

LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY[501]

Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 501—Chapter 2
“Minimum Standards for Law Enforcement and Reserve Officers”

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 17A, 80B, and 80D
State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code chapters 80B and 80D

Public Hearing

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

July 28, 2026
9 to 10 a.m.

7105 NW 70th Avenue
Burma Road, Building A41
Johnston, Iowa
Online: us06web.zoom.us/j/88688900677

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written comments concerning this Regulatory Analysis, which must be received by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy no later than 4:30 p.m. on July 28, 2026. Comments should be directed to:

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Purpose and Summary

Proposed Chapter 2 consolidates prior 501—Chapter 10 and describes the minimum standards that all law enforcement officers and reserve officers must meet before serving in a law enforcement capacity, as well as the hiring standards for certified officers with a break in law enforcement service or change in level of service. As a part of the Red Tape Review required by Executive Order 10, this chapter was reviewed and revised.

Analysis of Impact

1. Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:

• Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:

This proposed rulemaking does increase costs for law enforcement agencies because it requires psychological and cognitive evaluations for reserve officer applicants who were not previously required to meet any minimum standards before service.

• Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:

This proposed rulemaking will benefit the public by ensuring that all law enforcement officers and reserve officers meet basic minimum standards before being able to serve in a law enforcement capacity since both law enforcement and reserve officers have similar legal authority over the public.

2. Impact of the proposed rulemaking, economic or otherwise, including the nature and amount of all the different kinds of costs that would be incurred:

- **Quantitative description of impact:**

Iowa's law enforcement officers and reserve officers will benefit. All officers will have met basic minimum standards before serving in a law enforcement capacity, which will ensure a more professional and better equipped law enforcement force and be aligned with current law enforcement standards. This proposed rulemaking also consolidates Chapter 2 and prior 501—Chapter 10.

- **Qualitative description of impact:**

The public will benefit from a professional force of law enforcement and reserve officers who have met basic minimum standards and that is in alignment with current law enforcement standards. Creating greater public trust in the police force ultimately enhances safety, public cooperation, law enforcement efficiency, and officer well-being.

3. Costs to the State:

- **Implementation and enforcement costs borne by the agency or any other agency:**

Law enforcement agencies will continue to bear the costs of cognitive and psychological testing of applicants entering the field, as they historically have borne this cost.

- **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**

This proposed rulemaking has no anticipated impact on State revenues.

4. Comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking to the costs and benefits of inaction:

This proposed rulemaking streamlines Chapter 2 and consolidates the similar information from prior 501—Chapter 10. It creates identical minimum standards for both law enforcement and reserve officers who have nearly identical statutory authority.

5. Determination whether less costly methods or less intrusive methods exist for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking:

This proposed rulemaking has been streamlined, clarified, and made less restrictive where possible in accordance with the goals and directives of Executive Order 10.

6. Alternative methods considered by the agency:

- **Description of any alternative methods that were seriously considered by the agency:**

No alternative methods were considered.

- **Reasons why alternative methods were rejected in favor of the proposed rulemaking:**

Not applicable.

Small Business Impact

If the rulemaking will have a substantial impact on small business, include a discussion of whether it would be feasible and practicable to do any of the following to reduce the impact of the rulemaking on small business:

- Establish less stringent compliance or reporting requirements in the rulemaking for small business.

- Establish less stringent schedules or deadlines in the rulemaking for compliance or reporting requirements for small business.

- Consolidate or simplify the rulemaking's compliance or reporting requirements for small business.

- Establish performance standards to replace design or operational standards in the rulemaking for small business.

- Exempt small business from any or all requirements of the rulemaking.

If legal and feasible, how does the rulemaking use a method discussed above to reduce the substantial impact on small business?

The proposed rulemaking does not have a substantial impact on small business. This rulemaking does not establish design or operational standards.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Rescind 501—Chapter 2 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 2

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND RESERVE OFFICERS

501—2.1(80B,80D) Minimum hiring standards for non-Iowa certified law enforcement and reserve applicants. All non-Iowa certified law enforcement and reserve applicants must meet the following minimum standards before serving in a law enforcement capacity or attending a certifying course.

2.1(1) Be a United States citizen.

2.1(2) Be 18 years of age.

2.1(3) Hold a valid driver's license.

2.1(4) Not be addicted to drugs or alcohol. An individual who has been convicted of a crime involving drugs or alcohol within two years or who has been charged more than once of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated (OWI) does not meet this standard.

