



**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
SHERIFFS' STANDARDS DIVISION**

**JOSH STEIN**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

**PO DRAWER 629  
RALEIGH, NC 27602-0629  
PHONE: (919) 779-8213 • FAX: (919) 662-4515**

**RICHARD SQUIRES**  
DIRECTOR

**TO:** All Sheriffs, Agency Heads, and Agency Representatives  
**From:** Richard Squires, Director, Sheriffs' Standards Division  
**Date:** February 1, 2025  
**Subject:** Certification Application Guide

The purpose of this Certification Application Guide is to reduce errors and omissions for all application types and improve turnaround times for certifications. Beginning October 1, 2024, the Division will only accept applications and supporting documentation via email, as detailed below. Sections in this document cover topics such as submitting documents, completing forms, documenting prior charges, lateral transfers, break in service, and more. It is the hope of Division staff that this reference will be used by agencies when submitting hiring paperwork to streamline the certification process and improve processing times. The document will be posted on [ncdoj.gov/law-enforcement/sheriffs/](http://ncdoj.gov/law-enforcement/sheriffs/) and updated periodically to reflect Division rule changes and updates to standard practices.

We request that each Sheriff, Director, or Department Head identify designated individuals who are authorized to submit applications to the Division and submit the selection to the Division. Please use the 'Agency Information Update' form which can be found on the Division's website.

## **Submitting Documents to the Sheriffs' Standards Division**

<p>When do I email information to:  <a href="mailto:SScerteast@ncdoj.gov">SScerteast@ncdoj.gov</a>  <a href="mailto:SScertcentral@ncdoj.gov">SScertcentral@ncdoj.gov</a>  <a href="mailto:SScertpiedmont@ncdoj.gov">SScertpiedmont@ncdoj.gov</a>  <a href="mailto:SScertwest@ncdoj.gov">SScertwest@ncdoj.gov</a>  <a href="mailto:Telecommunicatorcert@ncdoj.gov">Telecommunicatorcert@ncdoj.gov</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New hire and lateral applications for employment, containing Form F-4 Form (Report of Appointment) or Form F-4T (Report of Appointment – Telecommunicator) and supporting documents.</li> <li>• Report separation, Form F-5 or Form F-5T.</li> <li>• Notice of officer/applicant criminal charges.</li> <li>• Notice of officer/applicant DVOs/Civil Restraining Orders</li> <li>• Name or Status Change Form, Form F-9 or Form F-9T.</li> </ul>
<p>How many documents do I send when submitting a hiring packet?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hiring packet must be one PDF document of all hiring paperwork per application.</li> <li>• If submitting multiple applications at a time, submit each application packet as a single PDF file that contains all required paperwork.</li> </ul>
<p>What do I label my hiring packets when sending to the Division?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each PDF hiring packet and email subject should be labeled in the following manner:</li> <li>• Last Name, First, MI – Agency Name – Type of Document</li> </ul> <p>Examples: Smith, Joseph A – Wake Co SO – Application  Diaz, Miguel X – Durham Co SO – Status change  McIntyre, Rachel R – CMPD Tele – Separation F5</p>
<p>What do I label my hiring packets when sending <i>multiple applications</i> to the Division?  Note: The number is needed so staff can verify that all attached applications were received.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emails should be titled in the following manner:</li> <li>• Agency Name – Document Type – Number of applications</li> </ul> <p>Example: Halifax County – Applications – 25 total</p>
<p>When do I call the Division staff?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please call the Sheriffs' Standards Division front desk at 919-779-8213 if you have questions.</li> </ul>
<p>How long will it take to certify an officer for my agency?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sheriffs' Standards Division staff works diligently to certify officers as quickly as possible but certification time varies. We appreciate your patience and we will reach out to you when the application(s) is being reviewed. If the submitting agency has not received contact in 30 days, you may email staff to verify status.</li> </ul>

