



IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT SYSTEM IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS BODIES: LEGAL, ORGANIZATIONAL AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21427874>

Abstract. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the legal, organizational, and practical mechanisms of recruitment to the internal affairs bodies of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It examines the procedures for candidate selection, screening, psychological and physical fitness assessment, military-medical examination, polygraph testing, personal document verification, initial professional training, and appointment. Drawing on foreign best practices from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Singapore, as well as the potential of digital platforms and artificial intelligence, the study proposes measures to enhance transparency, objectivity, and efficiency in personnel selection. Special attention is given to aligning the system with the principles of a people-oriented professional structure while ensuring robust human rights safeguards and human oversight in decision-making.

Keywords: internal affairs bodies, recruitment, candidate, personnel policy, screening stage, psychological assessment, polygraph, artificial intelligence, digital platform, foreign experience, professional suitability.

The recruitment system in internal affairs bodies constitutes a strategic mechanism directly linked to effective public administration, public safety, crime prevention, and the protection of citizens' constitutional rights. In recent years, the Republic of Uzbekistan has undertaken extensive reforms aimed at modernizing public administration, strengthening public security, and transforming law enforcement agencies into structures that genuinely serve the interests of the people. Resolution No. PQ-10 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated January 20, 2023 [3], set forth tasks to convert internal affairs bodies into a people-oriented professional organization, fostering in employees an honest and conscientious attitude toward their duties, a profound sense of responsibility to the Motherland and the people, and high moral-ethical qualities. In his congratulatory message to employees and veterans of internal affairs bodies on October 25, 2025 [4], the President emphasized that large-scale reforms are being implemented to make internal affairs bodies a truly people-oriented structure. Accordingly, the recruitment system must prioritize the selection of personnel who are loyal to the people's interests, professionally competent, honest, and proactive.

An employee of the internal affairs bodies holds a special status, distinct from that of an ordinary civil servant. Such personnel are entrusted with ensuring the rule of law, maintaining public order, combating crime, and safeguarding the peaceful and prosperous life of the population. Therefore, recruitment cannot be limited to assessing general education, age, or physical indicators; it requires a holistic evaluation of the candidate's moral and ethical virtues, patriotism, psychological resilience, commitment to legality, decision-making capacity under stress, communication culture with citizens, and adherence to service discipline.

The formation of a people-oriented internal affairs body begins with recruitment. If honesty, responsibility, patriotism, respect for citizens, loyalty to the law, and professional

culture are not rigorously assessed at the selection stage, remedying such deficiencies at later stages becomes considerably more difficult. Hence, the recruitment system should be regarded not merely as a process of document verification or testing, but as the primary institutional filter that determines the future quality and effectiveness of internal affairs bodies. The objective of this article is to analyze the prevailing legal, organizational, and practical recruitment mechanisms, examine international experience, and formulate evidence-based proposals for system improvement through modern digital technologies and artificial intelligence, while upholding human rights, legality, and transparency.

The legal foundations of recruitment to internal affairs bodies are enshrined in the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Internal Affairs Bodies" [1], the Regulations on the Procedure for Service in Internal Affairs Bodies [2], and pertinent presidential decrees. Recruitment is governed by the principles of voluntariness, selectivity, legality, transparency, and professional suitability. Citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan aged between eighteen and thirty, possessing appropriate education, and meeting the health, physical fitness, personal, and business quality standards required for service duties are generally accepted. Minimum height requirements are set at 165 cm for men and 160 cm for women. The relaxation of anthropometric standards for specialists in narrow fields such as information technology reflects the flexibility of contemporary personnel policy, recognizing that digital literacy, data analytics, cybersecurity competencies, and technological acumen are increasingly essential alongside physical capabilities.

