

**FAIRFAX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**SOP NUMBER: 041  
SUBJECT: POLYGRAPH**

**I. PURPOSE**

To publish policy and procedure regarding the polygraph and its utilization within the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office.

**II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office that there be two basic applications of polygraph utilization for this agency.

- A. Aiding in the administrative hiring process.
- B. Assistance in Internal Affairs investigations wherein facts pertinent to the investigation cannot be corroborated through normal investigative means.

**III. PROCEDURE**

A. Pre-Employment Process.

- 1. Each applicant for the position of Deputy Sheriff will be required to submit to a polygraph examination as a means of pre-employment screening.
- 2. This phase of processing will also be administered to civilian applicants who will be required to supervise or work directly with inmates in the Adult Detention Center. Should detrimental or conflicting information arise from a background investigation on other non-sworn position applicants, the Sheriff, at his discretion can direct that the applicant undergo a polygraph examination in an attempt to clear up any discrepancy. Failure to comply with such mandate will result in the applicant receiving no further consideration for employment with this agency.
- 3. The principal purpose of the polygraph examination in applicant processing is to determine the applicant's truthfulness concerning information supplied on the Personal History Statement.
- 4. Information obtained during the pre-employment polygraph examination that may be pertinent in determining an applicant's eligibility and suitability for employment will be reviewed only with the Sheriff and/or his designees.
- 5. All information concerning an applicant's background that may be disclosed during the pre-employment polygraph examination will be classified as "Confidential." Access to confidential polygraph files or records will be limited to the polygraph examiner(s), Sheriff, and/or his designees.
- 6. Retention of polygraph files and records will be conducted in accordance with regulations formulated by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations and the Sheriff of Fairfax County.
- 7. Methods of testing will conform to the guidelines of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations and all standards established by both Federal and State legislation.

B. Internal Investigation Process.

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1. It is the policy of this agency to utilize polygraph examinations to aid in the investigation of "Internal" matters wherein it is alleged that employees have committed acts of misconduct, violations of Standard Operating Procedures, or by some other means, have brought discredit upon the Office of the Sheriff. Polygraph examinations will be used, however, only when deemed necessary by the Sheriff or Chief Deputy.
2. The polygraph examination in Internal Affairs investigations is not to be construed as a substitute for a thorough investigation by the Internal Affairs Section. It will only be administered after all investigative leads have been exhausted and there is no other feasible means by which to either exonerate or implicate an employee of wrong doing.
3. All requests for Internal Affairs polygraph examinations will be directed to the Sheriff or Chief Deputy. Either can approve or disapprove the request after reviewing all facts and circumstances of the investigation.
4. Any employee who is ordered to undergo a polygraph examination in an Internal Affairs investigation will be made aware of the fact that the polygraph examination is a continuation of the ongoing Internal Affairs investigation. Each employee will be instructed to be totally truthful during the course of that examination and told that failure to do so will be construed as an act of insubordination, thus subjecting himself to disciplinary action and/or termination from this agency.
5. A full and comprehensive report depicting the findings of the polygraph examination will be forwarded to the Internal Affairs Section and/or the Sheriff or his designee having responsibility for the internal investigation.
6. All information and findings of an Internal Affairs polygraph examination will be classified as "Confidential." Any unauthorized release of any part of the information or findings to unauthorized personnel will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

01/01/00  
DATE APPROVED

01/22/96  
EFFECTIVE DATE

Revised: December 1995



**STACEY A. KINCAID  
SHERIFF**