

## GUIDE FOR CANDIDATES



Thank you for your interest in applying for a role with the New South Wales Police Force (NSWPF).

This guide should assist you in applying for roles within the NSWPF. You are encouraged to read this information to develop a comprehensive understanding for preparing and submitting your application.

### OVERVIEW

The NSWPF is the oldest and largest law enforcement agency within Australia. The organisation is directed and guided by the Commissioner's Executive Team (CET), made up of the Commissioner and the leaders of the five (5) streams of the organisation. These streams are Metropolitan Field Operations, Regional NSW Field Operations, Investigations & Counter Terrorism, Specialist Support and Corporate Services.

To obtain further information on the NSWPF please refer to our website [www.police.nsw.gov.au](http://www.police.nsw.gov.au).

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A candidate is eligible to be assigned to a permanent role with NSWPF if they are an Australian citizen or have the status of a permanent Australian resident (includes New Zealand citizens).

Candidates who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents may be employed in a temporary capacity if they have a current work visa.

### ROLE DESCRIPTION

When deciding whether to apply for a role it is important to understand the role, what is required and whether you have the right skills, knowledge and experience. To help you do this carefully read through the Role Description to see if the role is a good fit for you.

Role Descriptions provide information about the role, the primary purpose of the role, key challenges, key accountabilities and essential requirements and include the capabilities needed to perform the role and at what level. The Focus capabilities are the capabilities for which an employee assigned to the role must be able to demonstrate competence in at the required level from day one in the role. Roles are not fixed and they facilitate employee mobility across the organisation and broaden employees' capabilities and provide them with new development opportunities.

### ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

Essential requirements for a role are those factors that are needed for successful performance in the role from day one.

Essential requirements may include qualifications and certifications (where necessary to practice), licensing, registration and citizenship or residency requirements.

In some cases, knowledge and experience requirements may be included if they are critical to successful performance in the role, cannot be met by transferrable capabilities in other roles and cannot be developed "on the job" within a reasonable period.

If a role has essential requirements these will be clearly set out in the advertising and role description and will be included as pre-screening questions.

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## HOW TO APPLY

All applications are to be submitted online via I Work for NSW – <http://iworkfor.nsw.gov.au>

You can create your general profile on the I Work for NSW website at any time. This includes personal and contact information, creating a username and recording a password. Your email address is your unique identifier, so you can only create one account per email address.

This general profile can also be created as part of your first NSWPF or NSW Public Service job application. Once this basic information is captured it will populate any future applications automatically, removing the need to retype the same information. If your contact details change or you would like to include some additional information, you can amend your profile at any time and submit different information for each application if required.

The completeness and relevance of your application will determine whether or not you are invited for an interview. To be considered you must submit:

- A one page **covering letter** (This should be short and specific and include details of the role you are applying for, a brief introduction about yourself and a summary of your relevant skills, qualifications and experience);
- Responses to **two the (2) target questions** (written responses addressing each of the target questions or each selection criterion should be in the text boxes provided in the online Application and each response should be no more than 500 words);
- Responses to any other pre-screening questions relevant to the role and/or the organisation; and
- An up-to-date **resume or curriculum vitae (CV)** (This should be clear, concise and neatly organised and include details of your education, qualifications, employment history (starting with your most recent employer and include job title, major duties and responsibilities), skills, achievements and references and should be no more than 4 pages).

**TIPS:**

- Read the advertisement carefully, keep a copy of it and make a note of the closing date;
- Read the role description or selection criteria to help you better understand the role to help you determine if it is a good fit for you;
- Look at the NSWPF website to learn more about the organisation to help you decide if it is an organisation you would like to be a part of;
- Speak to the contact officer if you have further questions about the role;
- Before submitting your application, check your spelling, punctuation and grammar, and ensure you have been succinct. The application itself indicates how well you can communicate and, if written well, can make a positive impression.
- Before submitting your application, check you have answered the targeted questions or selection criteria and attached a cover letter and up-to-date resume/CV. Also ensure you have provided details for two (2) current referees and that the email address you have supplied is current and accessible, as all correspondence will be sent to this address.
- Do not attach copies of qualifications, certificates etc to your application as you can bring these to your interview if you are invited

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### RESPONDING TO TARGET QUESTIONS

Target questions are usually based on focus capabilities or can be about the candidate's experience or motivation to work in the role and for NSWPF.

They allow the selection panel to gather evidence of a candidate's experience and capability, and to explore the suitability of a candidate to meet the specific requirements of the role being advertised.

Your responses to the target questions are an important part of your application.

Target questions are generally situational questions and as such, start with phrases like: "Give an example of a situation where...", or "Describe a scenario...".

This type of questioning allows you to describe actual examples of when you have used specific skills to deal with a similar situation to the one being described in the question. Simply stating to refer to your resume/CV is not sufficient. Statements must be supported by relevant evidence.

In your response, try to focus on what you did personally, rather than on actions or decisions made by your team, as it's your individual capabilities that are being assessed in this process. Responses to each target question should be limited to 500 words.

Depending on the role, you may be asked to answer the targeted questions in the "pre-screening questions" field provided. If you do this, you don't need to address these questions in your cover letter.

