



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**16-1230

---

**Agenda Item Number:** 31.

**Agenda Date:** 2/11/2016

**In Control:** City Council A Session

---

**DEPARTMENT:** Human Resources

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Lori Steward, Human Resources Director

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City wide

**SUBJECT:**

Modifications to the entrance examination process for the San Antonio Police Department.

**SUMMARY:**

This ordinance authorizes the City Manager or her designee to amend the contract with Industrial/Organizational Solutions, Inc., (original Ordinance No. 2015-06-18-0568), a personnel selection and testing consulting firm. The testing modifications will be made to the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) entry-level examinations for the position of police cadet. The amendment goes into effect pursuant to the passage of this ordinance, with total compensation not to exceed \$33,095.00 related to this amendment.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 143, known as the Texas Fire Fighters' and Police Officers' Civil Service Law, mandates the use of examinations as part of the hiring process for police personnel. The current SAPD collective bargaining agreement (CBA) requires that a consultant to the City create a validated entry-level examination process. As part of this process, the consultant has developed an electronic (online) cognitive ability exam, a physical ability test (PAT), and a structured oral interview (SOI) scenario and questionnaire. The professional testing consultant has expertise in developing examinations that comply with professional, state, and federal guidelines related to personnel testing, which include the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines, Department of Justice, and the City's CBA.

The entry-level testing modifications included in this amendment deal with the SOI and PAT portions of the exam. The current process for assessing applicants under the SOI is to schedule an interview before a panel of three SAPD staff. The applicant is given one of several predetermined interview scenarios and allowed time to prepare. Once prepared, the applicant makes a presentation to the panel on how to handle the scenario. The applicant then responds to a list of predetermined questions for the given scenario, and the panel scores the applicant. There is no dynamic interaction between the panel and the applicant, and the scenarios and their respective questions are each predetermined. As such, the proposed modification to this portion of the exam is to move to a video-recorded SOI. This will create several efficiencies: 1) allows the scoring of the SOI at the convenience of the officers on the panel, reducing the amount of paid overtime; 2) conveniently allows for the

SOI to be offered in conjunction with other portions of the exam on the same day; 3) reduces the administrative time required to coordinate, setup and schedule the SOI; 4) and allows for SOI testing to take place off-site, at locations outside of San Antonio, which increases the convenience for both the applicant and the department.

The second portion of entry-level testing modifications in this amendment deal with the PAT. Currently, this portion of the test is offered only at the SAPD Academy, and is based on obstacles and permanent fixtures installed at the facility, and there is no means to test an applicant's physical ability off-site. By creating a portable PAT, it will allow for testing when recruiters travel to other locations. Off-site testing will increase the convenience for out of town applicants to enter the process and immediately move on to the SOI phase.

When used in conjunction with a video recorded SOI, these modifications will allow applicants to complete the first three phases of the hiring process at remote locations or job fairs, greatly increasing the convenience of the application process for the candidate, and providing a much more efficient and marketable recruiting tool for the department.

#### **ISSUE:**

Utilizing third-party test preparation provides a legally defensible, validated examination process. Execution of this amendment will allow the City to continue to retain a testing consultant with expertise in developing entry-level examinations and ensure the City's ability to administer professionally developed and validated examinations in accordance with the civil service statute (Chapter 143 of the Local Government Code) and the City's CBA.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The alternative is not to perform the modifications to the Police Department's entry-level examination. This would continue the process as is, thereby not realizing any of the aforementioned efficiencies created by the video-based interview and the remote PAT testing.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funds are available in the FY 2016 General Fund Budget for this one time expense of \$33,095. Funds are included in the Police Department Fees to Professional Contractors Budget for the Police entrance exam program.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

In order to maintain continuity in the administration of professionally developed entry-level examinations, staff recommends approval of this ordinance to execute the amendment with I/O Solutions upon the passage of this ordinance.