



CALIFORNIA *Highway Patrol*

Applicant Study Guide



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FOREWORD
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The Applicant Study Guide provides an overview of the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and is designed to prepare Cadet, CHP, applicants for the selection and hiring process. Information contained in this guide focuses on the Department's mission, purpose, and objectives as well as the duties of the CHP officer. This guide will assist the applicant in understanding the overall responsibility of becoming a CHP officer.

The Applicant Study Guide is an excellent resource for applicants preparing for the Written Examination, Physical Ability Test, Qualifications Appraisal Panel Interview (Oral Interview), Psychological Evaluation, Background Investigation, Academy Training and a career with the CHP.

The success of each applicant is very important to the CHP. Therefore, we strongly encourage each applicant to thoroughly review the Applicant Study Guide.

Questions may be referred to Recruitment Program staff at (916) 843-3275 or 1 (888) 4-A-CHP-JOB (888-422-4756).

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CHAPTER 1

CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION.

- a. **Mission.** The mission of the California Highway Patrol (CHP) is to provide the highest level of safety, service, and security to the people of California. This is accomplished through five (5) departmental goals:
- **Prevent Loss of Life, Injuries, and Property Damage.** To minimize the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage resulting from traffic collisions through enforcement, education, and engineering. To enforce the provisions of the California Vehicle Code and other laws to prevent crime.
 - **Maximize Service to the Public and Assistance to Allied Agencies.** To maximize service to the public in need of aid or information, and to assist other public agencies when appropriate.
 - **Manage Traffic and Emergency Incidents.** To promote the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout California, and to minimize exposure of the public to unsafe conditions resulting from emergency incidents and highway impediments.
 - **Protect Public and State Assets.** To protect the public, their property, state employees, and the state's infrastructure. To collaborate with local, state, and federal public safety agencies to protect California.
 - **Improve Departmental Efficiency.** To continuously look for ways to increase the efficiency and/or effectiveness of departmental operations.
- b. **Organizational Values.** To accomplish our mission, we are committed to the following organizational values as the foundation of our pledge to public safety and service:
- Respect for others.
 - Fairness.
 - Ethical practices.
 - Equitable treatment for all.
- c. **Rank Structure.** Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Chief, Assistant Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant, Officer.

2. HISTORY OF THE CHP.

In 1896, the first automobile appeared in California. From this day forward, California's interest in the automobile had begun. With the increase in automobiles throughout the state, particularly in populated cities and counties, traffic accidents also increased. The first automobile-related fatality was recorded in 1902. The need for traffic control services became apparent.

Cities and counties began by regulating motor vehicle operations within their own jurisdictions. As each jurisdiction passed its own regulations, the differences from one area to another created a new set of problems. As such, in 1905, the California Legislature responded by providing the first in a series of laws related to traffic regulation. As the need for uniform motor vehicle regulations continued to grow, the "California Vehicle Act of 1915" was enacted, a forerunner of today's California Vehicle Code.

By 1923, the Legislature authorized the appointment of State Inspectors and Traffic Officers. They were paid and employed by the state to enforce motor vehicle laws. These appointees were assigned to work in a specific county under a system known as "Dual Control." The problem with "Dual Control" was that the Traffic Officers were controlled by the counties. California still lacked statewide uniformity in the enforcement of traffic laws. Therefore, on August 14, 1929, the Legislature created the California Highway Patrol. This new agency had statewide authority to enforce traffic laws on county and state highways—responsibilities that are, to this day, still a primary component of the Department's mission.

Over the years, the CHP has continued to grow and change, assuming many more responsibilities along the way. Today, the organization includes a diverse group of men and women who ensure the responsibilities of the Department are carried out in the most professional and efficient manner.

3. CHP GEOGRAPHICAL JURISDICTION/ORGANIZATION.

Since California is comprised of 158,693 square miles from Oregon to the Mexico Border, the terrain, weather conditions, and roadways are extremely diverse. The CHP patrols all state freeways in the 58 counties, including those within city boundaries. These freeways include U.S. routes, interstate highways, and California state routes. The Department has traffic jurisdiction on all public streets and highways in unincorporated areas under state and county control. In all, more than 105,000 miles of roadway fall within the CHP's jurisdiction.

The CHP is divided into eight geographical Divisions covering the entire State of California. Personnel ranking from officer to chief, with the support of civilian personnel, staff each Division. These ranking officials command, manage, and support operations in Area offices, communication centers, and commercial vehicle inspection/scale

facilities throughout their geographical jurisdiction. Together these posts provide services which ensure public safety and security, as well as to ensure lawful and efficient use of the highway transportation system. To oversee the CHP Divisions, CHP Headquarters in Sacramento under the leadership of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Field and Assistant Commissioner, Staff provide general and specific support to the various CHP programs, disseminates policy and procedure, and provides training to run these programs.

4. FULL PEACE OFFICER POWER.

Authorities. Section 830.2 of the California Penal Code identifies the uniformed employees of the CHP as peace officers whose authority extends statewide. According to the Penal Code, their primary duty is the enforcement of any law relating to the use or operation of vehicles upon the highways, or laws pertaining to the provision of police services for the protection of state officers, state properties, and the occupants of state properties, or both, as set forth in the Vehicle Code and Government Code.

Division 2 of the California Vehicle Code further defines CHP function and powers, including authorities for accident investigations, CHP issued licenses, and emergency vehicle permits.

