

North Hennepin
Community College

Steps towards a career in

Law Enforcement



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North Hennepin Community College's

Associate in Science degree program in Law Enforcement provides students with a broad analysis of the relationship between law and society as well as a thorough examination of the interrelationships, functions and operations of the different components of the criminal justice system. It is designed to provide preparation for a variety of entry-level positions in state, county and municipal law enforcement agencies.

Students in this associate degree program are required to complete the *Professional Licensing Core* courses at the Law Enforcement Education Center (763-657-3700) to earn the degree. To qualify for admission to the Law Enforcement program, applicants must first meet certain criteria. Please consult with a counselor or advisor for more information. This document is intended to assist current and prospective students so they may have a clear understanding of the process in which to become a peace officer in the State of Minnesota.

Steps to becoming a Peace Officer in the State of Minnesota

1. Earn a Bachelor's Degree (4-year) or an Associates of Science A.S. or Associate of Arts A.A. Degree (2-year) with an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or better.

Students are required to complete nine prerequisite courses with a grade of "C" or better and a cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale in the courses prior to enrollment in the *Professional Licensing Program* offered at the Law Enforcement Education Center, LEEC. Applicants must have a cumulative college GPA of at least a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

The nine prerequisites courses offered at North Hennepin Community College include:

- College Writing I (ENGL 1201)
- College Writing II (ENGL 1202)
- Introduction to Sociology (SOC 1110)
- Introduction to Criminal Justice (SOC 1710)
- Psychology of Adjustment (PSYC 1165)
- Families in Crisis (SOC 1750)
- Minority Groups (SOC 2210)
- Juvenile Justice (SOC 1730)
- Police and Community (SOC 1720)

Courses taken at other accredited colleges or universities need evaluation and approval.

Law Enforcement Certificate Programs

Students who already have earned an associate or bachelors degree from a Minnesota POST Board (*Police Officers Standards and Training Board*) approved college or university in Law Enforcement or Criminal Justice are eligible to apply for admission to a Law Enforcement Certificate Program and take four Professional Licensing Program theory-based courses to supplement their degree.

Students who already have earned an associate or bachelors degree from any other regionally accredited college or university in or outside the State of Minnesota in any discipline must complete the nine prerequisite courses prior to enrollment in the *Professional Licensing Program*.

2. Complete a MN EMS Regulatory Board certified Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) course or above (EMT).

The class and certification does not have to be taken for college credit. Although the student needs to make sure they earn enough credits to receive a degree. The certification needs to be current at the time of taking the POST exam.

3. Peace Officer Licensure Advisory

Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6700.0300, subp. 5(D), requires all students be advised in writing of the minimum selection standards to become a licensed peace officer in Minnesota. The minimum selection standards, outlined below, advise students of these standards in order to help them make informed decisions about participation in the professional peace officer education program. For more information, go to www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/ or www.dps.state.mn.us/newpost/pdfs/bars%20to%20licensure.pdf

Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6700.0700: **Minimum Selection Standards**

Subpart 1. **Selection standards.** A person eligible to be licensed shall meet the following minimum selection standards before being appointed to the position of peace officer. The appointing authority may affirm that the applicant has already completed certain of these standards, but the affirmation must be documented pursuant to subpart 2.

- A. The applicant shall be a citizen of the United States.
- B. The applicant shall possess a valid Minnesota driver's license; or in case of residency therein, a valid driver's license from another state; or eligibility to obtain either license.
- C. The applicant shall complete a comprehensive written application.
- D. The applicant shall submit to a thorough background search, including searches by local, state, and federal agencies, to disclose the existence of any criminal record or conduct which would adversely affect the performance by the applicant of peace officer duties.
- E. The applicant must not be required to register as a predatory offender under Minnesota Statutes, section 243.166 or 243.167.

