

REVISED REPORT ON THE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

OF THE DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

Prepared By:

— Detroit Urban League
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LITTLE PROGRESS

In 1958, an officer of the NAACP requested that the Urban League, because of our fact-finding and research, make a study of the employment of Negroes in the Detroit Police Department. The facts were sadly revealing. In an effort to keep research current, the previous report has been up-dated as revealed on the following pages. Regrettably again, there have been no appreciable gains of Negroes either entering the Police Department, promotions, or integrating the force.

A policy may be well stated, but the degree of its implementation determines not only the intensions but also what actions are being taken to put policy into practice.

The acceptance of democratic police policy, given full interpretation and orientation, backed up by vigorous administration, will develop the kind of fair and equitable practices necessary to spark young promising Negroes to seek a career in police work.

Further, such acceptable practices will develop an attitude among Negroes that they are wanted, are needed, and that the same chance for advancement, even to the highest office, will be opened to them.

Admittedly, the feeling that Negro police personnel really belongs does not exist, further that the Police Department treats the Negro community with equality as it does the white community is not, as yet, shared by all Negroes. This is serious. The improvement of police-community relations will increase largely to the degree that the glaring inequities as reflected in this report are forthwith met.

Respectfully submitted,

JULIAN P. ROGERS, Jr.
President

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Executive Director

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The Detroit Urban League is an interracial social service agency engaged in the practice of "democratic" social welfare planning and implementation. The foremost objective of the Urban League's approach is to assure the availability of equal opportunity for all segments in American communities. In this role, the Urban League often employs repetitive methods in order to determine the degree of truth in allegations of racial discrimination in public agencies and/or institutions.

The United States Constitution affirms our basic right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And the Police Department is a foremost institution in correcting and preventing infringements upon these rights. Therefore, the effectiveness of a community's Police Department may be the difference between a democratic life or an undemocratic death. Racial discrimination within a Police Department usually will result in racial discrimination in law enforcement activities. An earlier Detroit Urban League report¹ noted discriminatory practices in the Detroit Police Department in 1957-58. The following report is a comparison between Police Department conditions in 1957-58 with those in 1962-63. Changes in the 1957-58 conditions are noted.

Method Of Recruitment

1. Personal contacts made by members of the Police Department.
2. Local newspapers.
3. Newspaper classified advertisements.
4. Radio and television outlets.
5. Bulletin board notices.
6. Employment agencies.
7. Posters and brochures.*

¹See: G. Nelson Smith, "The Detroit Police Department's Policy And Practice In The Recruitment And Assignment Of Police Officers," Detroit Urban League, December, 1958.

*Present brochure, unlike the 1957 brochure, contains a statement that the Police Department is open to any person regardless of race, color or religion.

Salary Schedules

<u>1958</u>	<u>1962-63</u>
1. 1st year - \$4,856	\$5,500
2. 2nd year - \$5,106	\$5,759
3. 3rd year - \$5,376	\$6,048
4. 4th year - \$5,669	\$6,364

Minimum Standards For Applicants

1. Age. 21 to 27 inclusive in 1958; 21 to 28 inclusive in 1962.
2. Education. A diploma from an accredited high school or a veteran's high school equivalent diploma which has been sanctioned by the Detroit Board of Education.
3. Residence. United States citizen, resident of the State of Michigan for at least one year continuously, immediately prior to the date of the written examination.

The time spent in service (Korean situation* to present) may be subtracted from age of applicant to assist in qualifying for the 28 year maximum age.

4. Height And Weight. Minimum height - 5'9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " - Minimum weight - 152 pounds. Five pounds are added to the minimum for each additional inch in height. The maximum weight will be 20 pounds above the minimum for any given height.
5. Medical Examination. A free, thorough physical examination is given to each applicant by a Detroit Police physician. Any defects which would prohibit the applicant from successfully performing the duties of a patrolman will disqualify him.

*Korean crisis mentioned specifically because service prior to aforementioned situation would indicate age disqualification.

6. Physical Agility Test. Applicants must pass a series of tests to determine physical fitness. These tests are of a general nature to indicate such important conditions as coordination, reflexes and reactions.
7. Character. A comprehensive investigation is conducted covering the applicant's school and work record, home environment, personal traits, police record, falsification of application, and financial status. Every effort is made to determine if the applicant's character is above reproach. In addition, applicants are finger-printed and records are checked in both the state and national bureaus to disqualify known criminals. Considerable emphasis is placed on previous driving record and each candidate, before appointment, must pass a driving test administered by the Detroit Police Department.
8. Competitive Examinations. The competitive examinations are divided into two parts: written and oral. The written portion provides 60% of the total credits. This is primarily a test to determine the applicant's mental capacity. The examination includes such things as reading comprehension, general intelligence, observation, retention, spelling, etc.