The Department's primary purpose is to ensure public safety and provide responsive services to the residents of California. The Department's mission is met through the management of traffic on California's highways, roadways, and assigned surface streets. Traffic management consists of various responsibilities that include accident prevention, emergency traffic and/or incident management, law enforcement duties, and assistance to allied agencies and the public. Additionally, the CHP has the responsibility for investigation of all crimes that occur on state property, and protection of state buildings, and justices of the California Supreme Court and Appellate Court. The following is a list of some of the diverse positions necessary to accomplish and maintain these services:

- Motorcycle Officer
- Recruiting Officer
- Air Operations Pilot/Observer
- Academy Instructor Staff Officer

- Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officer
- Weapons Training Officer
- Evidence Officer
- Advanced Accident Investigation Officer
- Field Training Officer
- Canine Officer
- Public Information Officer
- Drug Recognition Expert
- Court Officer
- Multi-disciplinary Accident Investigation Team
- Background Investigator
- Auto Theft Investigator
- Training Coordinator
- Dignitary Protection
- Safety Services Program Officer
- Equestrian Patrol
- Bicycle Patrol
- Capitol Protective Services
- Court Services
- Community Services Officer

5. **THE CHP ACADEMY OVERVIEW.**

- a. The **CHP Academy** is one of the most modern and professional law enforcement training facilities in the world. The Academy, covering 456 acres, is located in West Sacramento, California, and has been in use since September 17, 1974. The dormitory style housing facilities can accommodate approximately 480 personnel. The primary mission of the Academy is to prepare cadets for the tasks they will be required to perform in the field so they may carry out the purpose, objectives, and goals of the Department. The secondary mission of the Academy is to provide specialized in-service training for CHP personnel and allied agency employees.
- b. The **Dining Facility** can accommodate up to 400 personnel. The food is served cafeteria style three times daily. The dining facility staff is able to prepare a wide variety of specialty foods as needed.
- c. The **Multi-Purpose Room** serves as a gymnasium and an auditorium. It consists of a full length basketball court, two weight training rooms (free weights and machine weights), and locker rooms. Additional physical training facilities consist of a professional running track with a grass infield, a 442-foot obstacle course, and several running trails.
- d. The **Recreation Room** has computers, a Post Exchange store, pool tables, and a big screen television. This is also the location of the Staff Office which is staffed by an officer 24 hours per day.
- e. The **Water Safety Training Tank** is utilized for physical training, confidence tower training, air operations water rescue, and allied agency water training.
- f. The **Academic Classrooms** are utilized to instruct 67 learning domains mandated by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and CHP-specific policies and procedures. Cadets will receive over 1,275 hours of classroom training.

- g. The **Emergency Vehicle Operations Course** is world renown as the premier law enforcement driving training program available. The facility consists of a 2.3-mile high performance driving track, two skid recovery practice areas, motorcycle training areas, and a defensive driving (DD) network. The course is utilized by cadets, CHP employees, and allied agencies.
- h. The **Weapons Training Unit** has both an indoor and outdoor range, each equipped with electronically controlled moving targets. Each area has lighting which can be controlled to simulate different environmental conditions.
- i. The **Advanced Officer Safety Training Unit (AOST)** has an enclosed mat room where uniformed officers participate in realistic and current officer safety training. In addition, AOST also has an enclosed two story shoot house and a training village where force-on-force training is conducted utilizing non-lethal training ammunition (NLTA).

CHAPTER 2
SELECTION PROCESS
CADET, CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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Cadet, California Highway Patrol (CHP), is the entry level training classification for qualified persons to learn the duties of a CHP officer. **All** CHP officers begin their careers at this classification. During normal budget times applications for Cadet, CHP, are accepted on a continuous basis. (When budget issues intervene, applications will not be accepted) Examinations are conducted statewide in each field Division.

There are seven separate test phases in the cadet selection process. All tests, with the exception of the Qualifications Appraisal Panel (QAP) Interview, are scored on a pass/fail basis. A score of 70% is passing for the QAP, but many times the qualifying score to go into backgrounds is 85% or higher. Typically, the testing process requires an average of twelve months to complete. The sequence is listed below:

- Application
- Written Examination
- Physical Ability Test (PAT)
- Qualifications Appraisal Panel (QAP) Interview
- Background Investigation
- Psychological Evaluation, including a written test component
- Medical Evaluation

1. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR THE EXAMINATION.

a. Age. 20 to 35 years of age. By state law, the maximum age for examination is 35 years at the time of the most current written exam. Successful applicants must be at least 21 years of age prior to graduation from the Academy.

b. Education. High school diploma from a United States (U.S.) institution or a general equivalency diploma (GED). Applicants may also have passed the California High School Proficiency Examination or possess a diploma from a Department of Defense High School.

c. **Citizenship.** An application for U.S. citizenship must already be in process before you can begin the testing process. You must be a U.S. citizen at time of appointment to the CHP Academy.

d. **Character.** No felony convictions.

2. PHYSICAL CONDITION.

a. Good health, sound physical condition.

b. Normal hearing.

c. Freedom from any physical or mental condition that would interfere with the full performance of the essential duties of an Officer, CHP.

d. Vision. The applicant must read from a standard eye test chart. If eyeglasses or hard contact lenses are worn, uncorrected vision must be no less than 20/40 in each eye and corrected to 20/20 in each eye. Applicants who have successfully worn soft contact lenses for the past 12 months are not required to meet an uncorrected standard as long as their corrected vision is 20/20 in each eye. At least four quarterly checks for vision stabilization are required for applicants who have had any eye surgery. Normal color vision is required as assessed by the Farnsworth-D-15 test. An X-Chrom Lens is prohibited.