## Forms

<p>Where do I find the most current forms required by the Sheriffs' Standards Division?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NC Department of Justice operates a detailed web page and online presence at <a href="https://ncdoj.gov/law-enforcement-training/sheriffs/all-commission-forms-publications/">https://ncdoj.gov/law-enforcement-training/sheriffs/all-commission-forms-publications/</a></li> <li>• We recommend you never save a Sheriffs' Standards documents on a local computer as the documents are subject to change. Staff is unable to accept out-of-date forms and these forms will be rejected.</li> <li>• Accessing the forms page of NCDOJ.gov will ensure only up to date documents are used.</li> </ul>
<p>From February 1, 2025 forward:  In what order do I submit the hiring paperwork to the Division?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of Appointment, Form-4 Probationary/General</li> <li>• SBI Fingerprint Return</li> <li>• Oath of Office (Deputy)</li> <li>• Form-9A (Firearms Qualification Report) of hiring agency (both sides – if authorized)</li> <li>• Form AOC-CR-280</li> <li>• Authorization to Release Information</li> <li>• Form F-3 (Personal History Statement) (If applicant has criminal offenses)</li> <li>• DCI/III/Odyssey and similar out of state court documentation.</li> </ul>
<p>What name needs to be listed on the F-4?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An applicant's full legal name must be listed on <b>all</b> hiring paperwork. This includes full first, middle, last name, and suffix.</li> <li>• This may not be the name listed on their Social Security Card if it is different from their birth certificate. The birth certificate should be the primary.</li> <li>• Document used to establish their name, supplemented by court documents for a marriage or name change.</li> </ul>
<p>When must the Form F-1, Form F-2, Form F-3, and Form F-8 be completed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Form F-1, Form F-2, Form F-3, and Form F-8 are part of an applicant's hiring packet. Each must be completed in their entirety before the hiring packet is submitted to the Division.</li> </ul>
<p>When do I need to provide additional documentation of high school completion or equivalency?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the applicant attended a private school, home school, earned outside the US, or those earned though on-line or correspondence courses.</li> <li>• Hiring packet must include applicant's certified transcript and documentation of accreditation during years applicant attended.</li> <li>• For diplomas earned outside the US, the packet must include the original transcript and a transcript translated into English.</li> </ul>
<p>When is a psychological exam required?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A psychological exam is required when submitting an application for <b>initial</b> certification with one of the Standards Divisions. If an applicant was certified with one of the Divisions and transfer still during their probationary certification status to another Division, the applicant will be required to be administered another psychological exam.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Where can an applicant receive a drug test?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug tests must be performed at a certified Health and Human Service lab.</li> <li>• Test results must be dated within 60 days of the date of employment.</li> <li>• A list of approved Health and Human Services labs can be found here (approved list is updated monthly):</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.samhsa.gov/workplace/drug-testing-resources/certified-lab-list">https://www.samhsa.gov/workplace/drug-testing-resources/certified-lab-list</a></p>
What format must an applicant's name be listed on SBI fingerprint return letter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response from SBI must include applicant's full first name, middle name, last name, suffix, and date of birth.</li> <li>• This should be the <b>exact same full name</b> as listed on the Form F-4.</li> <li>• SBI fingerprint return must be dated within one year of submission to the Division.</li> </ul>
What format must applicant's name appear on AOC CR 280?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response from AOC staff must include applicant's full name, middle name, last name, suffix, address, date of birth, SSN and DL number.</li> <li>• Any former names must be listed in "Previous Names" box on page 1. If necessary, submit additional forms to AOC to document all former names.</li> <li>• Form AOC CR 280 form must be dated within one year of submission to the Division.</li> </ul>
What sections must be completed on the F-9A?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Section I, check box "Certified by: NC Sheriffs' Education ...." when the hiring agency is a municipal or state agency. The Criminal Justice Standards box should only be used when applying to a Police Department.</li> <li>• Probationary (authorized) and general (authorized) applicants are required to successfully pass the qualification section, prior to employment.</li> <li>• If not completed at the time of hiring, classroom courses must be completed within the calendar year to comply with in-service.</li> </ul>

### Documenting Prior Charges

Do I need to provide certified court documents of charges received in North Carolina?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes.</li> </ul>
Do I need to indicate old charges on my application paperwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes. All prior charges, excluding minor traffic, must be included in the above documentation.</li> <li>• It is the agency's responsibility to determine what qualifies in most current Class B Misdemeanor Manual.</li> </ul>
What charges must be investigated by the Sheriffs' Standards Division?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Felony.</li> <li>• Any crime for which the punishment could have been imprisonment for more than two years.</li> <li>• Any Class B misdemeanor which occurred after the date of appointment</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Class B misdemeanor within the five year period prior to the date of appointment</li> <li>• Four or more Class B misdemeanors regardless of the date of conviction or commission</li> <li>• Four or more Class A misdemeanors except the applicant can be employed if the last conviction or commission occurred more than two years prior to the date of appointment</li> <li>• A combination of four (4) or more Class A and Class B misdemeanors. There is no time limit when considering this 'combination' rule.</li> </ul>
What happens if an applicant needs to be investigated for prior criminal charges?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application will be forwarded to be investigated. Additional processing time will be needed. If charges go to the Probable Cause Committee, this could be up to six months.</li> </ul>