The oral portion provides 40% of the total credits. The oral interview is conducted by a board of three high ranking police officials. An applicant's oral score is based upon the officials' evaluation of his personal traits, attitude, manner, mien, judgement, emotional stability, etc. The report resulting from the character investigation is also reviewed at this time. It is felt that too much weight is given to the oral interview which can be subjective.
9. Eligible List. Those applicants who achieve a passing score are placed on an eligible list in the order of their rating (from 70 to 100). Selections for appointment of student patrolmen are made from this list in descending order. (See Table 1 for statistical breakdown of 1957-1961-1963 eligibility list comparison.)

ASSIGNMENT OF POLICE PERSONNEL

Information obtained from members of the administrative branch of the Detroit Police Department indicates that no assignments of police officers are made on the basis of race but, instead, "need" determines the ultimate assignment of patrolmen. The racial implications of police assignments will be considered later. First, however, an explanation should be made of the general procedure which applies to all who have qualified for the eligibility list.

Procedure Of Assignment

A. Student Patrolmen. All student patrolmen serve a probationary period of one year. During this period their work is closely supervised: both while in attendance in the police academy and while on-the-job training in the precincts. The precinct assignment for on-the-job training is made in the Director of Personnel's office.

Requests for additional personnel from police precincts and bureaus are forwarded to the Personnel Director's office. The student patrolman is subsequently assigned to a precinct on the basis of need.

Classes for student patrolmen are held every six weeks on a staggered schedule, i.e., when one class has been enrolled for a period of four weeks, another class is begun.

B. Permanent Assignment. Upon completion of the probationary period, the patrolman is assigned to the precinct or bureau in which his on-the-job training was received. Transfers to other precincts may be applied for through the personnel office.

C. Transfer. At any time after completion of training, a police officer may file a written request for transfer with his commanding officer. If approved, the written request is forwarded to the office of the Personnel Director where it is listed according to the date of application for transfer.

The majority of requests for transfers designated a transfer from precinct to bureau rather than from precinct to precinct. For various reasons, this type of request is often difficult to grant. However, some of the reasons given in the previous report either no longer exist or do not exist to the same degree, e.g., the 1958 report indicated that transfer applications for the Mounted Police Bureau extended back as far as October, 1953. This is no longer accurate inasmuch as the general consensus of opinion is that the Mounted Police Bureau has more or less "outlived" its usefulness and will be non-existent in the not too distant future.

Other reasons are:

- (a) Eligibility for transfer to Recorders and Traffic Courts is predicated on a minimum of 18 years seniority. Only ten years of service is required for serving warrants.
- (b) Eligibility requirements for transfer to the Central Photographic or Scientific Bureau are based upon special advanced training.
- (c) Some bureaus require a very limited number of personnel (Police Academy - 10; Harbor Master - 40; Administration - 34, etc.). Since police officers assigned to these bureaus usually prefer to remain there until they reach retirement age there are few annual vacancies.

During conferences held with administrative officials of the Detroit Police Department, it was indicated that while in the past, statistics have supported the widespread belief that race played an important part in the assignment of police officers, the future consideration will be "need." The present situation is as follows:

Statistically, there has been little or no change in the Negro composition of the Detroit Police Department. A study revealed that in 1958 Negroes comprised approximately 23 percent of Detroit's total population as compared to 3% (113 total) of the Detroit Police Force. Negroes currently comprise approximately 29% of the total Detroit population and, still, only 3.28%* (144) of the Detroit Police Force. It should also be noted that as of June, 1962, 223 more white police officers had received appointments than in 1957; while 4 less Negroes were appointed during this period.

As expressed in the previous study, the Personnel Examiner failed to disclose the number of Negroes applying for positions with the Detroit Police Department. At this time, the administrative office reveals that no provisions are made for keeping an account of the racial identity of applicants. It has been stated that racial implications are determined only after the written examination and the oral interview.

In answer to the query respecting the primary factor or factors involved in Negro applicants failing to meet the necessary requirements, it was the considered opinion of Commissioner George A. Edwards that the lack of formal academic training was the most recurring factor relating to their failure.

A current analysis of the statistics involving personnel at the thirteen precinct** revealed that three (22%) precincts in the City of Detroit are void of Negro personnel as compared to six (40%) of 15 precincts in 1958. All precincts have an extremely low number of Negro personnel.