3. **APPLICATION.** As of December 23, 2009 paper applications will no longer be accepted. When application dates are open, each applicant must submit an application online at www.chpcareers.com or www.chp.ca.gov.

4. **WRITTEN EXAMINATION.** The written examination was developed by CHP and The California State Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) to determine if the applicant possesses the **minimum** reading and writing proficiency needed to successfully perform the duties of a CHP officer. **This is not a test of law enforcement or knowledge of the CHP.**

The best resource for understanding, studying and taking a practice test for this written exam can be found on the POST website at:

<http://lib.post.ca.gov/publications/poWrittenPracticeTest.pdf>

a. **The Written Examination.** The written examination consists of multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank. There are approximately 125 questions covering spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. You have approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes to complete this portion of the test.

b. **Written Examination Preparation.** Applicants often ask how they can prepare for the written examination phase of the cadet testing process. There are several options you may wish to consider:

- (1) Study books that review reading comprehension skills, and English composition, including grammar and spelling.
- (2) Study books that pertain to taking law enforcement examinations.
- (3) Enroll in college or an adult education course that emphasizes English, reading comprehension, and writing skills.
- (4) Develop a self-improvement writing program.

c. **Reading and Writing Self-Improvement Books.** Whereas we may suggest books and guides, we do not require the purchase of, nor endorse, any specific publication. Since skills vary from applicant to applicant, it would be inappropriate to arbitrarily select books for an individual. If an applicant's skills/abilities are significantly below the 12th grade level, it is doubtful any book would be enough to ensure success on the written examination.

There are many publications available at local libraries and bookstores that provide instruction on improving reading and writing skills. Select publications comprehensive to reading and writing skills at or beyond the 12th grade level.

d. **Law Enforcement Examination Books.** Also available at libraries and bookstores are books pertaining to civil service or law enforcement examinations. These may be helpful for applicants who believe their skills are sufficient to pass the written examination but want to become familiar with civil service/law enforcement examination questions.

e. **Preparatory Courses.** If an applicant feels his/her knowledge of grammar is inadequate, it might be useful to take a writing course at a local college. A number of grammar handbooks exist, which can be located at almost any bookstore. One very popular handbook is called *Easy Access: The Reference Handbook for Writers*, by Katherine Adams and Michael Keene (McGraw-Hill Publishing). This text includes a section on English as a second language. One caution: the study of grammar without the practice of writing seldom improves writing skill.

Perhaps the most effective option is for an applicant to take college or adult education courses on English composition and writing. This ensures that the applicant is receiving professional instruction on correct and effective writing from staff with proper credentials. The instructors are able to determine the skill level of the students, and recommend the appropriate remediation necessary for proficiency.

As a complement to this instruction, the applicant should also consider speech courses. Most speech instructors include lessons on logical thought processes and topic organization. This type of training may enhance the applicant's competitiveness at the QAP.

f. Personal Self-Improvement.

(1) Some applicants may not have the time and/or the financial assets to consider the preceding options. Another suggestion an applicant may consider is to start a diary or journal.

(a) The applicant should write one or two pages on what he/she accomplished that day, or record his/her daily personal thoughts.

(b) The applicant should have access to a dictionary and thesaurus for help with spelling and vocabulary improvement.

(c) After writing out his/her activities or thoughts, the applicant should read the daily entries aloud.

(d) This exercise allows the applicant to hear what he/she has written. Oftentimes, what is written on paper sounds completely different when read aloud. By repeating this exercise daily, applicants can improve their reading, writing, and verbal skills.

(2) Applicants must decide what course of study will be their best option. Ultimately, having a minimum 12th grade reading and writing skill level is the key to passing the written examination phase for the Cadet, CHP.

CHAPTER 3

PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST (PAT)

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1. PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST (PAT).

- a. **Notification.** The applicant will be scheduled to take the Physical Ability Test upon receiving notification of passing the written test.

NOTE: In order to participate in this test phase, the applicant MUST bring the following forms which will be collected upon reporting to the PAT.

- A valid picture identification (i.e., driver's license, passport).
- State Employment Application (STD. 678) requires information about the applicant's education and employment history for the previous seven years.
- Cadet Arrest and Citation Questionnaire (CHP 446F) requires the applicant's traffic ticket(s) and arrest history.

The STD. 678 and CHP 446F will be handed out at the written exam

(The applicant may want to organize this information early so it will be complete.)

- b. **Preparation.** Applicants should consider the following suggestions to assist in their performance in the PAT.
- (1) Applicants should not drink any alcoholic beverages for eight hours prior to the test.
 - (2) A minimum of three hours should have elapsed since your last meal.
 - (3) Applicants should not have engaged in any moderate to heavy physical or emotionally stressful work within two hours prior to the test.
 - (4) Applicants should attempt to have a minimum of six hours sleep the night prior to the test.

- (5) If under the care of a physician or taking any prescribed medications, applicants should consult their physician and request approval to participate. Non-prescription medications should not be consumed 24 hours prior to the test.
- (6) Applicants should wear loose fitting clothing; preferably exercise clothing and athletic shoes. It is recommended applicants bring water and a light snack.

c. **Elements of the PAT.**

Changing the PAT elements is under consideration. In the future, we may be testing your, 1.) time for one and a half mile run, 2.) time for 300 meter sprint, 3.) number of sit-ups completed in one minute, and 4.) number of push-ups in one minute.

