CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM
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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
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General Physical Requirements for Applicants Seeking an Occupational Career in Municipal, County or State Law Enforcement

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Based on a random survey of a limited literature base pertaining to those physical requirements many reputable municipal, county and state law enforcement agencies require of their candidates, this document attempts to identify those essential elements comprising same. It does not offer any specific information pertaining to a particular agency nor does it include that information relevant to Criminal investigation at the Federal level, or those requirements for individuals seeking a position in the Correctional field and/or that area of Judicial Administration. Rather, it is a report presented as a compendium of that data promulgated by select law enforcement training councils and/or agencies.

It is hoped that this document will provide interested Wright State University criminal justice students with pertinent information pertaining to the physical requirements for one specifically seeking a career in law enforcement. Academic requirements differ with each agency, and, therefore, it is suggested that the student contact that public law enforcement entity he/she is specifically interested in for employment.

WEIGHT AND PHYSICAL FITNESS STANDARDS FOR POLICE OFFICER CANDIDATES

ALLOWANCE FOR EXCEPTIONAL CONDITIONS

A reasonable degree of latitude is permitted the medical examiner in his identification and interpretation of exceptional conditions which do not come within the prescribed standards, and which in his opinion would not adversely affect the performance of ordinary police duties.

"ORDINARY POLICE DUTIES" GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETATION

WEIGHT permissive procedures wherein overweight or underweight candidates may be

put on notice to correct this defect to retain candidacy.

vision addition of standard for perception of color. Correct reading of 13 or more of

the first 15 Ishahara plates is deemed acceptable.

addition of guidelines for standards and addition of audiometer tests between

250 and 6,000 cycles per second with hearing loss not exceeding 30 decibels.

addition of clause permitting candidates to be put on notice in event, of a

TEETH remediable defect and to permit continuation of his candidacy upon

certification that the defect has been corrected.

modification of standards to qualify with systolic not higher than 140, not lower

PRESSURE

The investment of standards to quarry with systems first reading than 90; diastolic maximum 95 and to permit additional readings if first reading

does not meet the standard.

PART I

REQUIRED MEDICAL STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

(See accompanying illustrative check list of conditions to be considered as disqualifying -- Part IV)

This examination is not rated on a percent score but merely on a pass or reject basis.

The findings of qualified medical examiners duly appointed by the local Civil Service Commissions shall be deemed to be valid for the purposes outlined in these standards. Examination reports from personal or family physicians of candidates are not to be presented by or on behalf of candidates certifying as to compliance with the standards contained herein.

ALLOWANCE FOR EXCEPTIONAL CONDITIONS

It is recognized that no set of standards can possibly be devised wherein all exceptional situations may be identified and satisfactorily resolved. It is therefore deemed advisable to permit a reasonable degree of latitude to the professional examiner in his identification and interpretation of exceptional conditions which, in his opinion, would not adversely affect the performance of ordinary police duties by the candidate. Examples of such exceptional conditions, with guidelines for same, are outlined in separate sections of the standards.

The general procedure to be followed by the examiner when a condition not within the stated limits is noted, is for the examiner to attach a signed statement to the report of examination, in which he (1) identifies the particular condition, and (2) gives his medical opinion as to why this condition is deemed to be in such degree or to such extent as would not adversely affect the performance of "ordinary police duties" by the candidate during the normal period of his police career.

Within the range of "ordinary police duties" the candidate should be capable of performing arduous physical exercise, such as running at a rapid pace for up to three or four minutes; doing heavy lifting such as carrying or helping carry an injured person or body for some distance;

restraining a violent person, or similar strenuous feats, without obvious danger of over-exertion. An obvious lack of physical coordination, obesity, or other types of physical disabilities would reasonably be considered to be barriers to the performance of "ordinary police duties" and any such defects should be considered by the examiner as grounds for disqualification. A police officer who cannot meet the physical demands of ordinary police duty is a PAGE 4

liability to himself and to his fellow officers in certain emergency situations, and such officer should be disqualified. It must be realized that "ordinary police duties" includes those emergencies in which a police officer must take immediate positive action requiring a high degree of physical and mental response.

1. HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

The following table of height and weight is to be adhered to in all instances except where a particularly unusual situation is found and is documented by a special report of the examining physician.

Local Commissions may adopt the following height and weight schedule in its entirely and may exercise the option of permitting no exceptions under any circumstances, or:

They may adopt the procedure whereby exceptions to the weight schedule may be noted at the time of examination, with a written notice to the candidate that if he corrects the deficiency within a stated period of time up to the date of appointment, he may be further considered for such appointment. In such instances the candidate is passed over in the normal certification procedure until the condition has been corrected and certified as having been corrected.

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT STANDARDS

	HEIGHT	MINIMUMWEIGHT	MAXIMUMWEIGHT
ALLOWABLE MINIMUM	5'7"	140 LBS.	180 LBS.
RECOMMENDED MINIMUM	5'8"	140 LBS.	180 LBS.
	5'9"	145 LBS.	185 LBS.
	5'10"	150 LBS.	190 LBS.
	5'11"	155 LBS.	195 LBS.
	6'0"	160 LBS.	205 LBS.
	6'1"	165 LBS.	210 LBS.
	6'2"	170 LBS.	220 LBS.
	6'3"	175 LBS.	225 LBS.
	6'4"	180 LBS.	230 LBS.
	6'5"	185 LBS.	235 LBS.

2. VISION

Adequate vision is most important to a police officer, for several obvious and valid reasons, among which are: self-protection, ability to focus on action whether near or at a distance, as an aid in criminal investigation or as a qualified witness in court.

Tests:

For visual acuity, Snellen test is generally recognized as standard.

For color perception, either the Ishihara test or the test given by pseudo-isochromatic plates is acceptable. The skein test should not be used.

In addition to the test for sharpness of eyesight and color perception, the examining physician should examine the eyes to make sure they are free from disease or possible condition that might lead to the rapid deterioration of the eyesight.

Standards:

The minimum acceptable standard of visual acuity (uncorrected) shall be 20/30 in the stronger eye and 20/40 in the other eye, total vision corrected to 20/20.

Perception of color is deemed acceptable if candidate correctly reads 13 or more of the first 15 Ishihara plates.

Disqualifying Conditions: (see attached list -- Part IV)

3. HEARING

It is highly desirable that all candidates be tested for sharpness of hearing, to establish a record of hearing ability at the time of recruitment and to provide a valid basis for disqualification of such candidates as are found to have obvious hearing defects which would interfere with ordinary police duty, such as inability to clearly perceive sounds within the normal voice range, or such sounds as are transmitted by police sirens, police radios, or voice commands, within normal decibel limits.

The use of a hearing aid by the candidate should be considered to be disqualifying.

The audiometer should be used as the instrument for measuring the hearing capability of the candidate. Such tests should be given in a reasonably quiet room. Tests by the voice of the examiner or by any device other than an audiometer are not considered to be valid and should not be used.

The reference thresholds of hearing as set forth herein are based on the 1963 ISO Standards (International Standards Organization). A candidate's hearing shall be tested between 250 and 6,000 cycles per second, with a hearing loss not to exceed 30 decibels through all frequencies, in either ear.

4. Musculo-Skeletal System

A. ARMS AND LEGS, HANDS AND FEET (EXTREMITIES)

There shall be no afflictions, impairments, disabilities or absences of the arms, legs, hands and feet which will interfere with the proper performance of ordinary police duties.

The extremities of the body must be free from afflictions of the joints, strains, stiffness, swelling or other abnormal conditions. Third degree flat feet, ingrowing toenails, hammer toes, claw toes, absence of toes should, if the examining physician considers them disabling or likely to be disabling in the future, eliminate the candidate from further consideration for police duty.

Candidate are not acceptable if there is an impairment of more than one finger on either hand.

B. BACK, JOINTS AND MUSCLES

Disease or injury of back, joints or muscles, as revealed by examination or x-ray -- history of, e.g., arthritis, bursitis, myositis, osteomyelitis, tendinitis, repeated dislocation of a joint, etc. are sufficient cause for disqualification of the candidate, as are the following conditions:

Congenital malformation of back, e.g., sacralization of lumbar vertebrae, spondyjollsthesis, etc.

