

# **H&P PROTECTIVE SERVICES WHITE PAPER**

## ***Your Security Matters***

### **Volume 2**

#### ***Better to be Safe, than Sorry***

Crime is a reality. It only takes one break-in or personal assault to focus one's mind on crime prevention and personal safety. Even buildings that already employ a door attendant and maintenance staff may still consider hiring a security guard.

Security guards must remain alert, while looking for anything out of the ordinary throughout their shift. In an emergency, security guards may call for assistance from police, fire, or ambulance services. Some security guards may be armed.

A security guard's job responsibilities vary depending on the employer's needs. In retail stores, security guards protect people, records, merchandise, money, and equipment. They may work with undercover store detectives to prevent theft by customers or employees, and detain shoplifting suspects until the police arrive, or patrol parking lots. In office buildings, banks, hotels, and hospitals, security guards maintain order and protect the organization's customers, staff, and property.

#### ***What does a Security Guard do?***

Security guards typically do the following:

- Protect and enforce laws on an employer's property
- Monitor alarms and closed-circuit TV cameras
- Control access for employees, visitors, and outside contractors
- Conduct security checks over a specified area
- Write comprehensive reports outlining what they observed while on patrol
- Interview witnesses for later court testimony
- Detain criminal violators

#### ***Security Guard Responsibilities while Patrolling Hospitals***

Hospital security guards are responsible for protecting:

- People
- Property
- Information
- Reputation

There are many responsibilities of security guards in respect to hospital staff. One in particular is their rapid response to security emergencies within the hospital. Sometimes patients may become violent or threaten medical or nursing staff due to psychiatric or medical reasons. If this happens, residents should never put themselves or other staff at risk, but should immediately call

for the security guards' assistance in subduing or restraining such patients. Security guards may also be called upon for external emergencies, such as assisting in providing aid for disaster victims.

Another important function of security guards is their assistance to give directions to hospital patients and visitors. They may also help people into and out of their cars, or assist them with dead car batteries. Security guards may also be involved in receiving hospital deliveries at night and escort duties.

### *Security Guard Burnout*

Security Guards work long hours standing on their feet patrolling buildings and grounds, sitting behind a counter or in a guardhouse at the entrance of a gated facility or community, and walking patrols. It is common for security guards to be burned out if they do not have proper rest or eating habits. It is important to maintain a proper diet and exercise regime in order to stay alert and avoid burnout.

It is also necessary to have staff backup, as well as trusted colleagues who can help avoid burnout. Thorough screening is important in order to gain a good security crew to work overtime, backups, and emergency calls whenever necessary. Having ample security backup will also lessen the pressure of working long hours for many security guards.

If extreme burnout is not addressed, it can lead to security guards making mistakes on the job, stressing out, which can lead to poor attendance and maybe even the desire to no longer want to do the job.

### *State Mandated Security Guard Qualifications*

A security guard is a demanding and ever-changing job that requires a diverse but specific skill set in order to be successful. There are two sets of qualifications that all potential applicants should become familiar with. The qualifications and requirements set by the state or government agency that will be issuing your license, as well as the qualifications and skills that will make you a great guard.

#### *State Mandated (Unarmed)*

Each state in the United States is in charge of regulating and setting the requirements for people to apply, register, and become licensed as security guards. This also makes the requirements and qualifications slightly different for each state, **but a broad set of qualifications that is mostly universal among the states would be:**

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Not have been convicted of a felony or violent crime.
- Be mentally, physically, and emotionally competent.
- Be able to pass a state mandated criminal background check as well as an F.B.I background check.
- Be able to complete and pass any state required guard training or guard training exams.

Even though these requirements are mostly universal, the state in which you reside may have slightly different rules, so it is best to double-check the required qualifications for your specific state.

### ***State Mandated (Armed)***

Any person that wishes to become an armed guard must be able to meet the requirements of an unarmed guard, and then additionally meet any extra state mandated requirements for being an armed guard. Just like the unarmed guard requirements, the armed guard requirements vary from state to state but could include any or all the following:

- Able to get a state weapons license for small arms.
- Able to obtain a concealed weapons permit.
- Be able to successfully complete and pass any extra mandated training classes or exams for armed guards.

### ***General Requirements***

Besides the requirements that a state government or agency may put in place in order to become a security guard, there are many other traits or skills that a security guard should possess in order to be both safe, as well as effective at their job. Some of these useful traits, skill sets, or certifications would be:

Being in good physical condition.

- Being an effective communicator.
- Possessing a valid state drivers license.
- Able to stand for prolonged periods of time.
- Having a good memory.
- Being able to write reports and describe situations effectively for management.
- Having an authoritative, loud, and clear speaking voice.

Depending on where and who you are employed with, your required individual qualifications may differ from someone else. It is best to check with the agency issuing your guard license or employer for the complete list of required qualifications before going too far into the process of becoming a guard.