The PAT determines whether the applicant is able to perform the minimum physical standards required of a CHP officer. The PAT currently contains the following five sections:

- (1) 100 Yard Sprint. The applicant is required to run 100 yards in 20 seconds or less.
- (2) Upper Body Strength. There are a total of three measurements.
 - (a) Shoulder strength adduction requires the applicant to hold a V-shaped device close to the chest with the forearms parallel to the floor and palms facing inward. The applicant pushes the handles of the device together with maximum effort.
 - (b) Grip strength requires the applicant to squeeze a grip strength tester with a maximum effort.
 - (c) Dynamic arm. If unable to achieve a minimum score in the shoulder and/or grip strength tests, the applicant is required to pedal a stationary bicycle with his/her arms at a workload of 2.5 kilopounds for up to one minute to reach minimum score.
- (3) Trunk Strength Flexion. The applicant is required to exert 113 pounds of force by contracting the abdominal muscles. The applicant is strapped into a harness and is hooked to a device by a cable. The applicant then leans forward while tightening the stomach muscles and reaching for the ground in front of him/her.

This motion puts tension on the cable and a gauge measures the applicant's strength. Some back muscle strength and flexion is involved.

- (4) **Side Step.** There are three parallel lines; one center line with two outside lines positioned four feet from the center line. In a standing position, the applicant straddles the center line with feet parallel to lines. The applicant side steps to left of the center line until his/her foot touches or crosses the left outside line, then side steps to the right until his/her foot touches or crosses the right outside line. This activity is repeated as many times as possible in ten seconds. Crossing each line, including the center line, earns one point. The applicant must score thirteen points.
- (5) **500-Yard Run.** The applicant is required to run 500 yards in two minutes or less.

Changing the PAT elements is under consideration. In the future, we may be testing your, 1.) time for one and a half mile run, 2.) time for 300 meter sprint, 3.) number of sit-ups completed in one minute, and 4.) number of push-ups in one minute.

- d. **Grading the PAT.** Each portion of the PAT test is pass/fail. The applicant is notified of the score after each test. The applicant must pass all five portions successfully to complete the PAT.
- e. **PAT Conditioning.** Engage in a physical fitness program, suited to your health and ability, designed to improve flexibility, muscular strength, and cardio-respiratory endurance.

CHAPTER 4

QUALIFICATIONS APPRAISAL PANEL INTERVIEW (QAP)

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1. **INTERVIEW.** The applicant will be scheduled for an interview upon successful completion of the Physical Ability Test.
 - a. **Time and Duration.** Thirty to forty-five minutes should be allowed for the actual interview. Applicant should arrive at the interview site a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the scheduled interview time. **Applicant must have a valid picture identification to be admitted into the interview.**
 - b. **Attire.** Applicant should wear clothing appropriate for a business interview. Dress should be conservative and color coordinated. For men, a suit, sport jacket and tie with dress slacks or a Class A military uniform for military personnel would be acceptable. Likewise for women, a business suit, dress, dress skirt/slacks and blouse or Class A military uniform for military personnel is appropriate.
 - c. **Format.** The QAP interview determines the applicant's suitability for the position of Cadet, CHP. Questions asked by the panel do not require a law enforcement background. The interview panel has two members:
 - (1) Chairperson—a member trained by the State Personnel Board
 - (2) State Service Representative—usually a CHP captain, lieutenant, or sergeant.
 - d. **Discussion Points.** Applicant will need to demonstrate the ability to speak clearly and concisely and display confidence. Applicant should be prepared to discuss their personal accomplishments, educational background, work history, and their driving and arrest record. **Applicants must be open and absolutely honest with all information.** The panel may also ask the applicant to respond to hypothetical scenarios. Applicants should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the duties and functions of the CHP officer and the California Highway Patrol; explain what they have to offer the CHP; and what they have done to prepare themselves for the position of Cadet, CHP. At the close of the interview, the panel will give the applicant an opportunity to ask questions and make a closing statement.

NOTE: Applicants should review the section entitled "You and Your Interview" at the end of this chapter.

e. **Additional Preparations.** In order to better prepare, applicants should study the CHP Cadet Exam Bulletin; review the CHP website at www.chpcareers.com; talk to a recruiter; research the position; write out answers to obvious questions; participate in practice interview sessions with associates or family members; and/or use a tape recorder or videotape to study the quality of the presentation and consider asking others to view or listen to the tape for constructive criticism.

f. **Notification of Results.** The applicant will be notified of the results by mail in approximately four to five weeks following the QAP interview. Applicants not selected to go forward in the process may re-apply if they still meet the minimum qualifications.

YOU AND YOUR INTERVIEW

An oral interview can be a stressful situation. By familiarizing yourself with the "mechanics" of an interview and by preparing yourself, you can make your interview a successful experience.

1. **PREPARING FOR YOUR ORAL INTERVIEW.** The oral interview evaluates intangible qualities of an applicant not easily measured. The oral interview scoring is on a sliding scale ranging from "not passable" to "outstanding." In fact, it is possible to achieve a relatively low score without a single "incorrect" answer, because of evident weaknesses (i.e., poor vocal delivery, lack of eye contact).

a. **Before the Interview.**

(1) Keep a copy of your application (STD 678) and review it carefully prior to the interview. This is one of the documents the oral panel reviews before your interview and often uses as a starting point of the interview. Know the sequence and dates of the experience and education you listed on the application. The panel may ask you to summarize the highlights of your education and experience. You should prepare, in advance, a brief oral summary of those aspects of your background that you think make you a more competitive candidate.