2.1(5) Be of good moral character as determined by the background investigation approved by the academy. A person is not of good moral character when:

a. Legally prohibited from possessing a firearm.

b. Convicted or adjudicated delinquent of:

(1) A sex offense or any offense that could result in placement on the sex offender registry; or

(2) Any offense in which a dangerous or offensive weapon was used in the commission.

c. Convicted of a serious misdemeanor, or higher, that caused physical or emotional harm to another.

d. Convicted of possessing with the intent to deliver or manufacture, delivering, or manufacturing a controlled substance.

e. Convicted of a crime involving dishonesty. This provision excludes convictions for:

(1) Purchasing or possessing alcohol or tobacco while underage; or

(2) Unlawfully possessing or controlling a driver's license or nonoperator ID card while under 21 years of age.

f. Charged with a felony regardless of disposition.

g. Engaged in any act of domestic violence or other domestic abuse, including other offenses or lesser included offenses stemming from domestic abuse.

h. Engaged in any act involving threats, harassment, or stalking of another person.

i. Placed on the child or dependent adult abuse registries.

2.1(6) Be free of personal conscience or belief that would oppose the use of reasonable force, including deadly force, when necessary for law enforcement duties.

2.1(7) Be eligible to secure a professional permit to possess a firearm.

2.1(8) Possess a high school diploma, general education development (GED), high school equivalency diploma (HSED), or a home school certificate of completion.

2.1(9) Have vision of, or corrected to, 20/20 and pass a color vision test without the aid of color corrective lenses as determined by a qualified licensed provider. As determined through testing, individuals with anomalous trichromatism or monochromasy color vision are not eligible to be hired as law enforcement officers.

2.1(10) Have normal hearing, or aided hearing that meets the hearing standard, in each ear as determined by a qualified licensed provider.

a. Normal hearing. Hearing is normal when, tested by an audiometer, hearing sensitivity thresholds are within 25 dB measured at 500 Hz, 1,000 Hz, 2,000 Hz and 3,000 Hz averaged together.

b. Aided hearing. An individual who fails to meet the hearing standard will have an evaluation by a qualified licensed provider to determine if the individual meets the hearing standard with the use of a prescribed hearing aid. The hearing standard is met if the individual demonstrates pure tone average of 25 dB hearing loss aided and is determined to have acceptable functional hearing.

2.1(11) Have not had any of the following occur:

- a.* A revocation or suspension of a certification or license;
- b.* Any action taken impacting a certification or license;
- c.* Denial of a path to certification or license; or
- d.* Dismissal from a basic training program due to a violation of the program handbook or an academic or skill failure.

2.1(12) Have not been charged with any criminal offense while certified or licensed as a law enforcement or reserve officer.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 80B.11(1) “*a*” and “*f*” and 80D.2.

501—2.2(80B,80D) Minimum standards of physical fitness, cognitive, and psychological testing for non-Iowa certified law enforcement and reserve applicants. All non-Iowa certified law enforcement and reserve applicants must meet the following minimum testing standards before serving in a law enforcement capacity or attending a certifying course:

2.2(1) Physical fitness. Achieve a passing score on a physical fitness test approved by the council for certification.

2.2(2) Cognitive test.

- a.* Achieve a validated, passing score on a cognitive test approved by the council.
- b.* The cognitive test is administered by an approved academy proctor or by the academy consistent with the testing protocols detailed by the cognitive test.
- c.* A cognitive test score is valid for one year from the date of testing.

2.2(3) Psychological test.

- a.* Be determined to be psychologically suitable based on a psychological test approved by the council.
- b.* Tests will be ordered through the academy and the orders forwarded to an approved psychologist selected by the agency.
- c.* The psychologist will review the background investigation, the score report, any prior evaluations, and, if indicated, will complete a clinical interview.
- d.* The psychologist will return the clinic results form and evaluation directly to the academy.
- e.* A psychological test outcome specific to a position as a law enforcement or reserve officer stands for one year from the date of testing unless stated otherwise.
- f.* An applicant may request one second opinion from a psychological test that results in a not suitable determination. To be valid, the second opinion will be provided by an approved psychologist who has reviewed the background investigation, the score report, any prior evaluations, and the report from which the second opinion is requested.

