

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR VA FORM 0120
VA POLICE OFFICER PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING CHECKLIST
(OMB 2900-0524)**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection of information.

It is the policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) that no person be employed as a VA police officer who has been convicted of a serious crime or has a history that reflects disregard for laws and regulations, questionable character, or a pattern of misconduct or poor work habits. Pre-employment screening for VA police officers and full verification of qualifications and suitability has been a long-standing policy. Audits by the VA Office of Inspector General conducted in 1987 - 1988 revealed deficiencies in the implementation of the VA's pre-employment suitability and qualification verification practices nationwide. Individuals with criminal records, applicants not meeting OPM/VA qualification standards, or applicants with poor to unsatisfactory work experience were hired as VA police officers. Accurate recording of required pre-employment screening procedures would have revealed the disqualifying conditions. The VA Form 0120, VA Police Officer Pre-employment Screening Checklist, involves thorough pre-employment screening and special background checks for police officer applicants. It also provided a record of pre-employment screening in conformance with selection standards that ensure that Federal criminal law enforcement authority is granted cautiously and responsibly.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purposes the information is to be used; indicate actual use the agency has made of the information received from current collection.

Each VA medical center has the authority to hire its own VA police officers. Prior to employment of a qualified applicant, each facility is required to conduct an FBI arrest record inquiry and to contact listed former employers for a determination of any adverse performance or suitability information. The VA Form 0120 is completed by each VA facility human resources office and serves as a record of pre-employment screening to determine the qualifications and suitability of the applicant. The office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Security and Law Enforcement in VA Central Office reviews each completed form and authorizes the VA Medical center to either proceed with hiring the individual, or deem the individual unacceptable to be a VA Police Officer due to items revealed during the FBI Criminal History check. The VA Form 0120 is completed by each VA facility human resources office and a determination of the qualifications and suitability of the applicant are acceptable. The office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Security and Law Enforcement in VA Central Office will authorize the VA Medical Center to secure a seat in the next VA Basic Police Officer Course as long as all other requirements set forth by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are satisfactorily accomplished. This form serves as a standard means of ensuring the appropriate completion of the pre-employment process.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the

basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

The information technology is not feasible because the data required to complete the VA Form 0120 consists of arrest record checks accessed through the automated FBI criminal justice records system and telephonic queries to previous employers.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

OPM conducts a post-appointment Minimum Background Investigation on all police hired; however, the completion of the pre-employment screening checks needs to be accomplished because of the extended time period required by OPM to complete the background investigation. This is the first official record maintained by each facility and VA Central Office that documents the collection of pre-employment screening information. No other information is available, other than that collected for the VA Form 0120, that can be used or modified for the purposes described in #2 above.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

Approximately 25% of the collection of information involves small business or other small entities. Since requests are done telephonically, the burden is less than that caused by providing a written response. No other method is used for conducting a discussion of a supervisor's view of an applicant.

6. Describe the consequences to federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden

If the collection of the information were to be done less frequently it would render the pre-employment policy and structure ineffective. A return to deficient pre-employment screening and recording conditions would ensue.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted more often than quarterly or require respondents to prepare written responses to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; submit more than an original and two copies of any document; retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years; in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study and require the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.

There are no special circumstances requiring that the collection be conducted in any manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.6 guidelines.

8. a. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the sponsor's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the sponsor in responses to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

The agency notice was published in the Federal Register /Vol. 81, No. 229 /Tuesday, November 29, 2016, at page 86073. There were no comments received.

b. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure or reporting format, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed or reported. Explain any circumstances which preclude consultation every three years with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained.

Outside consultation is conducted with the public through the 60- and 30-day Federal Register notices.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts to respondents have been made under this collection of information.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

This office complies with the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1994 (5 U.S.C., 522a). Assurances of confidentiality are provided in the system of records identified as "Personal Investigation Records, OPM/Central 9."

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private; include specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information:

Estimates of Information Collection Burden:

- a. Number of respondents is estimated at 1,500 per year.
- b. Frequency of response: One time
- c. Average time: 10 minutes.

d. Annual burden: 250 hours.

e. Annual cost to respondents: \$5,807.50 (250 hours X \$23.23 per hour).

The Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2015 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates gathers information on full-time wage and salary workers. Accordingly, the median hourly wage is \$23.23 based on the BLS wage code – “00-0000 All Occupations”

https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm#00-0000.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

This collection does not involve a record keeping cost burden to respondents.

14. Provide estimates of annual cost to the federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operation expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

Cost to the Federal Government:

Processing/analyzing Cost Estimate (500 forms x 12 minutes to fill out at field facilities X GS 9/5* @ (\$29.85/hour = \$2,985) + (500 forms x 10 minutes to review and verify at the VA LETC X GS 9/5* @ \$29.85 = \$2,487.50) + (500 forms X 5 minutes to review at Central Office X GS 7/5* @ \$24.41/hour = \$1,017.08) + (500 forms X \$.50 per NCIC check transaction = \$250)

Source: Office of Personnel Management 2017 General Schedule, Hourly Rates:

https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2017/RUS_h.pdf

Publication Cost per 100 forms = \$29.00. Total cost for 500 forms = \$145

Total Cost to Government = \$6,884.58

15. Explain the reason for any changes reported in Items 13 or 14 of OMB 83-I.

There is no change in burden.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

The information collected is not for publication or statistical use.

17. If seeking approval to omit the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

Not applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions,” of OMB 83-I.

This submission does not contain any exceptions to the certification statement.

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This data collection does not employ statistical methods.