(2) Study the CHP, Cadet examination bulletin. The bulletin explains the needed skills, knowledge, and abilities as well as personal characteristics considered important for the position. The bulletin also offers valuable clues about the oral interview. Never go into an oral interview without any knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of the classification. If possible,

talk to CHP officers about the duties of a CHP officer, or participate in an approved ride-a-long with a CHP officer. This demonstrates your interest in becoming a CHP officer.

(3) Think through each qualification required. Imagine the types of questions you would ask if you were a member of the interview panel. How well can you answer those questions? Try especially to appraise your own knowledge and background in each area. In addition to identifying your strengths, identify areas which may be considered weaknesses. Be prepared to discuss your weaknesses with the interview panel, if they mention them, and what you have done or are doing to overcome those weaknesses.

(4) Consider setting up a mock interview using family or friends and have practice interview sessions. This would allow you to receive constructive criticism about your performance. Contact your local CHP Recruiter for information regarding upcoming oral interview seminars or “mock interviews” in your area.

(5) The night before your interview, get a good night's sleep and monitor your general health and mental attitude. You will want a clear head at the interview. Take care of a cold or other minor ailments. Do not take any stimulants or tranquilizers before your interview unless your doctor prescribes them and they will not affect your interview.

b. **The Day of the Interview.**

(1) Allow plenty of time to get to your destination. Plan to arrive ahead of your scheduled time, particularly if your appointment is early. Should another applicant fail to appear, the oral interview panel may invite you to start your interview early. By late afternoon, the panel may be behind schedule, and you may have to wait. However, do not assume this will be the case. Ensure you arrive on time. Take along the examination announcement and a copy of your application to review. Do try to relax and compose yourself. Even the calmest, most self-assured person is usually somewhat nervous before his or her interview.

(2) Dress appropriately. This is a business interview, and your appearance should indicate that you regard it as such. The oral interview panel is forming impressions about you from your education and experience, your manners, your attitudes, the way you express yourself, and your appearance. Use perfumes/colognes and cosmetics sparingly, and be considerate that others may be allergic.

(3) Know names of panel members. As soon as you arrive at the interview area, ask the receptionist the name of each panel member. Make a note of how to pronounce those names if they seem difficult to pronounce.

c. **Beginning the Interview.**

(1) The chairperson will introduce you to the other panel member when you enter the interview room. After acknowledging introductions, sit down. The interview will now begin.

(2) Usually, the chairperson will start by briefly reviewing some of your background highlights as listed on your application. Do not interrupt unless there are important misinterpretations. You may be asked a general question to help you get started, such as, "What aspects of your background do you think have best prepared you for this job?". The interview is now under way. The members of the panel will proceed to ask you the kinds of questions they feel will give them an idea of your potential as a CHP officer.

d. **Making Interview Questions Work for You.**

(1) Do your best. Remember that the interview panel's job is to help you do your best. At times, you might feel that the panel individually and collectively is trying to seek out only your negative attributes. Actually, this is not true. They are obliged to make a fair and impartial appraisal of your qualifications for the classification of Cadet, CHP. They must consider both your strengths and your weaknesses, and want to see you in your best light. Remember, they must interview all candidates, and an uncooperative or complaining candidate may not do well in the interview in spite of their best efforts to bring out the candidate's strongest attributes. Your job is to let the panel see you at your best.

(2) Be natural. Keep your attitude enthusiastic and confident, but not cocky. If you are not confident that you can do the job, do not expect the interview panel to have confidence in you. Do not apologize for your weaknesses; rather try to bring out your strong points. The interview panel is interested in a positive, not a negative presentation. Cockiness and wordiness might make the panel wonder if you are covering up a weakness by a false show of strength. On the other hand, try to use more than a couple of words when you answer each of the panel's questions.

(3) Get comfortable, but do not lounge or sprawl. Sit upright but not stiffly. A careless posture may lead the interview panel to conclude that you are not impressed by the importance of the occasion. This conclusion is natural, even if incorrect. Do not fuss with your clothing or with a pencil or paper. Your hands may occasionally be useful to emphasize a point, but do not let them become a point of distraction.

- (4) Be pleasant, but do not wisecrack or initiate extensive small talk. This is a business situation, and your attitude should show that you consider it as such. The interview panel's time is limited; the panel does not want to waste it, and neither should you. However, participate appropriately if a panel member chooses to make small talk at the beginning of the interview in order to make you feel more comfortable.
- (5) Do not exaggerate your experience or abilities. The interview panel may know more about you than you think. An experienced interview panel is rather adept at spotting such a situation. Do not take this chance.
- (6) Knowledge of QAP member. If you know a member of the interview panel, do not make an obvious point of it; but do not hide it. Remain as natural as possible. Go ahead and present your strong points to the panel, rather than waiting for the person you know to do so.
- (7) Do not dominate the interview. Let the interview panel direct the interview. The panel will give you the clues. Do not assume that you have to do all the talking. Realize that the panel has a number of questions to ask each candidate. Do not try to take up all the interview time by showing off your extensive knowledge. On the other hand, be sure you have prepared in advance to present the highlights of your strengths to the panel when they ask you for them (or at the end of the interview if they have not been mentioned earlier in the interview).
- (8) Be attentive. Usually, your interview lasts approximately 30 to 45 minutes. You should keep your attention at its sharpest throughout the interview. When a panel member is addressing a problem or a question to you, give that person your undivided attention. Address your reply principally to that person but continue eye contact with the other panel member.
- (9) Do not interrupt. Panel members may be stating a problem for you to analyze. They will ask you a question when the time comes. Let the problem be stated and wait for the question.
- (10) Make sure you understand the question. Do not try to answer a question until you are sure what is being asked. If it is not clear, restate it in your own words or ask the panel member to clarify it for you. Do not argue about minor elements.
- (11) Reply promptly but not hastily. Respond as quickly as you can, but do not jump to a hasty, ill-considered answer. It is acceptable to pause before answering. Try not to stare at the window, wall, or ceiling while formulating your answer.