During a conference held with the Police Commissioner, it was revealed that the philosophy of the current administration is not to place Negro officers any where on the basis of race but on the basis of need. The largest number (46)

*Based on 1962 Annual Report and information from the office of the Director of Personnel.

**Precincts #3 and #9 were merged with neighboring Precinct Headquarters.

of Negro personnel in 1958 were staffed at the 3rd and 9th precincts. After the loss of these two precincts, the greatest increases in Negro personnel occurred at precincts one and seven. It is interesting to note that the latter two precincts service areas having a higher percentage of non-white residents.

The administrative heads of the Detroit Police Department, whose duties include assignment of new patrolmen and approval of transfers of regular patrolmen to the various bureaus and precincts, are adamant in their denial of any intentional segregation pattern relative to the assignment of police officers. However, the existing philosophy of the Detroit Police Department that all personnel are placed where most needed, coupled with the glaring lack of Negro personnel in predominantly all-white areas would tend to foster a belief that Negro personnel is not needed in areas where few or no Negroes reside.

In 1958 the number of Negro officers with ranks above that of patrolman numbered 7. Some improvement has been made in this area inasmuch as a check of the various bureaus revealed that there has been an increase in Negro personnel and to date 14 ranked above patrolman out of a total of 144. This indicates an increase in Negro personnel ranked above patrolman of 11 persons since 1958. However, of the 2,745 white police precinct assignments made in 1962, 390 (approximately 15%) were above the rank of patrolman.

A new Bureau, the Police Community Relations Bureau, was recently created and it was revealed through an authoritative source that "certain steps were taken" in order to assign a qualified Negro to this department. Recently, he became the first Negro in the history of the Detroit Police Department to achieve the rank of uniform lieutenant. He does not supervise a large staff or work in a precinct.

The Police Community Relations Bureau has been a much needed and most welcome addition to the Police Department. However, it is felt that responsibilities within this bureau should be more clearly defined. In addition, it is inadequately staffed.

Since Negroes have been placed in only two additional bureaus since 1957, little improvement is shown in the percentage of police bureaus having Negro personnel (see Table 5).

The integration of scout cars has, in the past, been a specific area of deep concern. On the surface, it would appear that much progress has been made relative to scout car integration. In many instances, the white officers assigned to the integrated cars have received such assignments because they stand in disfavor with superiors. Thus, to many white officers, the assignment is looked upon as a form of "punishment." It is generally conceded that the "experiment" of integrating scout cars has been more or less a failure. Some sources attribute this failure to a lack of cooperation on the part of the white officers.

In checking at one precinct, it was noted that of the 36 assignments labeled "good jobs" i.e., straight 5 days per week, desk duties, etc., not one Negro officer had received such an assignment.

In the immediate past it has been noted that Negroes have been received more cordially when making application for police work. However, after becoming a patrolman, it was stated that some are made to feel that they are placed in an inferior role because of the attitude and practices of some of their superiors. This feeling is, of course, perpetuated by the failure to promote qualified Negro personnel after years of satisfactory performance of duty.

During the course of gathering data for this report, the question was raised many times as to the advisability of the recent appointment of a superior officer. Within police circles, this superior officer is suspected of harboring anti-minority group feeling. Despite this, he has been chosen to direct the personnel of a precinct which is predominantly Negro. If the allegations are true, then it would also tend to indicate that the Police Department considers the needs of the Negro community to merit little attention.

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During a conference held in July, 1963 with the Director of Personnel, he stated that a Negro officer had been placed in the Traffic Court Bureau, another in the Recruiting Service, and also, one in the Scientific Bureau.*

Subsequent conferences with knowledgeable persons close to the employment picture of the Detroit Police Department revealed that there has been some new appointments on staff in the Personnel Department of the Detroit Police Department. It has become apparent that these recent changes will effect some improvement in the placement policies of this department.

However, a reliable source indicated that no far-reaching changes will be forthcoming in the immediate future. Several appointees recently placed in positions that would give them authority to circumvent certain heretofore anticipated improvements in the placement policies of the personnel department, have shown in the past their unwillingness to eliminate all racial barriers in the matter of upgrading personnel. It is felt that as long as these high positions are filled by persons who are not imbued with the philosophy of equal opportunity and promotions on the basis of merit rather than race, a realistic change in the current racial statistics of the Detroit Police Department will change but little for some time to come.

