

Probation Officer Entrance Exam – Save the Date

The Massachusetts Trial Court is pleased to announce that we will be holding registration for the Probation Officer Entrance Exam between November 14 – January 6. Scheduling of exact time and location of the exam to be completed through Pearson VUE Testing Centers after registration.

Anyone wishing to be a Probation Officer with the Massachusetts Trial Court must take and pass this exam, or one of the previous Probation Officer Entrance Exams (April 2017 and October 2019) that was administered by the Trial Court.

Registration will open on November 14, 2022.

Please check this page for more information regarding registration and requirements for the position of Probation Officer.

Examination Information

Opening Registration Date: November 14, 2022. The registration link will be available on November 14, 2022.

Last Day of Registration: 11:59PM on January 6, 2023

Examination Date: January 17, 2023 – February 3, 2023

Registration Deadline: January 6, 2023

Examination Fee: \$100

Note: An orientation and preparation guide will be available immediately in the I/O Solutions portal to all confirmed exam registrants at no additional cost.

Examination Location: Scheduling of exact time and location to be completed through Pearson VUE Testing Centers after Registration.

Individuals who took and passed the Probation Officer Entrance Exam in July 2014 MUST take this exam to remain eligible to be considered for Probation Officer positions. The exam is graded on a pass/fail basis.

Individuals who took and passed the Probation Officer Entrance Exam in April 2017 and October 2019 do not have to take this exam to remain eligible to be considered for Probation Officer positions.

Job Description

State law requires the passing of this exam to be eligible to apply for Probation Officer positions.

Individuals who do not take and pass this examination will be ineligible for probation officer positions until another probation officer examination is offered in the future.

Passing the Probation Officer Examination alone does not guarantee that candidates will receive an interview. Persons who apply to a Probation Officer job posting after passing this examination must also meet the minimum requirements for this job to be considered for appointment. Exam registrants should also be aware that due to the anticipated large volume of qualified candidates, job applicants selected for an interview typically exceed the minimum requirements.

Examples of Essential Duties

Please review the examples of essential duties and the related minimum requirements for this position before registering for this Probation Officer Examination.

A Probation Officer works with offenders/litigants in a variety of case types: criminal, delinquent, civil, guardianships, and family-related matters such as divorce, and child custody/visitation. Probation Officers use a skill set that enables them to develop a positive and collaborative working relationship with probationers/litigants in assisting them to change

their behaviors and negotiate contested family matters.

A Probation Officer thoroughly investigates offender personal history, background and environment, reports findings to the court, and is prepared to make appropriate recommendations on dispositions. A Probation Officer utilizes a variety of tools to complete initial and on-going assessments of offenders placed under supervision, refers probationers to social resources in the community for assistance in rehabilitation, enforces court orders; and makes appropriate recommendations throughout violation of probation proceedings and modification of court orders.

A Probation Officer performs community supervision during or after hours as necessary, including visiting the homes of probationers and their places of employment to ensure compliance with the terms of probation, visiting with victims to collect information and to keep them informed, and visiting police departments, schools or custodial settings depending on the type of case supervised. A Probation Officer also enrolls offenders/litigants to Electronic Monitoring, including installation of equipment, in accordance with court orders; administers alcohol breath testing; and conducts substance use testing, in accordance with Trial Court Substance Use Protocols. The conducting of substance use testing includes both

observation of the collection of the specimen as well as the reading and interpreting of the test results. A Probation Officer also utilizes a variety of computer-based software/programs to maintain accurate case notes, chronological listing of information, and contact with probationers/litigants.

Working Conditions

Probation Officers work in courthouses, other court facilities, in the field, and may be alone at times with probationers; may work varied shifts; interact with people who are under physical and/or emotional stress; must stand and walk for prolonged periods of time; and must be able to regularly travel within the Commonwealth for training and for job-related purposes. Job related travel includes traveling to probationers' homes to visually inspect the home for drugs, contraband, weapons, and other items that may violate terms of probation. Probation Officers must be able to verify the identity of probationers and testify in court proceedings about their first-hand observations, including their observations during home visits.

Minimum Requirements

There are no minimum education or job requirements to take the exam. However, individuals must pass the exam and meet the following minimum job

requirements to be considered for appointment as a Probation Officer at the time of application.

Individuals who took and passed the Probation Officer Entrance Exam in July 2014 MUST take this exam to remain eligible to be considered for Probation Officer positions. The exam is graded on a pass/fail basis.

Individuals who took and passed the Probation Officer Entrance Exam in April 2017 and October 2019 do not have to take this exam to remain eligible to be considered for Probation Officer positions.

A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required; a concentration in human services, behavioral sciences, or criminal justice is preferred. Additionally, a minimum of 2 years of work experience in human services, criminal justice, or 2 years working as an Associate Probation Officer.

Please Note: A graduate degree in the behavioral sciences, education, administration, management, law, or criminal justice may be substituted for the above experience, if the candidate also possesses a bachelor's degree in accordance with the education requirement.

Passing the Probation Officer Examination alone does not guarantee that a candidate will receive an interview. Persons who apply to a Probation Officer job posting after passing this examination must also

meet the minimum requirements for this job at the time of application to be considered for appointment. Job applicants should be aware that due to the anticipated large volume of highly qualified applicants, candidates selected for an interview typically exceed the minimum requirements. Visit Jobs with the Court System to learn more about the Probation Officer role and view current job postings.

Employment as a Probation Officer is contingent upon passage of a criminal background check and completion of orientation training.