(12) Do not try to create the answer you think the panel member wants. The panel is interested in how you analyze and solve problems. If you give an answer that you really do not think is correct, but believe it is an answer the panel wants, you may have difficulty defending your answer if the panel members ask you to clarify your answer.

(13) Do not switch sides in your reply merely to agree with a panel member. Sometimes a panel member will appear to support the reverse of your answer merely to draw you out and to see if you are willing and able to defend your point of view. Do not start a heated debate; yet, do not surrender a good position. If a position is worth taking, it is worth defending.

(14) Do not be afraid to admit an error in judgment if you are shown to be wrong. The panel knows that you are forced to reply without the opportunity for careful, prolonged consideration of the issue. Your answer may be demonstrably wrong. If so, admit it and get on with the interview.

(15) Do not bring in extraneous comments or tell lengthy anecdotes. Keep your replies to the point. If you feel the need of an illustration from your personal experience, keep it brief and leave out minor details. If you think you might be giving the interview panel too much detail on a specific point, you may want to ask them whether they would like you to elaborate further.

(16) Do not use slang terms or use words improperly. Many good replies have been weakened by the use of slang terms or other language faults. Frequently, the panel will note any errors in grammar or diction or other evidence of carelessness in your speech habits (i.e., use of phrases such as “yeah,” “uh-huh,” or “you know” and mumbling).

(17) Present your strengths in terms of how you could benefit the Department if hired. Be ready to tell the panel how your education, prior work experience, military experience, volunteer work, hobbies/clubs/achievements, physical fitness, or other activities have helped prepare you for the position.

e. **Closing The Interview.**

(1) The chairperson usually concludes the interview by asking if you have anything to add. You should take advantage of this opportunity to make a closing statement. The closing statement should include your overall qualifications, personal achievements, methods of preparation, items that were not covered in the interview, and reasons why you should be given favorable consideration. The tone of your closing statement should be positive, upbeat, and brief (approximately 30 seconds).

(2) If it seems appropriate to shake hands with the interview panel members, it is fine to do so. If it would be awkward or uncomfortable for you,

then you probably are better off not shaking their hands, however, should the panel members extend their hands first, you are recommended to shake hands. A smile and a statement from you such as, "Thanks again for your time," should end the interview on a positive note.

CHAPTER 5

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION, MEDICAL EVALUATION, PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION, ACADEMY INVITATION

Revised May 2012

1. **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION.** An initial interview appointment will be made with the applicant by the CHP officers who conduct the background investigation.
 - a. Applicants are required to provide information in the following areas:
 - References
 - Education
 - Residences (past seven years)
 - Other Peace Officer Applications (departments to which the applicant sent an application for employment)
 - Employment History
 - Driving Record (all arrests, all citations)
 - Arrest/Legal History (all arrests, any civil litigation)
 - Financial History (all accounts, opened and closed)
 - Military Service
 - b. Applicants are required to show the following documents, and provide a copy of each, at the initial interview:
 - Valid Driver License
 - Birth Certificate
 - Verification of Education (high school diploma, college degree, GED certificate)
 - High School Transcripts (sealed, official copies)
 - College or University Transcripts (sealed, official copies)
 - Marriage Certificate
 - Marriage Dissolution Documents
 - Vehicle Insurance Declaration Page
 - Military Service Certificate (discharge documents [DD214], commendations, etc.)
 - Social Security Card
 - Proof of legal U.S. residency (birth certificate, naturalization papers)

- a. During the Background Investigation Phase, the applicant will be scheduled for a Computer Voice Stress Analysis (CVSA). The CVSA will verify the information the applicant provides to the background investigator.
- b. A final interview is conducted by the background investigator to review the findings of the investigation, and to notify the applicant whether he/she will be recommended to continue in the selection process. All information provided to the background investigator will be subject to truth verification.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVIEW/ PSYCHOLOGICAL WRITTEN TEST.

The Psychological Written Test consists of a battery of three tests. It is a mandatory process required by state law for all prospective peace officers. These tests will be used in conjunction with your clinical interview with a psychologist to determine your suitability for a career in law enforcement. This will be scheduled once an applicant successfully completes the background investigation.

Applicants continuing in the selection process will be scheduled for an appointment with a departmentally selected psychologist. This interview is generally held after the background investigation and prior to the Academy invitation.

Preparations: This exam is based on your personal history and experiences; there are no study materials.