- F. No applicant may be appointed to the position of peace officer who has been convicted:
- (1) of a felony in this state or in any other state or federal jurisdiction;
 - (2) of any offense in any other state or federal jurisdiction which would have been a felony if committed in Minnesota;
 - (3) under Minnesota Statutes, section 609.224, 609.2242, 609.231, 609.2325, 609.233, 609.2335, 609.234, 609.324, 609.465, 609.466, 609.52, or 609.72; or convicted under any state or federal narcotics or controlled substance law irrespective of any proceeding under Minnesota Statutes, section 152.18, or any similar law of another state or federal law; or
 - (4) of any of the crimes listed in this item in another state or federal jurisdiction, or under a local ordinance that would be a conviction if committed in Minnesota.
- G. The applicant shall be fingerprinted for the purpose of disclosure of any felony convictions. Fingerprint cards shall be forwarded to the appropriate divisions of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The chief law enforcement officer shall immediately notify the board if a previous felony conviction is discovered.
- H. A licensed physician or surgeon shall make a thorough medical examination of the applicant to determine that the applicant is free from any physical condition which might adversely affect the performance of peace officer duties.
- I. An evaluation, including an oral interview, shall be made by a licensed psychologist to determine that the applicant is free from any emotional or mental condition which might adversely affect the performance of peace officer duties.
- J. The applicant shall pass a job-related examination of the applicant's physical strength and agility to demonstrate the possession of physical skills necessary to the accomplishment of the duties and functions of a peace officer.
- K. The applicant shall successfully complete an oral examination conducted by or for the agency to demonstrate the possession of communication skills necessary to the accomplishment of the duties and functions of a peace officer.
- Subp. 2. **Documentation.** The chief law enforcement officer shall maintain documentation necessary to show completion of subpart 1. The chief law enforcement officer is not required to obtain documentation for subpart 1, item J, if the applicant completed part 6700.0500, subpart 3. The documentation is subject to periodic review by the board, and shall be made available to the board at its request.
- Subp. 3. [Repealed, 18 SR 1961]
- Subp. 4. **More rigid standards.** An appointing authority may require an applicant to meet more rigid standards than those prescribed in this part.

Additional Information

The following points address questions frequently asked by individuals interested in Professional Peace Officer Education (PPOE) admission.

- If an individual has been convicted of a felony in Minnesota or any other state or federal jurisdiction the individual is barred from becoming a peace officer in Minnesota. Even if the individual has had a felony conviction expunged or continued for dismissal, the individual is still barred from peace officer licensure according to Minnesota Rule 6700.0100, Subp.9a.

- If an individual has been convicted of any of the following Minnesota Statutes, the individual is barred from becoming a peace officer in Minnesota. Even if the individual has had the conviction expunged or continued for dismissal the individual is still barred from peace officer licensure according to Minnesota Rule 6700.0100, Subp.9a.
 - 609.224 Assault in the Fifth Degree
 - 609.2242 Domestic Assault
 - 609.231 Mistreatment of Residents or Patients
 - 609.2325 Criminal Abuse
 - 609.233 Criminal Neglect
 - 609.2335 Financial Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult
 - 609.234 Failure to Report (Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults)
 - 609.324 Other Prostitution Crimes; Patrons, Prostitutes, and Individuals Housing Individual Engaged in Prostitution; Penalties
 - 609.465 Presenting False Claims to Public Officer or Body
 - 609.466 Medical Assistance Fraud
 - 609.52 Theft
 - 609.72 Disorderly Conduct, subdivision 3 Caregiver; penalty for disorderly conduct

- If an individual has been convicted under any narcotics or controlled substance law the individual is barred from becoming a peace officer in Minnesota. This includes possession of a small amount of marijuana or possession of drug paraphernalia, even if the conviction was a petty misdemeanor.
- A juvenile record does not bar an individual from becoming a peace officer in Minnesota unless the individual is required to register as a predatory offender; then, the individual is barred until no longer required to register.