However, if the application form doesn't provide a "pre-screening questions" field, you should address the targeted questions in your cover letter.

#### **TIP:**

- When responding to targeted questions in the "pre-screening questions" field, it is suggested that you draft your responses first externally (e.g. in a Word document) to allow you time to review and amend your responses prior to entering them in your online application.

If your application does not address the targeted questions you will not be short-listed for interview.

### SHORTLISTING

The selection panel undertakes an assessment of all candidates' applications (e.g. your cover letter, your resume/CV and your responses to the targeted questions or selection criteria) in relation to the advertised role.

This coupled with capability-based assessments including an interview and rigorous 'fit-for-purpose' reference and background checking allows the full spectrum of capabilities for the role to be assessed.

Shortlisting involves using all information provided in each application to identify which candidates have demonstrated experience relevant to the role and/or the ability to meet the identified capabilities for the role.

A key consideration for the panel at this stage is a candidate's ability to perform the role's focus capabilities. Candidates who best demonstrate this or who meet the selection criteria will be invited for interview and further capability-based assessments. Employment decisions are based on an assessment of candidate's capabilities, experience and knowledge against the pre-established standards of the role.



## CAPABILITY-BASED ASSESSMENTS

The selection panel will use a range of appropriate assessments to determine the candidate who has the capabilities, experience and knowledge best suited to the requirements of the role and the needs of the organisation.

Capability-based assessments are a good predictor of your future performance. The capabilities for the role you are applying for are described in the role description. Assessment methods can vary depending on the capabilities being assessed.

Multiple methods are used to help provide the selection panel with a full picture of candidate's capabilities, knowledge, experience, strengths and development needs and to increase the reliability and validity of the assessment process.

Some examples of capability-based assessments are interviews, presentations, work sample exercises and role play scenarios.

## INTERVIEWS

Interviews are one of the most common forms of capability-based assessment. A structured interview allows interviewers to rate candidates in a consistent, standardised manner.

During the interview, a panel will ask a set of usually behavioural based questions to evaluate your suitability to perform the advertised role.

Behavioural questions invite you to give examples of like roles or similar situations from your own experience and how you approached them, what you did and what were the results; as well as any lessons learned. They often start with "Tell me about a time..." or "Describe a situation...What was your role? What was the outcome?"

The selection panel will base interview questions on the range of capabilities required for the role or the selection criteria. Capability based questions examine whether you have the knowledge, skills and abilities at the level needed for the role. The same questions will be asked of each candidate. This enables the selection panel to comparatively assess each candidate.

When preparing for an interview read the capabilities of the role or the selection criteria and think of likely questions. Prepare your answers and rehearse as much as you can. Your responses could follow the STAR format by detailing the Situation, Task, Action and Result. Examples of how you used specific skills to deal with a similar situation to the one being described in the question can strengthen your answer.

At the end of the interview, you will be provided with the opportunity to direct questions to the selection panel, to provide relevant information and to produce work samples to support your claims for the role. You are able to emphasise your major strengths and add anything you left out.

Ensure to bring to the interview three (3) acceptable forms of identification, e.g. Passport, drivers licence, birth certificate, rates notice, Medicare card, bank card. Identification must be current and should include at least one (1) type of photographic ID and identification that contains your signature and date of birth.

You are also required to bring along any completed forms sent to you with your interview invitation.

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### BACKGROUND CHECKS

All recommended candidates applying for a role with the NSWPF are subject to a National Criminal History Record Check.

All recommended candidates must obtain a Baseline security clearance from the NSWPF Security Vetting Unit (SVU) prior to any offer of employment being made. This will be arranged by the Hiring Manager.

Some candidates employed by the NSWPF who have direct and unsupervised access to children are subject to a Working with Children Check (WWCC) and completion of a declaration before commencing employment.

Candidates are responsible for applying for their own WWCC. If the outcome is a clearance, the Check is valid for five (5) years and may be used for any child-related work in NSW.

**To apply for a WWCC go to:**

<http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/working-with-children/working-with-children-check>

### REFERENCE CHECKS

Referee checks are used to obtain independent information about your capabilities, experience and knowledge in a relevant context.

When the selection panel is making its final decision, information obtained from your referees will be considered together with your application, resume/CV, interview and other selection tools used.

A minimum of two (2) referee checks will be conducted.

Choose referees who can provide evidence to support your claims by commenting on your skills and abilities, and past work performance. It is generally expected that one of your referees be a current or recent supervisor.

### POST INTERVIEW

If you are being further considered for the role you may be asked to provide additional documents and requested to complete other forms for checks (refer to earlier section) to be undertaken.

If check results are clear and the selection panel received approval to employ the recommended candidate(s), an initial verbal offer will be made.

This offer will then be confirmed in writing via email. If you are a recommended candidate you will need to return the signed acceptance and supporting documentation by the due date to accept the offer.

Unsuccessful candidates will be advised via email at the end of the recruitment process and offered an opportunity to receive feedback. This feedback is a useful way to understand the areas that could be strengthened in future applications.

Unsuccessful candidates may also be advised that they have been placed on an eligibility list. This means you may be contacted during the next 12 months about similar roles.