



**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF POLICE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**



Subject			Policy Number
Promotional Process			414
Effective Date January 19, 2026	Revision Date January 19, 2026	Reevaluation Date Annually	Number of Pages 7
Reference Standards TPCA: 4.06, 4.07 CALEA: 33.8.4, 34.1.1 – 34.1.6 IACLEA: 3.1.3			Rescinds or Amends Policy Number 407

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and transparent promotional process for commissioned personnel by defining position qualifications, promotional process evaluation procedures, promotion eligibility lists, promotional process appeals, and setting guidelines for temporary “acting” assignments when officers assume higher responsibilities for a limited time. All promotional processes shall be conducted in compliance with this policy and applicable state and federal laws and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) standards to ensure nondiscriminatory promotional opportunities.

II. POLICY

The promotional process ensures a professional, job-related, and merit-based framework that consistently identifies, develops, and advances qualified candidates for leadership positions to the ranks designated in the job descriptions. The positions of Chief of Police and Assistant Chief of Police are not governed by this policy.

The Office of the Director of Police (ODOP) retains overall authority and responsibility for oversight, review, and approval of all promotional processes for sworn personnel. ODOP retains the authority to define minimum qualifications for each position. ODOP delegates to each Institution's Chief the authority to define preferred rank-specific qualifications, testing components, and evaluation criteria to meet local department needs while ensuring consistency and compliance with ODOP standards. Each Institution Chief is authorized to conduct an interview board or hire a third-party vendor to develop and implement an assessment center as part of the promotional process. ODOP still retains overall approval authority for vendor-run promotional testing processes.

Considering the need for periodic policy revisions, all promotional lists, regardless of when they are finalized, will be valid for only one calendar year, from January 1 to December 31. Changes to this policy will generally take effect on January 1 of each year,

which ensures that all eligible candidates have the opportunity to compete for promotions.

III. PROMOTION PROCESS

A. Eligibility

1. All applicants must meet the published rank-specific qualifications.
 - a. Minimum requirements for each rank shall be outlined in job descriptions available at <https://www.utsystem.edu/offices/police/odop-policies/job-descriptions>.
 - b. Any additional local requirements must be published and included in the promotional announcement.
2. Candidates must not have any sustained Class I Complaints within the previous twelve (12) months, sustained Class II Complaints within the previous six (6) months, or currently be the subject of Disciplinary Probation or a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) as outlined in ODOP policies.

B. Application and Announcement

1. Promotional opportunities shall be announced in writing by the Institution Chief or ODOP at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the scheduled testing date. The announcement shall specify eligibility criteria and process timelines. Eligible persons must meet all rank-specific qualifications by the date of the promotional announcement and submit a written intent to participate through their chain of command at least twenty (20) calendar days prior to the scheduled testing date.
2. Applicant eligibility shall be conducted by the institution.
3. Records and information on file in TCLEDDS on the date of the promotion test announcement shall be the source utilized by the institution for training, license, education, and experience. If a candidate is from outside the State of Texas, the institution shall obtain verification of law enforcement licensing, certification, and training directly from the candidate's home state licensing authority or equivalent agency. Such verification must confirm that the candidate is in good standing and eligible for certification under TCOLE (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement) standards prior to participation in the promotional process.
4. The institution shall notify the applicant of their eligibility status at least ten (10) calendar days before the scheduled testing date.

C. ODOP Oversight

1. ODOP retains responsibility for this policy and related job descriptions.
2. ODOP will review all eligibility certifications before candidates may advance to the assessment or interview phase.
3. ODOP shall be available as a resource, at the request of the Institution Chief, to review, consult, and provide assistance.

IV. ASSESSMENT CENTER, ORAL INTERVIEW BOARD, AND EVALUATION PROCESS

A. Discretion and Purpose

The Institution Chief may conduct an assessment center, oral interview board, or a combination of both, to evaluate candidates' promotional potential.

B. Oversight and Responsibility

1. The assessment center and/or oral interview board shall be conducted under the direction and oversight of the Institution Chief, who maintains exclusive responsibility for their operation.
2. Assessors shall be oriented to the evaluation process and scoring rubric prior to participation and may be required to sign a confidentiality statement prior to participation.
3. At least one assessor should be from outside the candidate's institution or external to the UT System Police when practicable, to ensure impartiality and reduce the appearance of favoritism.
4. The Institution Chief will determine the evaluation dimensions utilized to assess candidate performance in each assessment component. All candidates from an institution will be evaluated utilizing the same position specific dimensions.

C. Scoring

1. Regardless of the promotional process utilized, each method must include a scoring system that ranks the candidates and provides for a minimum passing score. All candidates included on the final ranked list must have successfully met the minimum passing score to be considered for possible promotion.
2. Assessment Center Scoring: Contracted assessment centers may utilize their proprietary scoring systems to evaluate candidates. All scoring instruments, weighting factors, and conversion methods must be approved by the Institution Chief.