Limitation of motion or function; weakness of or lameness of back or joint.

Operation on bone, joint or spine, e.g., cartilage injury of knee. History of disqualifies if any phase of this condition is unsatisfactory to Medical Examiner.

Significant abnormality of spine.

Orthopedic braces.

5. Nose, Mouth, and Teeth

Any significant defects of the nose, mouth or teeth as would interfere with the performance of ordinary police duties shall be deemed to be disqualifying.

Seriously deviated nasal septum or any other significant obstruction to free breathing shall cause rejection. The mouth shall be free from any deformities or conditions that interfere with distinct speech or predispose to disease of the ear, nose, or throat. Enlarged tonsils or adenoids

or primary sinusitis may be listed as temporary disqualification and the applicant shall not be placed on an eligible list until the condition is remedied.

The teeth shall be well cared for and free from multiple cavities. Pyorrhea, gingivitis or any irremediable disease of the gums or of the jaw of such a nature as to interfere seriously with the efficient performance of duty shall be cause for disqualification of the candidate.

Properly fitting partial or full dentures are permitted.

It is permissible, where a remediable defect in this category is noted, to put the candidate on notice of the defect and permit him, within prescribed time limits, to have the defect corrected. In such instances, the candidate is passed over in the normal certification procedure until the condition has been corrected and certified as having been corrected.

6. VARICOSITY

Since the candidates being screened for appointments to the police service are in a relatively young age group, any symptoms of a substantial problem with varicose veins should be considered as sufficient reason for disqualification. It can be envisioned that a candidate with such symptoms might become unfit for duty at a future date, with the additional influence of having to be on his feet a great deal, and in severe weather conditions.

7. HERNIA

Examiners are reminded that the nature of police work is such that police officers are particularly susceptible to hernias. Therefore, any degree of tendency toward a weakness or susceptibility to this condition is deemed to be a matter for careful and detailed exploration.

It has been found that many employees become public liabilities due to hernia or potential hernia. It is therefore essential that single, double, or incipient hernia shall cause the immediate rejection of any candidate. Hernia conditions controlled or corrected by truss are not acceptable for police positions. Candidates who indicate a willingness to correct hernia condition by surgical treatment may be retained on the eligible list. However, such candidates are passed over in the normal certification procedure until their condition has been judged corrected. Hydrocele is ample cause for rejection. Varicocele, if large or rending to become large shall cause disqualification.

8. RESPIRATION AND CIRCULATION

The respiration must be full, easy, and regular. The respiratory murmur must be clear and distinct over both lungs and no disease of the respiratory organs should be present. Examination of the respiratory system, lungs, and chest wall shall include an x-ray test of the candidate at the time of the clinical test. The action of the heart should be uniform, free and steady; its rhythm regular and the heart should be free from organic change. There should be

no thrills or indications of heart murmur. Acceptable blood pressure readings taken at rest are: systolic not higher than 140, not lower than 90; diastolic maximum 95.

Where an initial reading does not come within the above-noted limits. It is permissible for the examiner to repeat the procedure after allowing the candidate a period of relaxation and quiet. Of readings are abnormal, two readings on each arm may be taken.

Specifically, any candidate who takes medication for the control of blood pressure is not acceptable to the police service and should be disqualified.

If any condition of the heart has been found that warrants further investigation in the opinion of the examining physician, an electrocardiogram test may be required.

9. RECTUM

The rectum shall be free from any disabling condition including hemorrhoids, fistulas or cysts judged by the examiner to be in need of medical attention. If such condition or conditions exist as can be corrected by appropriate surgery or medical attention, the candidate may be retained on the eligible list if he indicates his willingness to have the situation corrected. However, such candidates are passed over in the normal certification procedure until the condition has been corrected and certified as having been corrected.

10. COORDINATION

The ability to integrate all parts of the body toward a single end is likewise a factor in physical fitness. In the well-coordinated individual, superfluous movements are eliminated, thus increasing precision and endurance. If, in the opinion of the medical examiner the candidate obviously lacks coordination, this is to be considered as sufficient grounds for disqualification.

