About Victoria Police

Some people think policing is all about arresting people. In fact, it is a much more complex and thoughtful role than that.

Any experienced police member would tell you they’d be happy if they never had to arrest anyone ever again.

Police preserve the peace, protect life and property, prevent offences and help those in need. And of course, if necessary, they detect and apprehend offenders. But in fact only about 20% of police effort is taken up fighting crime. The rest is actually ‘general policing’ and assisting the community. This vital work goes on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – often unseen and quietly, in the background. It falls into the following major roles:

To establish a visible and accessible police presence in the community; and to provide public safety programs which enhance community confidence and reduce the fear of crime.

To provide an efficient and effective response to incidents and emergencies, and the policing of public events. (Like major sporting events and demonstrations.)

To investigate reported and detected crime; and to provide an appropriate and effective response to reported crime.

To prevent road trauma and reduce the incidence of impaired driving and other traffic offences; and to attend and investigate major collisions and other road traffic incidents.

To support the courts and to administer justice fairly and promptly.

These are important jobs, carried out on behalf of the community by police members. And the community expects these jobs to be accomplished impartially, effectively and honestly. It follows that members must always conduct themselves with the highest professional standards to always enhance the Force’s positive image.

This doesn’t mean that you have to “stop being human” when you join the Force, (just the opposite, in fact), but it does mean you have to maintain a high standard of moral and legal conduct at all times.

This is best summed up by our mission: “A safer community through service excellence.” In part, this means working with the community to achieve effective policing that is sensitive to local area needs, as cost effectively as possible.

By helping our community to feel safer – and to genuinely be safer – Victoria Police enhances the lifestyles of millions of Victorians.
Could you help with this vital work?

**What do Police members do?**

There are over 500 different jobs in the modern police force. Some at police stations; some in central departments.

It all begins with the general duties constable, based at the local police station. If you join up after your training this will be your first job. Indeed, you’ll be “learning the ropes” in a general duties role for at least two years. You’ll be patrolling an area to prevent crime, and to assist the community. It’s rewarding work, in close contact with the public, and it goes on all day, every day, regardless of the weather or season. On foot, on bikes and in police vehicles of one sort or another.

It’s the best possible training ground for the exciting career that opens up in front of you. In fact, many people choose to stay in ‘general duties’ for their whole time with the Force.

Usually first on the scene of an accident or crime, a general duties member never knows what a day may hold. It could be anything from an illegally parked car to a homicide. The variety is part of the appeal of the job. And the experience and local knowledge that a general duties member develops over time is vital to crime detection, and highly respected throughout the Force.

Because general duties is such a central role to the Force, it will be instructive to list here all the things you could be confronted with in a typical day’s work. In a wide variety of situations, often requiring swift appraisal and quick, yet responsible action. Could you deal with this?

Policing and enforcing many laws and regulations; giving direction and advice to the public; investigating crime; prosecuting offenders; giving evidence at crown and coronial courts; investigating the cause of accidents or events that result in death; searching for missing persons, escapees and absconders; care and management of prisoners on the police station lock up or escorting them to jail; sensitively mediating in domestic disputes, between family, or between neighbours; keeping the peace and providing assistance in sporting events, demonstrations and other major public events; providing assistance at fires, floods, explosions, air crashes and other disasters; and conducting educational programmes to promote good citizenship, safe driving and crime prevention.

That’s some job!

After general duties, you may be able to choose from a wide variety of roles, such as in the Crime Department, which includes the Homicide and Major Crime Squads, or in the Operations Department at the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Units, assisting victims of sexual assault, family violence, child abuse and neglect. Others areas of interest
include the Traffic Management Units, Prosecutions, Dog Squad, Water Police, Search and Rescue, Mounted Branch, Major Collision Investigation Section and the Major Fraud group.

But whether you move into a specialist area, or stay with general duties, you’ll be providing a sense of security for the public, with a style of law enforcement which emphasises close partnerships and co-operation between the police and the community.

How do I join?

Becoming a member is a seven-step process. It takes some time and it’s deliberately designed to make sure we get the right recruits, not just any recruits. That shouldn’t put you off applying, but it should make you stop and think.

First things first. You must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident. And you must have the mental capacity and physical fitness to perform the duties of a member of Victoria Police.

You must be of good character and reputation. That means that a history of offending or irresponsible behaviours will most likely debar you from further consideration. We will conduct thorough checks.

If you wear spectacles or contact lenses, visual acuity must be at least 6/36 in the worse eye unaided and at least 6/18 in the better eye unaided, and both must correct to 6/9. There is no upper age restriction, however, before you can enter the Academy, you must show us your current Victorian driver’s licence and a Level One certificate First Aid. If you’re on ‘P’ plates, a manual licence is required. Full licence holders must prove that they can drive a manual vehicle.

If you have a prior criminal or driving history, or a history of involvement in family violence or bankruptcy, or believe you might not meet the strict medical requirements, talk to the Recruiting Services Branch before applying, by calling 13 2001.

Please read the following carefully.

Education Exam
Before applying, you must complete the Victoria Police Education Examination, conducted by an approved venue. This will check your Spelling and Vocabulary, English Skills (including grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension), Arithmetic, Reasoning Ability, and includes a Writing Task. Interstate applicants may undertake the examination at an approved venue in their respective state or territory. Further information regarding the education examination, including venue information and sample examination questions, can be found at www.vetassess.com.au or visit our website. You should contact the relevant venue directly to organise your entrance examination.
Application Form
If you successfully complete the exam, you’ll then be given your results and an application form. You will then need to complete the application form and make an appointment at your local 24-hour police station to undertake a preliminary suitability interview. These preliminary interviews are generally conducted by the Senior Sergeant in Charge of the 24-hour station. Your interviewer will make a recommendation to the Recruiting Services Branch about your suitability as a potential recruit. (It should be noted that the Interviewer makes a recommendation only and the final decision on whether to accept your application rests with the Officer in Charge of the Recruiting Services Branch). The station Senior Sergeant will undertake a preliminary assessment of your communications skills, knowledge of police duties, motivation, maturity, commitment, presentation and ethical conduct. Your application will then be evaluated according to the prior criminal and/or driving history (if any), and the completeness of the information provided. If you don’t tell us what we need to know, or provide any false or misleading information, you’ll be disqualified from further consideration. This includes details of any traffic infringements (speeding fines etc).

