



Fire and Police Commission

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Memorandum

To: Leon W. Todd, Executive Director

From: Barbara Cooley, Research and Policy Analyst

Date: April 5, 2024

RE: MPD and MFD Psychological Evaluation and Background Investigation Failures,
Appeals and Outcomes by Gender and Ethnicity

This report provides an overview of data related to appeals of failed background investigations and psychological evaluations.

Data

The most recent MPD Police Officer recruitment for which full information is available is the November 2022 recruitment. That is the recruitment that this report is based upon for MPD. The Spring 2023 MPD recruitment is not yet fully processed at this time.

The June 2023 Firefighter recruitment is the basis for MFD's data in this report, insofar as the recruitment has been completed.

All data was obtained from FPC Staffing Services. Whether a candidate appealed a background or psychological evaluation failure, and the outcome of that appeal, are not recorded in the JobAps application. Staffing Services separately tracks all failures of these application steps as well as all appeals and outcomes.

Police Department Results

The overall ethnic breakdown for the November 2022 Police Officer recruitment was as follows:

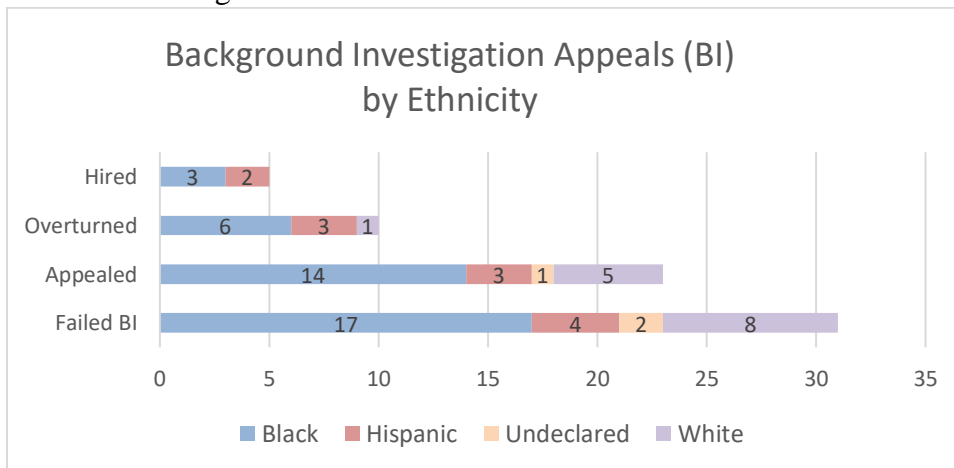
	City	All 578 Applicants	265 Eligible	44 Hired
Black	37.8%	45.0%	35.8%	29.5%
White	32.3%	30.3%	36.6%	45.5%
Hispanic	20.1%	17.3%	19.2%	18.2%
Asian/Pacific	5.2%	4.3%	4.9%	2.3%
American Indian	0.4%	1.2%	0.8%	2.3%
Undeclared/ Two or more races	3.6%	1.9%	2.6%	2.3%

Background Investigation Appeals

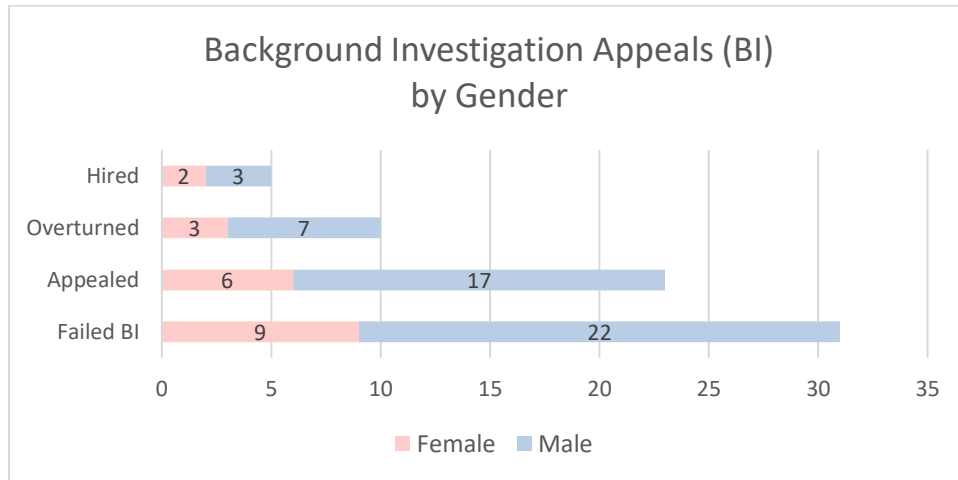
31 applicants failed the background investigation; 10 of the failures were overturned on appeal. 74% of fails were appealed; 43% of the appeals, or 32% of total fails, resulted in a decision to overturn.

Even though a background investigation appeal might have been overturned, a candidate still would not be hired if they had failed the psychological evaluation (or another non-appealable component of the testing process) and that fail was not overturned.

Blacks appealed background investigation fails at the greatest rate, 82%, followed by Hispanics at 75% and Whites at 62%. Hispanics had the highest rate of success on appeal, 100%, followed by Blacks at 43% and Whites at 20%. There were no American Indian/Alaska Native or Asian/Pacific Islander background fails.