### **Lateral Transfers/Reinstatements**

Is a psychological exam required for an officer who already has a probationary or general certification in North Carolina?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals seeking probationary must have a psychological exam within one year of their date of employment.</li> <li>• Individuals seeking general certifications are not required to complete a psychological exam. However, one is encouraged as a hiring practice.</li> </ul>
What is required if an officer has been separated from the same agency they are reapplying for with a break in service of 180 days or less?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduced hiring packet may be submitted if an officer has earned a general certificate or grandfathered certificate and been separated for 180 days or less according to 12 NCAC 10B .0406. The hiring packet shall include the documents required in 12 NCAC 10B .0305: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form F-4 or Form F-4T form.</li> <li>• Form F-3.</li> <li>• Form F-8.</li> <li>• New SBI fingerprint return.</li> <li>• Complete agency's full firearms in-service (if authorized).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
What is required if an officer is seeking dual certification?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hiring packet with completed Form F-4 or Form F-4 T.</li> <li>• SBI Fingerprint Return</li> <li>• Oath of Office (Deputy)</li> <li>• Form F-9A of hiring agency (both sides – if authorized)</li> <li>• Form AOC-CR-280</li> <li>• Authorization to Release Information</li> <li>• Form F-3</li> <li>• Form F-8</li> <li>• Form F-1</li> <li>• Form F-2</li> <li>• Drug Screening</li> <li>• Psychological</li> <li>• Education verification</li> <li>• Proof of citizenship</li> <li>• AOC/III/Odyssey &amp; similar out of state court documentation</li> </ul>

	<p>All of the above agency must be maintained in the agency’s certification file. The agency will submit the F-4 or F-4T along with the below documentation to the Division.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hiring packet with completed Form F-4 or Form F-4 T.</li> <li>• SBI Fingerprint Return</li> <li>• Oath of Office (Deputy)</li> <li>• Form F-9A of hiring agency (both sides – if authorized)</li> <li>• Form AOC-CR-280</li> <li>• Authorization to Release Information</li> <li>• Form F-3 (if applicant has criminal charges)</li> <li>• AOC/III/Odyssey &amp; similar out of state court documentation</li> </ul>
<p>What additional documentation needs to be submitted for an out of state applicant, to include prior Federal law enforcement officers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application must be submitted on a Form F-4 (probationary).</li> <li>• Documentation of minimum two years full time, sworn LEO experience with general power of arrest, out of state law enforcement experience. This two year period does not include time at their basic law enforcement academy,</li> <li>• A copy of their training certificate showing their completion of basic law enforcement training</li> <li>• A letter from most recent out of state agency that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification applicant was a “full time sworn” officer with arrest authority.</li> <li>• Verification applicant separated agency “in good standing”.</li> <li>• Verification of beginning and end dates of employment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Deputy/LEO in-state break in service**

<p>Can an applicant who has less than two years full-time experience as a law enforcement officer be certified if they have been separated for more than one year?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. The applicant would be required to successfully complete a full BLET and successfully pass the state comprehensive exam.</li> </ul>
<p>Can an applicant who has two years full-time experience as a law enforcement officer be certified if they have been separated for more than one year?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An applicant that was certified for at least two years full-time (not counting the academy time) and has a break in service of more than one year, can apply to have their training and experience evaluated. If the applicant meets the requirements for certification, the applicant can choose within their one year probationary period to attend a full BLET or ‘challenge’ BLET.</li> <li>• The Evaluation for Training Waiver requirements can be found in 12 NCAC 10B .0505.</li> </ul>

**Detention Officer to Deputy**

<p>I have a certified detention officer with my agency and I want to appoint them as a deputy with my agency. What paperwork is required?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant would need to be a BLET graduate and the submission of the application must be within one year of the applicant's completion of BLET.</li> <li>• The agency would need to submit an Application for Appointment, Form F-4.</li> <li>• If authorized, Form F-9A.</li> <li>• Oath of Office.</li> </ul>
---	--