4. Apply, be accepted, and complete the 21 credit police skills course.

- United States citizenship is not required for admission to the Professional Licensing Program. However, applicants must be US citizens before being hired by a law enforcement agency.
- Applicants may not be convicted of a crime that would prohibit them from being admitted to the law enforcement program under the rules of the MN Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Contact the POST Board at 651-643-3060 or www.post.state.mn.us for a list of current Criminal Conviction Standards.
- Persons who are prohibited by State or Federal law from possessing a fire-arm are not eligible to apply.

- Application deadlines: June 1st by 4:00pm for the fall semester. November 1st by 4:00pm for spring semester. It is your responsibility to have your application completely and accurately filled out and in **before** the deadline.
- Students who are conditionally admitted to the practical, skills development course will be required to have a licensed physician and a licensed psychologist certify their participation in the law enforcement skills development course will not pose a serious threat to the health or safety of themselves, other students, staff members, or the public. The medical and psychological examinations are at the cost of the student. If the student does not pass the psychological examination the student must successfully complete the classes the psychologist mandates and then retake the psychological examination at the student's cost. The physical and psychological evaluations must be current as determined by the skills course administrator.
- Skills students must possess a valid driver's license at the time of admission to the professional skills courses at the Law Enforcement Education Center and must maintain a valid license throughout the program.

5. Fill out the Police Officers Standards and Training (POST) application to take the State exam. Pay the fee each time to take the exam (\$105 in 2010).

6. Apply for employment with agencies.

The application process for a law enforcement position in the state of MN is rigorous. The initial application may be 10-50 pages in length. There may be written exams which include report writing, math problems, English language proficiency, reading proficiency, scenario based exams, and oral interview boards.

A background investigation is required by state law. The applicant will fill out a background packet that is 30-60 pages in length. Included in the packet are Release of Information forms which give an extensive list of people associated with the applicant permission to disclose information about the applicant. This list may include past and present employers, teachers, college instructors, family, friends, friends of friends, past significant others, adult children, and past and present neighbors. Those interviewed are encouraged to talk freely about the applicant's life, character, and any indiscretions. Permission is also granted to search personal computers, Facebook and other social networking sites, access U.S. Military records and contact the Internal Revenue Service. The background investigation is usually performed by a seasoned investigator. The investigator's job is to search the applicant's life in detail.

A broad range of areas of the applicants life will be examined including financial and bank account history, charge card accounts, house/rental payments, past due and missed financial commitments, gambling habits, alcohol and drug use, verbal or physical issues in relationships, contact with police, parking citations and moving violations, arrests and detentions, civil court action, residential history including people and places, school grades and withdrawals, work and school attendance, punctuality, honesty issues, automobile crashes, and insurance claims. Most police departments in the State of MN will not hire an applicant to a peace officer position who has been convicted of a DUI in the past 10 years or has numerous traffic violations.

This is only a partial list of what a background investigation entails. If any of these issues make a student nervous about the chances of being hired, the student should speak with current police officers, background investigators, or police management about the specific situation. It is better for a student to explore in advance barriers to being hired before committing three or more years to an educational program.

The college or university the student applies to will most likely not deny the student entrance into the program, but future employers will not ignore background issues.

Note:

If you have been arrested, charged or convicted of any criminal offense, you should investigate the impact that the arrest, charge or conviction may have on your chances of employment in the field of law enforcement or on your chances to obtain federal, state, and other higher education financial aid.

Students requiring accommodation due to a disability need to apply for services through the Disability Access Services Office. During the application process, please be prepared to discuss your disability and its impact, required documentation, possible accommodations, and policies and procedures for receiving disability services. Any information shared is considered private information under state and federal law.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity. No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to and participation in programs, services, and activities with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or sexual orientation.

Have questions? Contact:

Counseling, Advising and
Career Planning (CACP)

Educational Services (ES) building

Phone: 763-424-0703

Fax: 763-424-0704



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call 763-493-0555. Minnesota Relay users may call 1-800-627-3529

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