11. GENERAL APPEARANCE

It must be realized that policemen are required to meet the general public on various occasions. It is therefore desirable that applicants be free from any marked deformity or any parasitic or systemic skin disease or any other defects which, although not disabling, would nevertheless cause public reaction against.

the employee and thereby reduce his efficiency. The body shall be well proportioned, physically developed, and indicate general wholesome cleanliness. Obesity or scrawniness shall cause rejection of candidate. The girth of the abdomen must not be more than the measurement of the chest at rest. Pronounced spinal curvature shall cause rejection.

In addition to the foregoing examination, the official physician should be requested to state if the candidate has any other defects which would seriously impair his efficiency on the job. The agency should inform the candidate of the result of the medical examination and indicate to him whether the defects found are sufficient to eliminate him/her from any future consideration, whether they are remediable defects, or whether the defects are disqualifying only for a position in the police service.

PART II

12. CLINICAL TEST -- REQUIRED PROCEDURES

In addition to the physical standards listed in Part I, certain clinical tests shall be given to each candidate to provide further evidence of fitness for active police duty.

A. Urinalysis Candidates will be disqualified upon evidence of albuminuria, glycosuria or renal diabetes until proven benign by further tests.

B. Serologic Test Addition of provision that clinical proof of active venereal infection is disqualifying but that this condition may be considered to be a remediable defect to permit later consideration of the candidate.

Candidates will be disqualified upon clinical proof of active venereal infection as determined by acceptable tests including, the VDRL slide test or the treponemal tests, namely, RCPF, TPI and FTS (ABS). This condition may be considered as any other remediable defect which would permit the candidate to be considered for appointment at a later date, upon submission of valid certification that the condition had been corrected.

C. Chest X-ray The chest X-ray is required procedure because of its obvious diagnostic value as part of a comprehensive medical examination.

PART III

PHYSICAL TESTS (OPTIONAL)

After the examining physician (or physicians) have completed the above-described procedures, the literature base notes that it is strongly recommended that the local Civil Service Commission administer tests designed to measure the candidate's strength, agility and endurance. It is entirely possible that a candidate could meet all the medical standards required in Parts I and II and still be completely inadequate from the viewpoint of physical standards. Because of the strenuous physical demands of the job of the police officer, it is imperative that minimum standards be adhered to in this aspect of the screening process.

The following requirements re suggested for several reasons among which are:

- (a) The tests are easily administered and require a minimum of equipment.
- (b) These tests have been used in the field for a number of years and are found to be valid.

- © All procedures are within the view of the candidate who can plainly see the objectivity and fairness of the test.
- (d) These procedures are less susceptible to injuries sustained by candidates than some of the more complex or difficult procedures.

It is to be noted that the following physical tests are deemed to be minimum standards and should be considered to be qualifying test; not rating tests. Local Commissions may wish to assign a weighted value to the physical tests. Any local Commission or police department desiring to establish more rigid standards, or to require more extensive testing procedures, may do so.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST (75% general average on all events combined is suggested) STRENGTH

I -- Bar Chinning

Candidates will be required to chin themselves on a horizontal bar 5 times to attain a score of 75% in this event. Candidates will begin from the completely extended arm position. The count of 1 will be credited to a candidate after the first lift to the horizontal bar. The lift will be of a straight up and down movement. Wiggling or kicking of the feet will result in loss if credit for the lift involved.

9 times - 95% 8 times - 90% 7 times - 85% 6 times - 80%

1 chance 10 times - 100%

5 times - 75%

4 times - 70%

3 times - 65% 2 times - 60%

1 times - 55%

0 times - 0%

AGILITY

II -- High Jump

Candidates will be permitted a short run and will be obliged to clear 3 feet 6 inches to attain a score of 75% in this event. Touching or moving of the horizontal rope or pole is cause for disqualification.

