

Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police Voluntary Police Chief Certification Annual Status Summary



Prepared by:



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SUMMARY OF APPLICANT INFORMATION

Reporting as of December 15, 2023

STEP 1 Application	STEP 2 Written Exam	STEP 3 Oral Interview	CERTIFIED Current Status
Total 333 applicants	Total 333 eligible	Total 291 eligible	106 currently certified
2 criteria not met*	42 criteria not met*	28 criteria not met*	Last 12 month's activity: 18 new certifications 6 re-certifications
37 Pending applications** <i>**passed practice written exam</i>		11 preparing <i>(passed practice written exam)</i>	157 retired from program

**This number reflects individuals who either did not meet minimum requirements or opted not to continue participation in the certification process.*

This report summarizes the accomplishments of the Voluntary Police Chief Certification process since its inception in September of 1998. Activity has increased dramatically since the inception of the program with a **total of 263 certifications. Currently there are 106 active certified and certified-eligible individuals across the State of Illinois.**

This report highlights the following steps in the program:

- **The Application:** Overview of minimum requirements, categories, and overall percentage of total possible points earned by applicants to date.
 - **Table 1.** Summary of application points by category to date
- **The Written Exam:** Overview of minimum requirements and areas of study.
 - **Table 2.** Average written exam score across test forms (versions A, B, C, and D)
- **The Oral Interview:** Overview of the process and areas of measurement.

The Application

The minimum score required to proceed in the certification process is **500** points. Points are evaluated in three main categories of the certification application: *Professional Experience, Education, and Professional Development (comprised of Professional Memberships and Community Involvement)*. To date, the average score obtained by all applicants is **791** out of a total possible 1,000 points.

The table below provides a further breakdown of all application points earned to date. It exhibits a wide range of scores within each of the category groupings, illustrating that candidates' strengths come from a variety of areas.

Table 1. Summary of application points by category

n=332	10 Years?	Yrs. as Sprv	Yrs. as Chief	Higher Ed.	Contin Ed.	Other Ed.	Prof. Act.	# Prof. Act.	Comm. Act.	# Comm. Act.
LOW*	332 (99%)	0 (8)	0 (179)	0 (14)	0 (30)	0 (103)	0 (3)	0 (3)	0 (58)	0 (60)
HIGH*		33	28	312 (1)	660 (1)	880 (1)	200 (146)	17	100 (145)	21
AVG		12.1	2.3	137.6	140.1	78.3	144.5	4.5	61.6	2.6
% Pts.		98%	46%	96%	91%	69%	99%	99%	83%	82%

In summary, the data indicates the following.

- 99% of applicants have a minimum of 10 years full-time experience as certified law enforcement professionals.
- The average tenure as a police chief is 2.3 years, with a maximum of 28 years in the position.
- Applicants have an average of 12.1 years of general supervisory/command experience. The range included 8 candidates with no supervisory experience, 74 with more than 15 years' experience, and 33 with over 20 years of supervisory/command experience.
- 100% of all applicants have completed high school, and most have taken some higher education course work. 91% are involved in continuing education courses.
- 99% of all applicants participate in some type of professional organization activities, and 83% are actively involved in community activities.

The Written Exam

The minimum score required to proceed in the certification process is **70%**. Applicants are encouraged to obtain a study guide and begin studying at least 60 days prior to taking the exam. The exam is offered year-round at the ILACP Headquarters in Springfield or at Stanard & Associates in Chicago by appointment. A practice exam is also offered at the ILACP conferences. Individuals passing the practice exam may use this as an official score to apply for certification.

The written exam was developed based on extensive research conducted by Stanard and Associates, Inc. (S&A) on a national level, coupled with Subject Matter Expert (SME) input, and field-testing data obtained from departments across the state. Specifically, test items were written in accordance with relevance to the job of police chief in the state of Illinois covering the following knowledge areas: *management principles, state and federal law (Illinois criminal/vehicle code, relevant federal/state case law), community policing principles, and budgeting concepts.*

S&A frequently monitors the written exam content to ensure test questions are relevant based on changing factors of law enforcement over time. To date, three parallel written exams have been released since the program’s inception in 1998. The latest version was released in late 2019. An updated version (Form D) was released in September of 2022.

The table below summarizes the average passing score across all three-parallel test versions. Most candidates would describe the test as “reasonable, but somewhat difficult” as the average score across candidates is approximately **77%**.

Table 2. Average written exam score across test forms

Form A (1998)	Form B (2001)	Form C (2019)	Form D (2022)
76%	75%	78%	77%

The Oral Interview

The last phase of the evaluation process for certification is an oral interview. The minimum score required to proceed in the certification process is **70%**. The interview panel consists of three interviewers: two police chiefs and one non-police chief with an academic or police training background. As is the case for the entire certification process, confidentiality of the interview content and candidate ratings are strictly enforced.

Members of the three-person structured interview panel are trained in interviewing concepts and procedures. Each candidate will respond to 5 open-ended questions. Each question consists of a main theme and sub-themes in the areas of leadership, professionalism, and ethics. Each response will be scored on a ten-point scale. Additionally, an overall assessment of the candidate’s verbal communication ability will be made upon completion of the questioning period. Interviews are coordinated on an individual basis by Dr. Steve Stanard.