3. Internal Oral Board Scoring: Internal Oral Boards shall utilize a standardized numerical scale (e.g., 0–100) approved by ODOP to ensure consistency across institutions.
4. Combined Scoring and Weighting: When both an external (vendor) assessment and an internal evaluation are utilized, the Institution Chief shall develop a composite scoring matrix that converts all assessment components to a common 100-point scale, with predetermined weighting (e.g., 60% external / 40% internal).
5. Document and Record Retention
 - a. Upon conclusion of the process, score sheets documenting candidate performance shall be tabulated by the contracted assessment vendor or the institution.
 - b. Recruitment process materials will be maintained by the institution in accordance with records retention policies and filed separately from personnel files.
 - c. ODOP will be provided with each candidate's final score and the ranking of candidates.

V. FINAL COMPOSITE SCORE

- A. After tabulating the assessment or interview results, the Institution Chief will compile a final list of candidates and their respective scores.
- B. In the event of an overall score tie, the higher assessment score prevails; if identical, overall commissioned law enforcement service time, utilizing TCLEDSS, is the tiebreaker.
- C. Each candidate will receive their individual scores and their specific ranking.
- D. The promotional eligibility list remains valid for one year from the date the final list is approved and posted by ODOP.

VI. MAKE-UP ASSESSMENT CENTER / INTERVIEW BOARD

A candidate who fails to attend, participate in, or complete the assessment center and/or interview board process shall be deemed ineligible for promotion and removed from the eligibility list, unless mandated by federal law (e.g., USERRA). Any make-up assessment center or interview board must be developed and implemented consistent with legal mandates.

VII. SELECTION METHOD

- A. For any vacancy authorized to be filled, the Institution Chief may promote any one of the top three candidates (rule of three) on the eligibility list at the sole discretion of the Institution Chief.
- B. The Institution Chiefs have sole discretion to bypass a higher-ranked candidate. If utilized, the Institution Chief will be required to provide a reasonable justification.
- C. Factors the Institution Chief may consider when bypassing a higher-ranked candidate may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. demonstrated job performance and competency
 - 2. personnel evaluations
 - 3. discipline history
 - 4. awards, recognitions, and achievements
 - 5. history of leadership involvement, mentorship, special assignments
 - 6. training records
 - 7. community/civic involvement
 - 8. specific needs of the vacant position and department
- D. Methods of evaluation may include, but are not limited to: interviews with candidates, consultations with supervisors, and review of personnel, training, and discipline files.
- E. A bypassed candidate will be provided written notice of the bypass prior to the promotion of the selected candidate.
- F. Non-selected candidates for promotion or appointment due to ranking shall receive feedback upon written request to the Institution Chief.

VIII. VACANCIES (INTERNAL OR LATERAL)

- A. The Institution Chief may seek qualified candidates from within their own department, the UT System, outside the UT System, or any combination of these options.
- B. The existence of an active promotional list does not preclude an Institution Chief from filling a vacancy through another hiring process, such as an external lateral hire. Such decisions are at the discretion of the Institution Chief, based upon the best interests of the department.
- C. All vacancy announcements and selections shall comply with equal opportunity principles and institutional hiring policies.
- D. When a vacancy is filled by a candidate from outside the institution's police department, the new hire shall be considered a lateral selection rather than a promotion. External selections do not confer promotional status, promotional

seniority, or promotional preference and are processed in accordance with institutional hiring practices rather than the promotional process outlined in this policy.

IX. PROMOTIONAL OR APPOINTED PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All individuals promoted or hired to any position must successfully complete a six-month promotional probationary period. The supervisor shall conduct written performance evaluations at the midpoint and prior to the conclusion of the promotional probationary period.

X. SECURITY PROTOCOLS

All promotional process materials, including assessment instruments, interview questions, scoring sheets, evaluator notes, eligibility documentation, and candidate records, shall be secured.

Electronic promotional materials shall be stored on a secure, access-controlled institution server or an encrypted digital platform approved by the institution's Information Security Office.

Paper files shall be secured in a locked cabinet or storage room.

Access to files shall be restricted to the Institution Chief, their designee, and personnel specifically authorized by the Institution Chief, and audit logs shall be enabled when available.

XI. ACTING ASSIGNMENTS

This section is applicable only to vacant positions that are subject to being filled through the promotional process and shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the operational command authority of the Institution Chief and Executive Director of Police to maintain continuity of police services. Nothing in this section prohibits the Institutional Chief of Police from appointing an acting person to fill a vacancy. Acting assignments are interim in nature and intended solely to ensure continuity of command when a vacancy or operational need arises.

- A. Acting assignments filled for a vacancy that is subject to a promotion or appointment to be permanently filled are limited to a maximum of 180 continuous days unless extended by the Institution Chief with notice to the Office of the Director of Police.
- B. The assignment must comply with the institution's Human Resources policies.
- C. Assignments shall not be used to circumvent or legitimize a promotion decision.

D. During such assignments:

1. The officer shall wear their permanent rank insignia.
2. All signatures and written references must indicate acting status (e.g., Acting Corporal, Acting Sergeant, Acting Lieutenant, Acting Captain). All acting assignments must be documented in writing, specifying duration, responsibilities, and supervisory oversight. Acting time shall not confer permanent rank, pay grade advancement, or seniority.

E. All members assigned to an acting position shall receive compensation for the rank they are fulfilling for the entire duration of their assignment.

F. Removal from an acting assignment may be made by the Institution Chief for any reason.



Michael Parks
Executive Director of Police

Changes/Amendments since last publication:

Replaces 407 Promotional Policy. January 19, 2026