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3 chances 4' 6" - 100%
4' 3" - 90%
4' 0" - 85%
3' 9" - 80%
3' 6" - 75%
3' 3" - 65%
3' 0" - 55%
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III -- Standing Broad Jump

From a standing position candidates will be required to jump forward 6 feet 3 inches to attain a score of 75% in this event. Distance will be measured from the starting position to the most rear heel mark of the candidate.

3 chances 1 inch - 1 point

ENDURANCE

IV -- Quarter-Mile Run

Candidate will be required to run one-quarter mile on an outdoor or indoor track. The maximum allowable time for traversing this distance is 85 seconds.

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1 chance 60 seconds - 100%
65 seconds - 95%
70 seconds - 90%
75 seconds - 85%
80 seconds - 80%
85 seconds - 75%
90 seconds - 70%
95 seconds - 65%
1 point will be deducted for each 1 second over 60.
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PART IV

MEDICAL STANDARDS FOR POLICE OFFICER CANDIDATES DISQUALIFYING DEFECTS

The following list of defects, is designed for use by medical examiners in processing police candidates, and is to be used in conjunction with the "Guidelines for Medical Examiners in the Screening of Police Officer Candidates" that was found in the literature survey and prescribed by select Municipal Police Training Councils and listed above, in Parts I and II. This list is illustrative and is not intended as a complete list of disqualifying conditions. The presence of any of the defects listed below is deemed to be sufficient cause for disqualifications.

I -- ALLERGY

- **1. ASTHMA** presence of. History of treatment within the past five years, prior history may disqualify.
- **2. Other ALLERGIC CONDITIONS** History of chronic and incapacitating form.

II -- BLOOD CONDITIONS

3. ANEMIA - or any other chronic blood condition

III -- CARDIOVASCULAR

4. BLOOD PRESSURE - Systolic not higher than 140 nor lower than 90 . Diastolic not higher than 95

(See Part II instructions on RESPIRATION AND CIRCULATION.)

- **5. HEART** Significant abnormality in rate, rhythm or force, or enlargement or significant murmur.
- **6. VARICOSE VEINS** presence of enlarged and significant.

IV -- EAR CONDITIONS

- **7. HEARING** defective (see Part II of Instructions)
- **8. INFECTION** of middle ear or mastoid acute; chronic condition is disqualifying.

V -- EYE CONDITIONS

- 9. CHRONIC EYE CONDITION e.g., glaucoma, cataract, chronic inflammation.
- **10. COLOR** If Ishihara test is used, incorrect reading of three or more of the first 15 plates. (see Part I -- vision).

11. VISION - minimum of 20/30 in one eye and 20/40 in other eye. Total vision corrected to 20/20.

VI -- GASTRO-INTESTINAL CONDITIONS

- **12. HEMORRHOIDS** if significant, or other significant rectal conditions, e.g., fistula.
- 13. LIVER enlargement or disease of, e.g., cirrhosis
- **14. PEPTIC** esophageal, gastric or duodenal ULCER presence or history of.

VII -- GENITO - URINARY CONDITIONS

A. Urologic

- 15. DISEASE of the URINARY TRACT
- B. Genital
- 16. ACUTE INFLAMMATORY CONDITION
- 17. SCROTAL MASS significant e.g., hydrocele, varicocele.

VIII -- HEIGHT

18. SHORT HEIGHT - minimum of 5'8" in bare feet is recommended; 5'7" may be accepted.

EXCESSIVE HEIGHT - Maximum height 6'5" in bare feet.

IX -- HERNIA

19. PRESENCE of, in any part of body: inguinal, internal, large umbilical, ventral; or tendency toward hernia.

X -- INFECTIONS AND PARASITIC DISEASES

- **20. ACUTE LOCAL INFECTIONS**
- **21. VENEREAL DISEASE**, (active)
- XI -- METABOLIC DISEASE
- 22. DIABETES MELLITUS or RENAL DIABETES