The Director of Personnel found it lamentable that Negroes comprise such a low percentage of the total police force and he stated that more efforts are being made in the recruitment of Negro men.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In general, the stated policy of the Detroit Police Department leaves little to question. However, it is obvious that the overall philosophy of many white superiors in reference to Negroes, and many practices which have been sanctioned

*These changes occurred after the up-dating of this report.

over the years respecting Negro assignments, promotions, and personal dignity are unequal and therefore unfair. The following, therefore, are some suggestions which, if followed, could very well expell some of the old frictions and pave the way to better race relations in the Detroit Police Department:

I. Recruitment Procedures

- a. Differences based upon race should not be exhibited at any time on the part of police personnel.
- b. To alleviate personal prejudice, Negroes should be a permanent part of the recruitment personnel and the oral interview.
- c. The interviewers should be persons with considerable experience, psychological acumen and skill in determining those qualities essential for performance of the assigned duties of a police officer.
- d. A psychiatric or psychological interview should be required because of the personal interaction and the pressure involved in the performance of police duties.
- e. A Negro physician should be used on the medical examination teams.

II. Promotional Procedures

- a. Promotional examinations should be given by an outside, neutral agency.
- b. There should be equitable placement of Negro personnel in all bureaus with opportunity for promotion based on qualifications and seniority.
 1. The duties, responsibilities and specific requirements for all job assignments should be clearly detailed and available to all personnel.

III. Work Assignment Procedures

- a. Assignments should be made on the basis of vacancies, wherever they exist, and not racial considerations regardless of geographic location.
- b. All officers should receive assignments according to ability and seniority.
- c. Assignment areas should be rotated.

IV. That a Negro be kept in a supervisory position in the Police-Community Relations Division.

V. Recommend that the Commissioner of Police assign Negro police personnel to the many bureaus which, to date, use only white officers.

VI. Recommend that the entire recruitment procedure be studied in an effort to determine the place and reason why such few Negro applicants are accepted.

APPENDIX

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TABLE 1. ANALYSIS OF RECRUITMENT FOR PATROLMEN
(1957, 1961, 1963)

Disposition Of Applicants	1957	1961	1963
Total applicants	2,574	4,035	4,106
Total accepted (placed on eligible list)	148	160	217
Total applicants rejected	2,426	3,875	3,889
Prewritten rejections	1,448	2,657	2,543
Age	179	562	438
Education	308	487	459
Residence	74	29	52
Height and/or weight	458	1,070	1,045
Medical	165	294	242
Police Record	54	102	124
Miscellaneous	210	113	183
Written examination rejections	790	919	1,010
Failed written examination	477	606	657
Failed to appear for written examination	313	313	343
Physical examination rejections	74	155	156
Failed to appear for physical examination	18	39	35
Failed physical examination	39	60	61
Failed physical agility test	17	56	60
Post physical examination rejections	114	144	173
Withdrew	13	14	27
Failed to appear for oral examination	3	2	2
Oral examination rejections	68	106	130
Investigation rejections	30	22	14

Because pre-written applicants are not identified by race, it is difficult to estimate how many and why Negroes fail to qualify for the eligible list. However, it was the general opinion of the Police Commissioner that education would be the foremost cause for the failure of Negroes to become eligible for acceptance to the Detroit Police Department.

TABLE 2. ASSIGNMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS BY RACE
IN DETROIT POLICE PRECINCTS

DECEMBER 1, 1958				JUNE 5, 1962			MARCH 1, 1963		
PRECINCT	NEGRO	WHITE	TOTAL	NEGRO	WHITE	TOTAL	NEGRO	WHITE	TOTAL
1st	3	202	205	13	309	322	11	281	292
2nd	5	153	158	7	228	235	7	205	212
*3rd	22	117	139	M e r g e d			M e r g e d		
4th	1	161	162	3	185	188	4	164	168
5th	Void	200	200	1	200	201	4	179	183
6th	8	119	127	8	161	169	10	147	157
7th	Void	128	128	13	219	232	11	201	212
*9th	24	142	166	M e r g e d			M e r g e d		
10th	17	178	195	20	229	249	19	219	238
11th	3	144	147	5	155	160	7	142	149
12th	Void	139	139	4	184	188	4	168	172
13th	11	186	197	16	245	261	16	211	227
14th	Void	173	173	Void	206	206	2	193	195
15th	Void	208	208	Void	232	232	Void	206	206
16th	Void	160	160	Void	192	192	Void	180	180
Totals	94	2,410	2,504	90	2,745	2,835	95	2,496	2,591

*Precincts #3 and #9 were merged with neighboring Precinct Headquarters.