International practice demonstrates a growing emphasis on competency-based approaches in law enforcement recruitment. In the United Kingdom, the Metropolitan Police Service and the College of Policing assess candidates not only on knowledge but also on teamwork, decision-making in challenging situations, public service ethos, communication skills, integrity, and adherence to professional ethics [6; 11]. In the United States, major departments such as the New York Police Department (NYPD) employ a rigorous multi-stage process that includes written examinations, physical fitness tests, psychological evaluation, background investigations, polygraph examination, medical assessment, and academy training [5]. Singapore places particular weight on discipline, technological proficiency, public engagement skills, and dedication to public service when selecting candidates for law enforcement agencies [9]. These models highlight the value of comprehensive, multi-dimensional evaluation over reliance on singular metrics and underscore the importance of best-practice frameworks promoted by organizations such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) [10] and INTERPOL [12].

The recruitment process in Uzbekistan's internal affairs bodies encompasses several sequential stages designed to assess professional suitability, moral-ethical qualities, physical and psychological stability, and overall capacity to fulfill service obligations. To attract suitable candidates, promotional and outreach activities are conducted in educational institutions, military units, defense affairs departments, residential areas, and organizations; recruitment announcements are placed in the mass media; and open days are organized at higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, thereby enhancing the social openness of the system. This proactive approach seeks to engage citizens who already possess interest in and understanding of the profession, rather than depending on random applicants.

A critical component of the process is the comprehensive compilation of required personal documents. These typically include the application form, passport or ID card information, birth certificate, details about relatives, photographs, curriculum vitae, questionnaire-information forms, references from places of study, work, and residence, educational credentials, military service certificate, health documentation, and a copy of the work record book. Such documentation enables a holistic appraisal of the candidate's personality, social environment, family background, prior activities, and legal-moral standing. To prevent excessive bureaucracy, gradual digitization and integration with state databases are advisable so as to reduce the repeated requesting of identical information from candidates.

Candidate assessment proceeds in two primary phases: the screening stage and the examination stage. The screening stage includes registration, preliminary review, evaluation of intellectual development and psycho-emotional stability, testing, and physical fitness assessment. The examination stage comprises military-medical commission review and psychophysiological (polygraph) testing. This dual structure permits a multifaceted rather than unilateral appraisal of the candidate. While test examinations conducted by the Agency for Assessment of Knowledge and Skills increase the relative objectivity of assessment, test results alone cannot fully guarantee future service performance. Contemporary best practice therefore advocates combining tests with interviews, psychological evaluations, practical situational exercises, stress assessments, service motivation analysis, and appraisal of moral-volitional qualities.

The introduction of polygraph testing constitutes an important tool for identifying risk factors during recruitment. However, it should be employed as a supplementary psychophysiological instrument rather than as a definitive detector of truth. International standards recommend interpreting polygraph outcomes in conjunction with psychological interviews, biographical data, references, service motivation indicators, levels of legal consciousness, and other risk metrics. Given that newly recruited employees may have access to information close to state secrets, weapons, special means, citizens' personal data, and operational intelligence, thorough vetting of loyalty, integrity, susceptibility to corruption, attitudes toward violence, possible extremist connections, propensity for providing false information, and capacity to comply with service discipline remains essential.

The practical value of foreign experience lies in its illustration of modern selection methods – competency-based interviews, situational judgment tests, digital assessments, psychological profiling, integrated data verification, AI-assisted identification of risk indicators, and individual development planning. These approaches enable advance assessment of a recruit's potential for service adaptation, disciplinary stability, and professional growth. Digital platforms used internationally, such as AI systems for natural language processing and semantic analysis (for example, IBM Watson [7]) and data-fusion environments for multi-source integration and risk mapping (for example, Palantir Gotham [8]), offer promising avenues for enhancing initial screening and analytical support. Nevertheless, any deployment of such technologies in internal affairs recruitment must rigorously adhere to the requirements of personal data protection, algorithmic impartiality and fairness, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, and human-centered final decision-making. Without these safeguards, technological tools risk undermining rather than reinforcing candidate rights and the integrity of the system.