Other Requirements After Passing the Examination and Prior to an Appointment

Massachusetts Residency Requirement - Pursuant to Chapter 478, sec. 328 of the Acts of 1978, no person who is not a resident of the Commonwealth shall serve as an officer in or an employee of the Judicial Branch; provided, however, that this provision shall not apply to those persons serving as officers in or employees of the Judicial Branch prior to the effective date of Chapter 478, sec. 328.

Training - Candidates must satisfactorily complete the Probation Officer Orientation training and are subject to a probationary period.

Criminal Background Check - Interviewed candidates selected for appointment will be required to complete

the Consent to Criminal Record Check Form. Trial Court Policy (Section 4.100) may prohibit the employment of individuals with a misdemeanor conviction resulting in incarceration if the end date of such incarceration is within the five-year period immediately preceding the date of application of employment or a felony conviction. A CORI check involving other offenses will not automatically disqualify the final candidate(s). Determinations of suitability based on CORI checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

Finger Printing - In compliance with 28 C.F.R, the FBI CJIS Security Policy, and the MA CJIS User Agreement regarding access to confidential information, final candidate(s) will be required to undergo fingerprint-based background checks prior to initial hire and at least once every five years thereafter.

Employment Eligibility and Verification Form (I-9) - Pursuant to the provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, after an offer of employment is made, selected candidates for appointment are required to complete an Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) and submit specific document(s) that establish identity and verify the right to work in the United States.

Examination Information

Examination Date: January 17 – February 3
Exam Registration Deadline: January 6, 2023
Examination Fee: \$100

Note: An orientation and preparation guide will be available immediately in the I/O Solutions portal to all confirmed exam registrants at no additional cost.

Examination Location: Pearson VUE Centers – exact time and location to be selected by applicants within the examination period on Pearson VUE website.

Registration: All registrations must be received by the posted deadlines and accompanied by an examination-processing fee. You will receive a confirmation email when you have completed the process. Your registration is not complete until you have received a confirmation email. All additional information about the examination will be provided to you by email. Please check the email address you registered with regularly for up-to-date information about the upcoming examination.

Your examination processing fee of \$100 must be paid by 11:59 p.m. on January 6, 2023, for standard registration. If you have not registered and paid for the examination on or before January 6, 2023, your registration will not be processed or accepted, and you will not be eligible to take the examination. Persons who have successfully registered will receive

information regarding how to sign in on Pearson VUE's website and select the time and location within the testing period that best suit their schedules. An orientation and preparation guide will also be available online to all confirmed registrants at no additional cost.

Fee Waiver: The examination fee may be waived for registrants receiving certain state or federal public assistance, or unemployment insurance. A link to the Fee Waiver Form is available on Mass.gov. You must follow the instructions on the Fee Waiver Form regarding proper submission of the Form and supporting documentation. All Fee Waiver forms must be either scanned and emailed to exams@jud.state.ma.us on or before January 6, 2023. Late Fee Waiver Forms will not be accepted.

Reasonable Exam Accommodations: If you would like to request a reasonable accommodation for the examination due to a documented impairment, you must successfully register for the exam online and then complete an Exam Accommodation Form. A link to the Exam Accommodation Form is available on Mass.gov. You must also submit a letter of support from a qualified professional detailing what type of reasonable accommodation you are requesting at the examination site. You must follow the instructions on the Exam Accommodation Form regarding proper submission of the Form and supporting documentation.

All Exam Accommodation Forms and supporting documentation must be either scanned and emailed to exams@jud.state.ma.us on or before January 6, 2023. Late Exam Accommodation Forms will not be accepted. Without such letter by January 6, 2023, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to grant your accommodation. This information is requested only to provide reasonable accommodation for examinations and will not be used for any other purposes.

Current Military Personnel: All military personnel who, in connection with current service, have military orders that indicate their unavailability due to military service on the examination date, must register for the examination, pay the processing fee, and request a makeup examination in writing, with a copy of your military orders attached.

Military related requests must be emailed to:
exams@jud.state.ma.us

Please provide with your request an email address, daytime base phone number and/or name and phone number of a friend or family member with whom you have regular contact and entrust with your personal communication. Note: Only candidates who have registered and have submitted the examination-processing fee or Fee Waiver Form for this examination by the registration deadline will qualify for a military make up examination.

No Makeup Examination: Except for current military personnel as described above, no candidate has a right to a makeup examination due to personal or professional conflicts on the testing date. Candidates are advised to consider this policy BEFORE applying for the examination. If you have registered and subsequently encounter a personal emergency or unanticipated hardship, you may request a makeup examination by filing a written request with verifiable documentation to: exams@jud.state.ma.us

Note: Previously scheduled vacation plans will not qualify as a personal emergency, unanticipated hardship, or grounds for a makeup examination.

Makeup examination requests must be received no later than 7 calendar days after the scheduled examination date. The Trial Court reserves the right to approve or deny your request and may require an additional examination processing fee upon approval of your request.

Identification at the Examination Site: At the examination site, registrants must present current and valid government issued photo identification with signature (e.g., driver's license, passport, military ID).

Change of Personal Information: Registrants are responsible for maintaining accurate contact information (e.g., address, email, phone number) with

the Trial Court. Failure to keep your records up-to-date and to email them to exams@jud.state.ma.us may jeopardize opportunities for employment.

Refunds: There will be NO REFUND of the examination processing fee unless the examination is cancelled by the Trial Court.

During the Trial Court review process or during the life of this candidate pool, candidates must make original supporting documentation available should the issue of authenticity arise with any submitted document copies.

Contact Information:

The Office of the Court Management is managing the examination process for this job. For questions regarding this process please contact:

Office of Court Management

Business Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., except holidays.

Email: exams@jud.state.ma.us

Telephone Number: (617) 742-8575