3. MEDICAL EVALUATION.

- a. The applicant will be notified when and how to arrange a medical appointment after the background investigation.
- b. The medical evaluation is paid for by the state, and administered by doctors contracted by the state. A complete physical examination is conducted to ensure that the applicant is capable of performing the essential duties of a CHP officer.

NOTE: Although the State Personnel Board allows 20 days to fill out the medical forms, it is recommended that the applicant complete the forms as soon as possible. Completion of the medical forms in a timely manner may expedite entry into the Academy.

4. ACADEMY INVITATION.

In normal economic periods, there are generally four Academy cadet classes annually. Normally 4 to 8 weeks prior to the start of the Academy class, either by mail or

telephone, applicants receive formal notification of an invitation to the Academy. Refer to Chapter 1, Section 5, of this guide for a general overview about the Academy, Academy facilities and accommodations, and the type of training and courses provided.

CHAPTER 6
LIFE AT THE ACADEMY
Revised May 2012

1. REPORTING TO THE ACADEMY.

a. **Arrival.** Applicants will need to arrive at the Academy for the first day by 0730 hours for registration and orientation.

b. **Attire.** Male and female cadets should report to the Academy wearing appropriate business attire.

(1) **Males.** Suit (sport coat), tie, dress shoes.

(2) **Females.** Business suit, dress shoes (skirt, dresses and high heel shoes not recommended).

c. **Grooming Standards.** As with uniformed employees, cadets shall assume the responsibility of adopting high standards for personal grooming and cleanliness.

(1) **Personal Grooming – Male.** The following grooming standards are deemed reasonable and shall be the minimum standards for male uniformed employees while in uniform or appropriate civilian attire.

(a) **Hair.** Shall be neat, clean, trimmed (not shaved), and present a groomed appearance. Hair shall not interfere with the proper wearing of the uniform hat/cap or helmet. Hair shall not extend below the top of the uniform shirt collar while sitting or standing in an erect position. Hair color or style shall not be eccentric. Hair which is styled or combed forward shall not be lower than the relaxed eyebrow of an individual and shall not be visible on the forehead while the uniform hat/cap or helmet is worn.

(b) **Sideburns and Mustaches.** Skin shall be clean shaven; however, neatly trimmed sideburns and mustaches are permissible. Sideburns shall not extend below the bottom of the ear and shall end with a clean-shaven horizontal line. The maximum width at the bottom of the sideburns shall not exceed 1 – 1 ½ inches.

Mustaches shall not extend more than ½-inch beyond the corners of the mouth nor below the vermillion border of the upper lip, or more than ¼-inch below the corner of the mouth. Waxed ends or points are prohibited.

(2) Personal grooming (Females).

(a) Hair. Same standards apply as with male hair grooming.

1 Decoration(s) shall not be worn in the hair. Hair clips and pins that match the color of the hair are permitted.

2 Hair shall not be worn in a “pony tail” or similar style.

3 Moderate “natural” or other hair styles are permitted in conforming with the hair standards described above; however, the maximum extension from the scalp shall not exceed two inches.

(b) Cosmetics. Cosmetics shall be subdued and blended to match the natural skin color of the individual.

1 False eyelashes are prohibited.

(c) Fingernails. Shall be clean and trimmed. Nails shall not extend beyond the tips of the fingers. Only clear nail polish is permitted.

(d) Brassieres. Brassieres shall provide adequate support.

(3) Tattoo and Body Art Policy

Many applicants and current officers have tattoos but they must adhere to our policy which is: All uniformed employees and cadets are prohibited from displaying any body art, tattoo(s), brand(s), intentional scarring, mutilation, or dental ornamentation while on duty or representing the CHP in any official capacity. Any current uniformed employee or cadet with existing body art, tattoo(s), brand(s), intentional scarring, or mutilation that is visible shall have the following options:

(a) Uniformed employees and cadets shall cover existing body art, tattoo(s), brand(s), intentional scarring, or mutilation by wearing the long-sleeve uniform shirt and/or uniform trousers/breeches.

(b) Cover the existing body art, tattoo(s), brand(s), intentional scarring, or mutilation with a skin tone patch or make-up.

(c) Have the tattoo(s) or brand(s) removed at the employee's expense. Body art, tattoo(s), brand(s), intentional scarring, and/or mutilation that is not able to be covered or concealed is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, foreign objects inserted under the skin, pierced, split or forked tongue; and/or stretched out holes in the ears.

Uniformed employees and cadets shall not have any dental ornamentation. The use of gold, platinum, silver, or other veneer caps for the purposes of ornamentation are prohibited. Teeth, whether natural, capped, or veneered, shall not be ornamented with designs, jewels, initials, etc.

d. **What to Bring.** It is imperative that each cadet possess certain documents and information for the first day processing.

(1) Driver license.

(2) At least two blank checks, with \$550 to \$700 deposited in the account to cover the checks.

(3) Social Security Numbers of beneficiaries.

(4) Emergency contact information.

(5) Vehicle information – license plate number, color, make, and model.

e. Other items to bring include: one clock radio, dusting supplies, shoe polishing items, plain white crew neck tee-shirts, a minimum amount of civilian attire, swimsuit, toiletries (prescription medications), boots/shoes (black, all leather), a pair of running shoes and non-marking court shoes.

