commitment-to-Community) on website as well. This should provide you with the information you are asking about and in an easy to follow format.

Yes, police officers are required to intervene if they witness excessive force being used by another officer. That is discussed in the FAQ’s as well.

**5.       Is there an early-intervention system enforced to correct officers who use excessive force?**

The La Grange Police Department conducts an internal review of every Use of Force. This review is conducted by the on-duty supervisor and includes the names of witness and video if available (squad video). The review is then forwarded to the Deputy Chief and then Chief for final review. This process is utilized to identify policy and training issues.

**6.       Do all of your officers receive de-escalation training?  If so, please describe the training.**

Yes, officers within the La Grange Police Department receive de-escalation training. This is accomplished through a number of training classes.

Since October of 2018 we have had thirteen (13) officers attend in-depth de-escalation training to include a 16-hour class on De-Escalation Strategies for Safe Street Encounters, a one-day Crisis Communication and Communication Tactics Class as well as the 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team training; the latter is highly sought after and provides a state certification. The La Grange Police Department currently has eight (8) officers certified as Crisis Intervention Team Officers.

The La Grange Police Department also completes monthly online training through its Policy Manual vendor, Lexipol ([Lexipol](https://www.lexipol.com/industries/law-enforcement/)) and through the Police Law Institute ([Police Law Institute](https://policelaw.org/)). Lexipol provides continual training on our department policies and the Police Law Institute covers a number of topics. Some of the topics covered this past year were Autism Spectrum Disorder Awareness for Law Enforcement, Psychology of Domestic Violence, and Domestic Violence Law and Enforcement, Implicit Bias, Cultural Competency and Racial Profiling and Use of Force; Deadly Force; Qualified Immunity. We have received de-escalation training as well.

**7.       What types of calls or required interventions did you receive in the last year [mental health, behavioral health, substance abuse, domestic violence, gun violence, traffic related, public disturbances, property damage, etc.]?  Please indicate the percentage in each category.**

A chart is attached to the e-mail to provide the information you requested. We were a little confused by this question but assumed you were looking for a breakdown of all calls for service. Since such a chart would have been too large, we provided the top 25.

8**.       Has your Department signed on to the 10 Shared Principles affirmed by the IL NAACP and the ILACP?   If not, why not?  If so, what is your Department doing to implement the principles?**

The La Grange Police Department adopted the 10 Shared Principles in August of 2018. In fact, they are posted in the lobby of our Police Department.

The 10 Shared Principles were provided to all staff members when they were adopted. Additionally, a large portion of the training that the Police Law Institute provides addresses many of those principles. Lastly, a larger portion of the information within this document is germane to the principles (training, website information, policies, racial makeup of the department, recruitment).