TABLE 3. ASSIGNMENT OF NEGRO POLICE OFFICERS
BY RANK IN DETROIT POLICE BUREAUS

BUREAU	RANK	1958	1962	1963
City Hall	Patrolman	1	1	1
Homicide	Patrolman	1	0	0
	Detective	4	2	2
	Detective Sergeant	0	1	2
Identification	Patrolman	0	1	1
Motor Cycle Traffic	Patrolman	0	2	2
Narcotic	Patrolman	1	1	1
Parking Enforcement	Patrolman	2	4	5
Police Community Relations	Detective	n.a.	1	1
	Lieutenant	n.a.	1	0
Recorders Court	Patrolman	0	1	1
Special Investigation	Patrolman	2	0	1
	Detective	0	1	1
Stationary Traffic	Inspector*	0	0	1
	Patrolman	2	2	2
Vice Bureau	Patrolman	6	8	6
	Sergeant	1	0	0
Woman's Division	Patrolman	1	1	0
	Detective	1	1	0
	Police Woman	9	11	11
	Police Woman Sergeant	1	1	1
Youth Bureau	Patrolman	5	6	7
Totals		37	46	46

Note: n.a. = not applicable, newly created bureau.

*This appointment was made September 10, 1963.

TABLE 4. ASSIGNMENT OF POLICE PERSONNEL
BY RACE AND RANK IN ALL PRECINCTS

P R E C I N C T S	R A N K								
	Inspector	Lieutenant	Sergeant	Patrolmen	Detective Inspector	Detective Lieutenant	Detective Sergeant	Detective	Totals
All Precincts (White) December 1, 1958	15	72	183	2037	-	16	20	179	2522
All Precincts (Negro) December 1, 1958	-	-	4	87	-	-	-	3	94
All Precincts (White) June 5, 1962	12	65	177	2255	13	13	22	201	2758
All Precincts (Negro) June 5, 1962	-	-	3	83	-	-	-	4	90
All Precincts (White) March 1, 1963	27	101	263	3225	16	50	64	331	4077
All Precincts (Negro) March 1, 1963	-	-	8	119	-	-	-	9	135

TABLE 5. DETROIT POLICE BUREAUS VOID OF NEGRO PERSONNEL

<u>1958</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>
<u>BUREAUS</u>	<u>BUREAUS</u>	<u>BUREAUS</u>
<u>Administration</u>	<u>Administration</u>	<u>Administration</u>
Civil Defense	Civil Defense	Civil Defense
Corporation Council	Corporation Council	Corporation Council
<u>Accounting</u>	<u>Accounting</u>	<u>Accounting</u>
<u>Band</u>	<u>Band</u>	<u>Band</u>
<u>Radio</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Radio</u>
<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	
<u>Courts</u>	<u>Courts</u>	<u>Courts</u>
Traffic	Traffic	
Recorders	Recorders	
<u>Detective Division -</u> <u>Administration</u>	<u>Detective Division -</u> <u>Administration</u>	<u>Detective Division -</u> <u>Administration</u>
Arson	Arson	Arson
Auto Recovery	Auto Recovery	Auto Recovery
General Service	General Service	General Service
Identification		
Central Photographic	Central Photographic	Central Photographic
Prosecutor's	Prosecutor's	Prosecutor's
Robbery, Breaking and Entering		
Scientific	Scientific Laboratory	
Subversive		Special Investigation
	Criminal Information	Criminal Information
<u>Harbormaster</u>	<u>Harbormaster</u>	<u>Harbormaster</u>
<u>License and Censor</u>	<u>License and Censor</u>	<u>License and Censor</u>
<u>Liquor License</u>	<u>Liquor License</u>	<u>Liquor License</u>

TABLE 5. - CONTINUED

<u>1958</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>
<u>BUREAUS</u>	<u>BUREAUS</u>	<u>BUREAUS</u>
<u>Medical</u>	<u>Medical</u>	<u>Medical</u>
<u>Motor Service</u>	<u>Motor Service</u>	
<u>Mounted</u>		
<u>Personnel Examiner</u>	<u>Personnel Examiner</u>	<u>Personnel Examiner</u>
<u>Police Academy</u>	<u>Police Academy</u>	<u>Police Academy</u>
<u>Property</u>	<u>Property</u>	<u>Property</u>
<u>Research and Planning</u>	<u>Research and Planning</u>	<u>Research and Planning</u>
<u>Stock Room</u>	<u>Stock Room</u>	<u>Stock Room</u>
<u>Traffic Administration</u>	<u>Traffic Administration</u>	<u>Traffic Administration</u>
Accident Prevention	Accident Prevention	Accident Prevention
Operator's License	Operator's License	Operator's License
Public Vehicle	Public Vehicle	Public Vehicle
Traffic Safety	Traffic Safety	
	Mounted	Mounted
<u>Special Patrol Force</u>		

