

Key Findings from Survey of POST Screening Psychologists on Methods for Assessing Bias in Peace Officer Preemployment Psychological Evaluations

Note: N=105 screening psychologists from all 10 state regions responded to the online survey. N=76 respondents (72.4%) reported primarily conducting evaluations on behalf of the hiring agency [i.e., initial (or “first-opinion”) evaluations]; N=29 respondents (27.6%) indicated that they primarily conduct evaluations of candidates who are self-referred after failing the initial evaluation (i.e., “second-opinion” evaluations). N=42 respondents (40.4%) reported that they conduct fewer than 50 peace officer psychological evaluations annually; the remaining respondents (N=62 or 59.6%; one respondent did not answer) reported conducting 50 or more evaluations per year (with 29.8% reporting that they conduct 250 or more evaluations annually). Because two-thirds of the respondents who reported conducting fewer than 50 evaluations annually also reported that they primarily conduct second-opinion evaluations, and more than 95% who reported conducting 50 or more evaluations per year indicated that they primarily conduct initial evaluations, the main survey results are reported separately for these two groups.

	< 50 per year	≥ 50 per year	Combined
How long have you been conducting psychological evaluations of peace officer candidates?			
< 6 years	50.00%	22.58%	33.33%
6-10 years	19.05%	27.42%	23.81%
> 10 years	30.95%	50.00%	42.85%
What methods do you currently use to assess for explicit bias toward race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation?*			
Background Investigation	79.41%	91.23%	86.81%
Psychological Testing	67.65%	63.16%	64.84%
Self-Reported Personal History	82.35%	91.23%	87.91%
Clinical Interview	94.12%	96.49%	95.60%
What methods do you currently use to assess for implicit bias toward race or ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation?**			
Background Investigation	66.67%	74.55%	71.59%
Psychological Testing	57.58%	54.55%	55.68%
Self-Reported Personal History	78.79%	72.73%	75.00%
Clinical Interview	93.94%	81.82%	83.36%
Do any of the agencies you conduct evaluations for routinely provide you with outcome data for hired candidates?***			
Yes	15.15%	32.73%	26.14%
No	84.85%	67.27%	73.86%

*N=14 respondents did not answer this item.

**N=17 respondents did not answer these items.

Note: The survey included questions concerning the **specific** methods used for assessing bias within each of the four data sources, but the response rates were too low to provide reliable findings.