

Sheriff's Office seeking new recruits

Written by By Babette Herrmann Sun Editor
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McKinley County Sheriff's Office is running at about half its capacity due to a shortage of deputies.

MCSO Capt. James Maiorano said the department is gearing up to conduct a recruitment drive in September and sat down with the *Gallup Sun* to go over some details for individuals considering a career as a deputy.

"We're trying to fill 12 deputy positions," he said.

When folks interested in applying learn about the seemingly arduous process, they may count themselves out before trying, so Maiorano wanted to cover some details about the entry level "unclassified deputy position."

For starters, prospects must have a high school diploma or GED, no exceptions. And applicants must be 18, and can't have any past felony convictions. Misdemeanor convictions must be five years in the past.

Maiorano said he understands that not all candidates were angels during their younger years, so for those who dabbled with illegal substances, he wants them to come clean about those past transgressions as a lie detector test will be given.

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"We're looking at your history of ethical decision-making," he said. "What you have done since then and now."

This includes a credit history check.

Maiorano said the department doesn't expect everyone to have a stellar report, but instead the department is looking at more of debt to income ratio and payment history.

If applying, there's no escaping the physical fitness and written test that he doesn't consider overly demanding. The fitness test determines whether a candidate will move forward in the hiring process. The written test is done to gauge basic math and English skills.

A whole shift isn't dedicated to chasing down bad guys all day like the 70's cop show "Starsky & Hutch." The less glamorous, but essential incident reports need typed up, so scoring adequately in reading comprehension, basic math and grammar skills are essential to the job.

And be expected to put some miles on a patrol unit as the MCSO patrols all 5,455 miles of McKinley County.

So, what's the starting pay? It's on the low side, \$13 hr. and some change. But it's a start and increases to \$15.88 hr. when a deputy graduates from the academy. At two years, the pay goes up to \$18.98 hr.

"This field offers retirement in 25 years for your dangerous and rewarding commitment," he said. "No two days will be the same, preventing crime from occurring by proactive patrols, handling crashes, arresting drunk drivers, helping a domestic violence victim or giving a talk to a class of school kids."

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For lateral transfers with two years of experience, and New Mexico certification, the pay starts at \$18.98 hr.

Maiorano encourages those sitting on the fence to take the leap and apply.

“Being a deputy sheriff is not just a job, it’s a profession,” he said. “A chance to make a difference and become a leader in your community.”

For information, visit: <http://www.co.mckinley.nm.us/175/Recruiting>

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