2.2(4) Approval process for psychologists.

a. A psychologist will submit the academy’s application for approval providing evidence of all of the following:

- (1) A valid Iowa license to practice psychology and at least five full-time years of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, including three full-time years of post-doctoral experience;
- (2) Approval as a qualified user by the assessment source; and
- (3) Competence to conduct pre-employment psychological screenings of officers consistent with the guidelines set forth in the police psychological services section of the international association of chiefs of police.

b. To maintain approval, a psychologist will complete at least eight hours of continuing education annually related to pre-employment officer psychological evaluations and provide

verification to the academy upon request. Psychologists may choose from activities approved by the academy or traditional continuing education, with at least 40 percent of the hours completed through nontraditional continuing educational programming.

2.2(5) Test administration.

a. The academy will have prescheduled cognitive and psychological testing dates. Nonscheduled testing may also be provided.

b. Cognitive or psychological test results will be provided by the academy to a hiring authority upon request as long as the applicant is not the hiring authority.

2.2(6) Cost of tests. The academy will establish and post fee schedules for testing services.

2.2(7) Test integrity.

a. Any issues related to testing integrity must be immediately reported to the director.

b. Test integrity violations will result in the invalidation of scores, the revocation of proctor status, and the revocation of academy approval for test administration.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 80B.11(1) “*f*” and “*g*” and 80D.2.

501—2.3(80B,80D) Status forms.

2.3(1) *Report of hire.* The academy will be provided with a fully completed report of hire once all requirements have been met. Upon receipt of the signed attestation, the hiring authority will be notified if the hire meets minimum hiring standards.

2.3(2) *Notice of election.* Consistent with Iowa Code chapter 80B and section 331.651(2) “*c*,” the academy will be provided with a fully completed notice of election prior to a sheriff taking office. Upon confirmation by the academy that minimum standards have been met, the sheriff will be notified that the sheriff’s Iowa peace officer certification is approved for service.

2.3(3) *Separation.* The academy will be provided with the approved form within ten days of separation.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 80B.11(1) “*a*,” “*f*,” and “*g*”; 80B.13A(4); 80D.2; and 331.651(2) “*c*.”

501—2.4(80B,80D) Minimum hiring standards for an individual with an Iowa law enforcement or reserve certification. An individual with an Iowa law enforcement or reserve certification must meet the following minimum standards before using the individual’s certification when moving to a new or additional law enforcement agency.

2.4(1) If the break from Iowa law enforcement service is 180 days or less, complete a timely report of hire attesting there has not been a break in service of more than 180 days.

2.4(2) If the break from Iowa law enforcement service is more than 180 days but less than one year:

a. Be of good moral character as determined by a background investigation approved by the academy; and

b. Complete a psychological suitability evaluation consistent with the protocols detailed in rule 501—2.2(80B,80D).

2.4(3) If the break from Iowa law enforcement service is between one and three years:

a. Complete the requirements of rule 501—2.1(80B,80D) and paragraph 2.4(2) “*b*”; and

b. Complete all required professional development training requirements of subrule 4.1(4).

2.4(4) If the break from Iowa law enforcement service is longer than three years:

a. Complete the requirements of subrule 2.4(3); and

b. Complete an in-person skills course at the academy within one year of hire.

2.4(5) A certified officer who left active Iowa law enforcement service to work at the academy will not be deemed to have a break in service if the individual complies with all annual professional development requirements beginning January 1, 2027, during the officer’s employment at the academy.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 80B.11(1) “*b*,” “*f*,” and “*g*” and 80D.2.

501—2.5(80B) Minimum hiring standards for an Iowa-certified reserve officer applying to become a law enforcement officer. A certified reserve officer who has not previously met the requirements of rules 501—2.1(80B,80D) and 501—2.2(80B,80D) must meet the minimum requirements of both rules before serving as a law enforcement officer.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 80B.11(1) “b,” “f,” and “g.”

501—2.6(80B,80D) Officers in agencies under intergovernmental agreements. A jurisdiction entering into an intergovernmental agreement under the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 28E for the sharing of law enforcement services and officers does not need to verify minimum hiring standards for law enforcement personnel if an agreement is filed and recorded as required by Iowa law and a certified copy is provided to the director. Minimum hiring standards must be met when a unified law enforcement district is established as defined in Iowa Code section 28E.21.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 80B.11(1) “i” and 80D.1(1).

501—2.7(80B,80D) Higher standards permitted. Although an individual may not serve in a law enforcement capacity without meeting these minimum standards, civil service commissions or agencies may establish additional standards.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 80B.11(1) “i” and 80D.2.