2. **ACADEMY LIFESTYLE.**

a. **Live-in Training.** The Academy is a live-in training facility. Training day typically begins at 0800 hours and ends at approximately 1700 hours. Cadets are required to remain on the Academy grounds after training hours.

b. **Drill.** Cadets learn drill procedures necessary to participate in ceremonies and tactical formations.

c. **Inspections.** To ensure each cadet adheres to the high standards of the Department, personnel and dorm inspections are held at various intervals during cadet training.

d. **Liberty.** Cadets receive liberty on Wednesday nights and weekends, contingent on passing the tests each week and absent any disciplinary actions.

(1) Wednesday – 1700 to 2359 hours

(2) Weekends – 1700 hours Friday to 2359 hours Sunday

e. **Meals.** Meals are served between 0645 – 0730, 1145 – 1230, and 1700- 1730 hours Monday through Saturday, and 0800, 1200, and 1700 hours on Sunday.

(1) The Academy cafeteria provides a variety of prepared foods. Cadets are responsible for choosing meals appropriately. Cadets not meeting the body composition requirements of below 20% body fat for females and below 16% body fat for males will be placed on the training table and must adhere to a strict diet.

f. **Salary/Pay.** Cadets receive full salary during the 27-week training period at the Academy. Pay warrants will be issued once a month, after the first of every month. Arrange with creditors and budget your finances accordingly.

g. **Medical Care.** Medical and dental benefits are provided after the cadet's first thirty days of training. **NOTE: Cadets are responsible for any medical costs incurred during the first thirty days of training.** Treatment for injuries that cadets suffer as a result of training will be covered by the Department.

Mail/Mailing Address.

(1) Incoming mail is delivered to the Academy on a daily basis, except Sundays and holidays. Mail should be addressed to cadets as follows:

Cadet (cadet's full name)
Cadet Training Class (e.g., CTC II-12 [class/year])
California Highway Patrol Academy
3500 Reed Avenue
West Sacramento, CA 95605-1677

h. **Housing.** Cadets are assigned to a dormitory quad. Eight to twelve cadets may be assigned to each quad, sharing a common restroom and showers. Cadets will normally share a room with two other cadets from the same class. Cadets are responsible for maintaining its appearance.

i. **Emergencies.** Cadets may receive emergency telephone calls once an emergency is verified. Cadets should tell their family/friends that they can only receive cell phone calls during designated times.

j. **Personal Affairs.** Personal and family conflict (marriage problems, homesickness, etc.) is the main cause for early separation from cadet training. Cadets should have their personal affairs in order prior to reporting to the Academy. Cadets should be prepared to be separated from their families for several months.

3. **ACADEMY TRAINING.** Cadets will be required to meet the standards set forth by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) for cadet training ranging from academics and physical training to enforcement tactics, weapons training and vehicle operations. The following descriptions will give a brief overview of the type of training and what you should expect in each phase.

a. **Academics.**

(1) Cadets are responsible for 67 "learning domains" (LDs) mandated by POST, in addition to agency specific policies and procedures. Cadets will receive over 1,275 hours of training. Cadets are required to take a remedial exam in addition to serving a weekend restriction if an LD is failed. Failure of the remedial examination will result in termination from cadet training.

(2) Cadets are certified as an Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) during Academy training.

(3) Cadets are also required to complete and pass an Accident investigation course, Spanish Language training, and Criminal Law courses.

b. **Physical Training.** Cadets are expected to pass a variety of Physical Fitness Tests and the Physical Performance Program Test. To prepare, cadets should be involved in some form of strength training program (a circuit weight training program is advisable). In addition, prior to reporting to the Academy, cadets should develop an endurance to:

- (1) run at least three miles, three times a week, at an 8-minute-per-mile pace,
- (2) perform 50 to 75 sit-ups (unassisted),
- (3) perform 50 push-ups, and
- (4) perform four pull-ups.

This will ensure each cadet meets the **minimum** incoming acceptable level.

c. **Enforcement Tactics.** During the course of this training, cadets will learn the basics for (and be tested on) general knowledge of Use of Force, Patrol Techniques, Vehicle Pullovers, Unusual Occurrences, Simunitions® (simulated ammunition) Training and Crimes in Progress, as well as, the ability to apply that knowledge during both day and night scenario testing.

d. **Weapons Training.** This program prepares the cadet to meet the challenge of “real world” encounters.

- (1) Each cadet will be instructed in the safe handling and effective use of the Department’s general duty weapons; Smith & Wesson model 4006-TSW, semi-automatic pistol, and Remington model 870 shotgun, both in daylight and night conditions.
- (2) Each cadet will also complete a firing course to familiarize him/herself with tactical rifles.
- (3) Each cadet will be trained in the proper use of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC), “pepper spray,” operations in a chemical environment (CS gas), and basic recognition and handling of confiscated and clandestine weapons.

e. **Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC).**

(1) Cadets will be trained in enforcement driving at the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course. Cadets will receive a minimum of 24 hours lecture on vehicle dynamics, performance driving techniques, and departmental policy. Cadets will also receive a minimum of 22 hours of hands-on driver training. Training includes:

- (a) vehicle placement,

- (b) skid control techniques,
- (c) performance driving,
- (d) defensive driving, and
- (e) Code-3 pursuit driving.

(2) Each cadet will be required to meet minimum performance objectives during hands-on training as well as successfully completion of a written examination.

f. **Customs and Courtesies.** Cadets are to become familiar with paramilitary customs and courtesies such as addressing staff members, or any persons on Academy grounds, by using “Sir” or Ma’am.” During many aspects of training, cadets will be required to perform drill facing movements and assume the position of attention and remain in that position until told otherwise.