Research and comparative analysis indicate that several systemic measures are required to improve the recruitment system in internal affairs bodies.

First, it is advisable to establish a unified electronic “Candidate Platform.” On this platform, candidates would be able to register online, upload documents electronically, track their status by stage, view test and assessment results in the prescribed order, and receive transparent explanations regarding commission decisions. This would not only increase process transparency but also enhance convenience for candidates and reduce administrative costs.

Second, the development of a position-specific “competency model” is recommended. For each role, explicit minimum criteria should be established across relevant competencies – legal knowledge, physical fitness, psychological stability, communication culture, digital literacy, analytical thinking, integrity, and leadership potential – enabling assessment tailored to the specific requirements of the position rather than generic standards alone.

Third, the introduction of situational judgment tasks into candidate assessment would be beneficial. Presenting candidates with realistic practical scenarios involving citizen appeals, family or domestic conflicts, risks of public disorder, traffic accidents, situations involving minors, or corruption propositions would allow evaluation of practical thinking, legal and ethical decision-making, and behavioral responses in context, rather than theoretical knowledge in isolation.

Fourth, to strengthen transparency, assessment criteria for each stage should be announced in advance, results should be recorded in the electronic system, and subjective decisions dependent on the human factor should be minimized through standardized protocols and multi-member evaluation commissions.

Fifth, psychological assessment should be enriched beyond formal tests to incorporate in-depth and stress interviews, emotional stability evaluations, and systematic analysis of service motivation and value alignment with the principles of internal affairs service.

Sixth, the initial probationary period and the mentoring institute for newly recruited employees require substantive content and accountability. The mentor should not remain a formally assigned figure but should bear direct responsibility for guiding the new employee’s adaptation to service, instilling professional ethics, instructing on work with documents and communication with citizens, and fostering adherence to service discipline.

The practical implementation of these proposals, grounded in the analysis of current mechanisms and international benchmarks, can significantly improve the quality indicators of the recruitment system, reduce subjectivity and corruption risks, strengthen trust in the system among candidates and society, accelerate decision-making while preserving transparency, and raise the personnel capacity of internal affairs bodies to meet contemporary requirements. Crucially, any technological innovation must remain subordinate to the principles of human rights, legality, justice, and impartiality. Artificial intelligence and digital tools may serve as auxiliary mechanisms supporting decision-making, but final responsibility and accountability must always rest with qualified human specialists and leadership.

In conclusion, the recruitment system forms the personnel cornerstone of state security, public order, and the protection of citizens’ rights in internal affairs bodies. While existing procedures—encompassing candidate requirements, screening and examination stages, medical and psychophysiological assessments, document protocols, initial professional

training, and appointment mechanisms—are directed toward selecting worthy individuals, the digital era requires further systematic improvement. A unified electronic platform, AI-supported preliminary screening conducted under strict ethical safeguards, competency-based modeling, situational assessment, transparent rating mechanisms, advanced psychological profiling, and a revitalized mentoring institute can collectively elevate the quality of personnel recruited to internal affairs bodies. Foreign experience from the United Kingdom, the United States, Singapore, and international bodies such as the College of Policing [11], IACP [10], and INTERPOL [12] offers valuable adaptable models centered on competency frameworks and integrated evaluation. When introducing AI solutions, strict compliance with personal data protection, algorithmic impartiality, non-discrimination, and human oversight is indispensable [7; 8]. The overarching goal must remain the formation of employees distinguished by loyalty to the people's interests, elevated professional culture, patriotism, honesty, discipline, and modern expertise—the precise strategic direction set by the President for transforming internal affairs bodies into a truly people-oriented structure [3; 4]. Continued scientific research, pilot projects, expanded international cooperation, and the judicious application of advanced technologies, always balanced against the imperatives of national security and fundamental human rights, will be essential to sustaining and deepening progress in this vital area.

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