XII -- MUSCULO - SKELETAL SYSTEM

A. Back and Joints

- 23. CONGENITAL MALFORMATION of back
- **24. DISEASE or INJURY** of back, joints or muscles as revealed by examination or x-ray. History of, e.g., arthritis, bursitis, myositis, osteomyelitis, tendinitis, repeated dislocation of a joint, etc.
- **25. LIMITATION** of motion or function; weakness or lameness of back of joint.
- **26. OPERATION** on bone, joint or spine, e.g., cartilage injury of knee. History of, disqualifies if any phase of this condition is unsatisfactory to medical examiner.
- 27. SPINE Significant abnormality of:
- **B.** Upper Extremities
- **28. IMPAIRMENT** of or absence of one finger on either hand.
- 29. IMPAIRED GRIP or function of hand.
- **30. LIMITATION** of motion or function of shoulder, elbow, wrist or fingers.
- C. Lower Extremities
- **31. LACK OF FULL FUNCTION** of hip, knee, ankle, foot or toes.
- **32. DEFORMITY** symptomatic or disabling which may impair function of foot, e.g., third degree flat feet; ingrowing toenails, hammer toes, claw toes, missing toes.

XIII -- NERVOUS SYSTEM

- **33. EPILEPSY, SEIZURES** presence or history of.
- **34. ALCOHOLISM or DRUG ADDICTION** presence or history of.

XIV -- RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

- **35. SINUSITIS** Significant extent to be determined by local examiner.
- **36. RESPIRATORY CONDITION** Chronic e.g., bronchitis, bronchiectasis, emphysema, fibrosis; significant extent to be determined by local examiner.
- **37. TUBERCULOSIS** history of significant clinical.

XV -- SPEECH

38. INARTICULATENESS or any marked speech defect, e.g., stuttering, except mild lisp, if so severe as to interfere with satisfactory performance of duties.

XVI -- TEETH

39. UNCORRECTED CONDITION - where significant.

Properly fitting upper or lower partial or full dentures are permitted. Decayed or badly broken teeth or numerous missing teeth may be cause for disqualification, although remediable defects allowable if corrected. (see Part I instructions.)

XVII -- URINE EXAMINATIONS

40. ALBUMINURIA, GLYCOSURIA or RENAL DIABETES

XVIII -- WEIGHT

41. OVERWEIGHT or UNDERWEIGHT

(see Part I chart and instructions on Height and Weight.)

XIX -- OTHER DEFECTS

42. The causes for disqualification are not limited by the above list of defects. As discovered from the survey to obtain this data, the medical examiner or examiners may put any question, make any examination and disqualify for any cause which in his or their opinion tends to impair the present or future health or fitness of the applicant in the performance or ordinary police duty.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIAL

(Note: Select sites may change. Suggest using a search engine if site has changed)

Cnet Networks Sites - bBent. "Law Enforcement Physical Fitness Standards and Title VII." < http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2194/is_5_70/ai_76880862>

EBJacobs. "Law Enforcement Solutions: Physical and Medical Standards." < http://www.ebjacobs.com/LawEnforcement/standards le.html>

Florida Department of Law Enforcement. "Officer Employment Requirements." http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cjst/officerrequirements/

HighBeam Encyclopedia. "Law Enforcement Physical Fitness Standards and Title VII."

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Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. "Physical Fitness Standards." < http://www.in.gov/ilea/2320.htm>

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< http://www.ebjacobs.com/LawEnforcement/standards_le.html>

MedTox Health Services. "Police Medical Standards."

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Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Human Resources. "Article 36 - Education and Training."

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Ohio Department of Public Safety. Ohio Investigative Unit. "Career Opportunities." < http://www.oiu.ohio.gov/recruit.asp>

Ohio Police Officer Training Council. "Ohio Police Officer Training Program - Physical Fittness Standards."

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Smith, Stew. "USA - State Police Physical Fittness Assessment Standards for New Recruits." < http://www.stewsmith.com/linkpages/LElinks.htm>

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. "Pre-Employment Physical Fitness Test for Law Enforcement

Officer Positions Within the Office of Detention and Removal."

< http://www.ice.gov/doclib/careers/dro pft faqsheet.pdf>

Wikipedia - The Free Encyclopedia. "Police Officer." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Police officer>

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Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. "Law Enforcement Qualifications." < http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/Org/es/enforcement/qualifications.html>