Men appealed background investigation fails at a higher rate than women, 77% to 67%, but women received a decision to overturn at a higher rate, 50% to 41% (Women comprised 28% (161) of the November 2022 applicant pool).

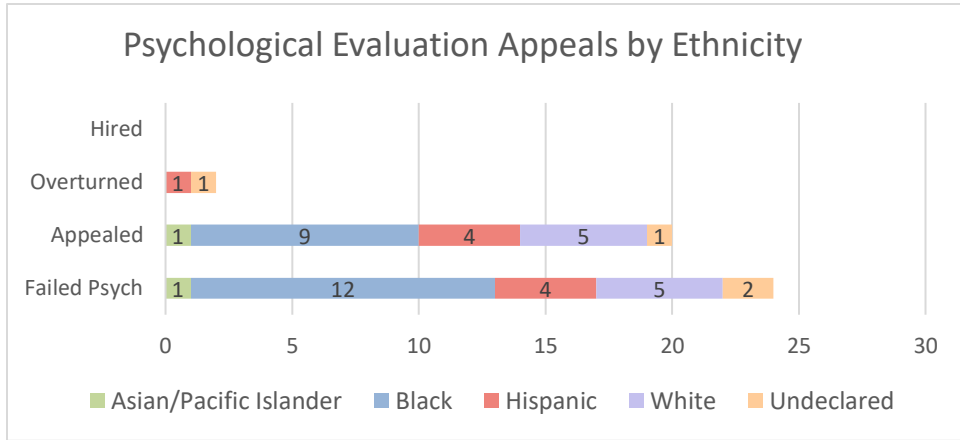


Psychological Evaluation Appeals

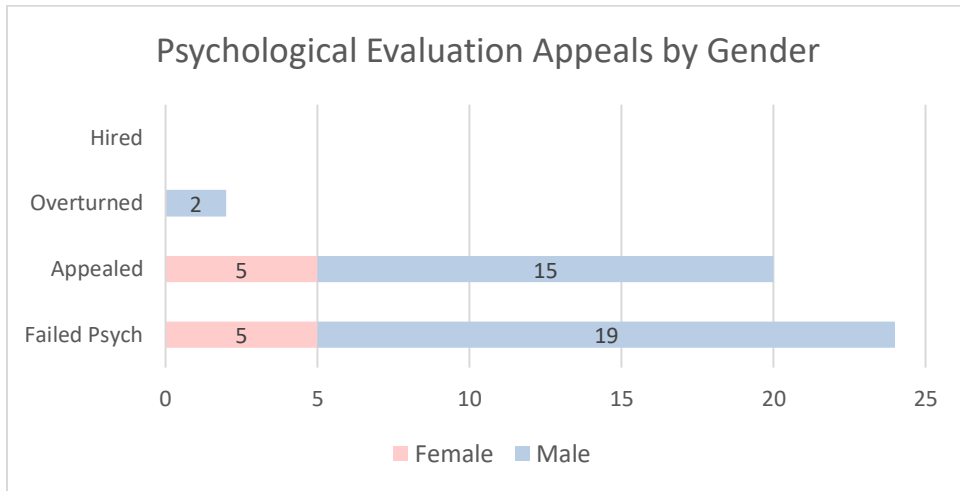
24 applicants failed the psychological evaluation; 2 failures were overturned on appeal. 83% of the fails were appealed. 10% of the appeals, equal to 8% of the total fails, resulted in a decision to overturn. Neither of the two individuals who prevailed on appeal were actually hired, as they both failed their background investigations and those fails were sustained on appeal.

Six candidates – 1 black female, 3 black males, 1 white female, 1 white male, 1 Hispanic female, and 1 undeclared male – appealed both psychological evaluation and background investigation fails. In each case at least 1 of the 2 fails was upheld. As a result, none of these applicants were hired.

Whites, Hispanics, and Asian/Pacific Islanders appealed psychological evaluation fails at a rate of 100%, followed by Blacks at 75% and undeclared at 50%. Success rates were 25% for Hispanics, and 0% for Whites and Blacks. There were no American Indian/Alaska Native psychological evaluation fails.



Women appealed psychological evaluation fails at a higher rate than men, 100% to 79%. None of the women’s appeals succeeded; only 2 of the men’s appeals, or 13%, succeeded.



Fire Department Results

The June 2023 firefighter recruitment has resulted thus far in twelve fails of psychological evaluations (4 Black males, 1 Hispanic male, 6 White males, and 1 undeclared male) and 2 background investigation fails (1 Black male and 1 White male).

Eleven of the psychological evaluation fails were appealed; one has yet to be scheduled for a hearing and the other ten were upheld. Both background investigation fails were appealed; both were overturned.

Of the two candidates who successfully appealed their background investigation fails, 1 White male was hired. The other candidate, a Black male, was not hired because he also failed the psychological evaluation, which result was upheld on appeal.



Conclusion

MPD background investigation fails were appealed at a lower rate than psychological evaluation failures (74% v. 83%).

However, MPD background investigation appeals had a much higher rate of success than psychological evaluation appeals (43% v. 10%). The rate of psychological evaluation appeal success for the Spring 2022 recruitment was also low, at 13%.

It does not appear that racial or gender inequities affected these results. By both ethnicity and gender, rates of appeal were similar.