**Deputy/Law enforcement officer and becoming Detention Officers**

<p>I have a certified deputy with my agency and I want to appoint them as a detention officer with my agency. What paperwork is required?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agency would need to submit an Application for Appointment, Form F-4.</li> <li>• If authorized, Form F-9A.</li> </ul>
<p>If an applicant has certification as a deputy or a law enforcement officer, will they be required to attend and successfully complete the 174 hour Detention Officer Certification Course (DOCC)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants who have successfully completed NC BLET, who had no break in service as a deputy or law enforcement officer that exceeds one year are eligible to receive partial training credits towards DOCC. Once approved, the applicant would receive a training evaluation that would authorize them as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a partial enrollee in a full DOCC and would be required to successfully complete 73 hours of identified training and pass the entire state comprehensive exam, or;</li> <li>• an enrollee in a standalone truncated DOCC and would be required to successfully complete the truncated DOCC and pass the entire state comprehensive exam.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>What happens if the applicant fails a block of the DOCC state comprehensive exam?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An applicant is authorized one retest per unit of the comprehensive state exam. The applicant must be retested within 90 days of any unit failed of the comprehensive state exam.</li> </ul>

<p>What happens if the applicant fails a training block of DOCC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An applicant can fail up to 3 blocks in DOCC. The applicant would then receive a training letter authorizing them as a limited enrollee in a future DOCC.</li> </ul> <p>If an applicant fails more than 3 blocks they would be required to attend a full DOCC.</p>
--	---

**NC Correctional Officer Experience and becoming certified as a Detention Officer Break in Service**

<p>I have an applicant that has prior NC Correctional Officer Certification, will they be required to attend and successfully complete the 174 hour DOCC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants who hold general certification as a NC Correctional Officer, who has completed correctional officer training January 1, 1981 and after, and who does not have a break in service exceeding one year from the time of last employment as a correctional officer and being appointed as a detention officer are eligible to receive partial training credits towards DOCC. Once approved, the applicant would receive a training evaluation that would authorize them as a partial enrollee in a full DOCC and would be required to successfully complete 67 hours of identified training and pass the entire state comprehensive exam.</li> </ul>
---	--

**Miscellaneous**

<p>When must a certified officer or conditional hire applicant notify the Division of a criminal charge?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 NCAC 10B .0301 requires written notification to the Division of all criminal offenses for which the officer or applicant is charged.</li> <li>• Includes traffic offenses listed in the Class B misdemeanor manual.</li> <li>• Includes any Domestic Violence Protection Order (50-B) or Civil No Contact Order (50-C).</li> <li>• Must be submitted in writing to the Division within five business days. Failing to do so is a violation of 12 NCAC 10B .0101(13).</li> </ul>
<p>What must be included in a notification of criminal charges?</p>	<p>Include in the written notification, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full name and date of birth</li> <li>• The court in which the case was charged.</li> <li>• The date of arrest.</li> <li>• The criminal charge(s).</li> <li>• A copy of the court order, citation, or warrant.</li> <li>• When the case is disposed of, the officer will need to submit certified court copies indicating the disposition.</li> <li>• These documents must be submitted to the Division in writing within 5 business days. Failing to do so, could result in an investigation.</li> </ul>
<p>If an applicant has submitted an F-3 to the hiring agency and they provide a positive drug test during the hiring process, what is required?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The hiring agency must report the positive drug test to Sheriffs Standards Division according to 12 NCAC 10B .0410.</li> <li>• Verification from the Medical Review Officer (MRO).</li> </ul>
<p>An officer is retiring from my agency but wants to remain certified as a part-time or reserve officer. What paperwork is required?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An officer moving from full-time to part-time status the agency shall submit a Status Change Form F-9, regardless of retirement or other employment status.</li> <li>• If an agency submits a Form F-5 report of separation, the Sheriffs Standards Division must fully separate them. A Form F-5 cannot be retracted.</li> </ul>
<p>When must an officer be fingerprinted within the Rap Back System?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A newly certified officer must be fingerprinted within the Rap Back system parameters prior to being issued certification 12 NCAC 10B .0303(e).</li> </ul>