Medical Information
If your application is considered suitable for further consideration, you will then be asked to have your usual medical practitioner complete medical certificate information. Your application will then be evaluated according to this information. Any costs incurred in preparing and lodging an application, or participating in the recruiting process will be at your own expense.

Agility Test
Your next step is to visit the Police Academy in Glen Waverley for the Agility Co-ordination tests. These include: Firearms: Adopt a one-handed grip with your preferred hand, and (without ammunition) fire the revolver six times, then fire six times in double action mode. (If you’ve never handled a firearm, be assured you’ll be advised by a qualified instructor). Physical Pursuit Course: Two brisk laps of the 400m running track, and on the second lap, we’ll ask you to perform some Agility Co-ordination Tests, including hurdles and platform, balance beam, window, maze and chain mesh fence. (You don’t have to be super-fit to get through this, by the way, just basically healthy with a reasonable level of fitness). You’ll also pull two weighted levers together and hold for three seconds. (This simulates handcuffing someone.) You must be able to pull a revolver trigger six times with each hand. We’ll give you six minutes and 30 seconds to complete the course. With preparation, most people can manage it. Last but not least, on completion of the agility course you will need to be able to swim 50 metres using a recognised life-saving stroke, in 90 seconds.

Psychological Screening
Next, (on the same day as the Agility Test), we’ll test you with a series of questions that help our Clinical Services Unit to understand what your character is like.
Medical Exam
A Police Medical Officer will assess things like eyesight, hearing, colour vision and general physical condition (including your body mass index). Personal and family medical history will also be considered. You must disclose your full medical history or risk disqualification.

Interview
A structured interview will now be held with members of the Victoria Police. We are looking for people who demonstrate integrity, respect, flexibility, leadership/support and professionalism, not to mention customer service ability, planning and organising skills, decision making ability/judgement, organisational awareness and good communication/interpersonal skills. If it sounds like we are very careful who we choose for training, that's because we are, as policing is not for everyone.

Induction
If you successfully complete all of this testing you will be awarded a final score based on your results from the education exam and from your interview. You can also earn bonus marks for designated skills that have organisational value to Victoria Police. This score will determine your ranking on our Order of Merit of all successful applicants. Appointment to the Victoria Police is very competitive and the number of applicants generally exceeds the number of available positions. Even if you are deemed suitable, whether or not you go any further depends on our vacancy rates, recruit intake schedules and your ranking on the Order of Merit.

Makes you look at your local police member with new respect, doesn’t it? He or she has gone through a lot even to get into the Academy, let alone onto the streets.

How does my career begin?
Well done! You're at the start of your exciting 20 week training course at the Police Academy in Glen Waverley.

Five months from now, if you make it through the rigorous training, the discipline, and meet the standards we set, you’ll be ready to undertake on-the-job training as a probationary constable. Academic subjects you’ll study include police procedures, law, communication skills and computer skills. Physical training is included in your education, and we won’t always be telling you what to do. Modern policing requires self-discipline, a decisive manner, and good commonsense. Even though we value teamwork, you’ll have to convince us that - at a pinch - you can face the world on your own, or you won’t get through. You may be required to live at the Academy for this whole period, working from 6.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. These hours may vary, and include evening or weekend work. You’ll be paid, but we’ll also charge you a training and establishment fee, which includes your meal and accommodation expenses.
Probationary Constable
After successfully graduating, you’ll begin two years “on the streets”, so we get a chance to see you in action. This is real policing, but you’re still under close supervision. The probationary period includes: two weeks at the Motor Driving School, and four weeks at the Traffic Alcohol Section. Then you get to try your hand at a wide variety of police duties, based in local stations, with regular supervision reports. This “on the job” training is designed to give you thorough theoretical and practical instruction in all aspects of being a Constable. During your two year probation, you go back to the Academy to complete the Constable’s Course, which includes written and practical exams, and assessment of your appearance and fitness. We expect you to always keep your fitness up to an acceptable level.

Diploma
You must also complete a Diploma of Public Safety (Policing). Recognition of prior learning may be granted where units are compatible with our requirements.

What next?
If you successfully pass the first two years of training, many options may open up for you. There are many in-service training courses for those wishing to improve their knowledge and skills. After probation, you can apply for un-filled vacancies that have been accorded Priority or Special Category jobs status. If you don’t volunteer for one of these positions you may be confirmed in your current location or transferred to another area of operational need.

Now please make note of this. It is very important.
Police are valued members of the community and therefore you may be transferred to any location within Victoria, according to where the community needs you. When you first sign up for training you must accept this condition.

First promotion to Senior Constable requires a minimum of four years’ service from graduation, completion of the Diploma, and an assessment of suitability for promotion to the rank. From there, it’s up to you. It’s not possible to forecast how long it takes to reach any particular position or rank, but it’s fair to say that hard-work, ethical behaviour, study, a willingness to learn, and a combination of self-resourcefulness with an appreciation of team-dynamics, will always be well-regarded. It’s a challenging career, certainly – but it’s also very exciting, rewarding and meaningful.

Now. If you still want to know more, please call us on 13 2001.