



## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

### *HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT*

**KATJANA BALLANTYNE**

**MAYOR**

**ANNE GILL**  
*DIRECTOR*

**ELLEN COLLINS**  
*DEPUTY DIRECTOR*

June 23, 2025

Honorable City Council  
City of Somerville  
93 Highland Avenue  
Somerville, MA 02143

Re: Entry Level Police Officer Hiring Practices – Alternative (Local Register) Process, Item 25-1152

Honorable City Council Members,

I am writing to convey an update on our entry level police officer hiring practices.

On November 20, 2024, an economic development bill was signed into law by Governor Maura Healey that included reform to the Civil Service system. Part of this reform was to create a Hybrid, or Alternative, pathway of hiring through a locally sourced pool of candidates (rather than the typical exam process) that Cities could opt into for up to 50% of entry level public safety hires made during the five (5) year period covered by the MOA entered into between the City and the Commonwealth Human Resources Division (March 2025 to March 2030). As cited on the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) website...

“The hybrid pathway allows for the following:

- Departments could make up to 50% of entry-level police and fire appointments *outside* of the traditional Civil Service exam process, drawing from a locally generated pool of prospective candidates.
- Departments could consider prospective “hybrid” candidates immediately, regardless of whether they have taken a Civil Service examination and without the need for a certification from the HRD.
- Prospective candidates would go through the pre-existing review process, including a [panel interview,] pre-conditional-offer background check and post-conditional-offer medical and physical abilities tests.
- Once all conditions are met, the HRD would authorize a candidate’s employment in the same manner as traditional Civil Service candidates, subject to completion of a prescribed course of study at an approved police or fire academy, if not already completed.
- Civil Service communities could appoint incumbent police officers from non-Civil Service communities through this process, but only for entry-level positions; these hires would not retain any seniority.

The new authorization for hybrid pathway hiring will be in effect for at least 10 years. It is set to expire on Jan. 1, 2035, unless otherwise extended or made permanent.” (<https://www.mma.org/major-civil-service-reforms-included-in-economic-development-package/>)

The City of Somerville chose to opt into this alternative hiring process for entry level police officer hires on March 5, 2025. The Somerville Police Department, in partnership with the Somerville Human Resources Department, worked with Massachusetts HRD/Civil Service Division to develop an equitable, transparent, and robust alternative hiring process.



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143

(617) 625-6600 EXT. 3300 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 666-4426

EMAIL: [hrradmin@somervillema.gov](mailto:hrradmin@somervillema.gov) • [www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov)



Attached you will find the Memorandum of Agreement between the Somerville Police Department & Massachusetts HRD, the Police Department's Alternative Pathway (Local Register) Hiring Policy, a side-by-side comparison of the two different processes that the City will be using going forward – the typical eligible list process and the new alternative process, and a copy of a local register guide (provided by HRD).

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anne Gill".

Anne Gill  
Director, Human Resources