

The FWC Law Enforcement Academy Experience



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Florida Public Safety Institute



FPSI Administration Building

Florida Public Safety Institute (FPSI) sits on a site covering almost 1,500 Acres in Gadsden County, Florida

In 1999 Tallahassee Community College took over the Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy (PTLEA) from the Lewis M. Lively Area Vocational-Technical Center

In 2009 the name changed from PTLEA to FPSI



The FPSI campus contains administration, classroom, defensive tactics and cafeteria buildings



FPSI driving track and firearms ranges

FWC Hiring Process

- Recruiting
- Application
- Physical assessment
- Oral interview
- Background investigation
- Psychological and medical evaluation



These are the basic steps in the hiring process to become an FWC Officer:

Application: All applicants must submit an application for review to ensure they meet the minimum qualifications. Applicants meeting the minimum qualifications are invited to physical assessment.

Physical assessment: All qualified applicants who submitted all of the required applications and documents, will proceed to the physical assessment, consisting of the 150-yard swim and the FWC-specific Physical Abilities Test (PAT). All applicants who successfully pass the swim and PAT will move on to the oral interview.

Interview phase: Applicants will be asked standard questions by a panel of FWC officers and supervisors about their ability to serve as future FWC Officers. At the end of the interview process, all applicants will receive a total score and ranked from highest to lowest.

Background investigation: Background investigations will be conducted for a number of applicants based on the anticipated number to hire. The background investigation will include criminal history, credit history, neighborhood checks, personal references and an applicant interview.

Psychological and medical evaluation: All selected applicants will receive a conditional offer of employment requiring applicants to submit to a drug screen test, physical and psychological evaluation. Upon successful completion of the above, all will then receive a final offer/contract to attend the academy.



Recruiting

- Identifying potential applicants at job fairs, police academies, colleges, military bases, public outreach events and referrals
- Focusing on diversity and inclusion for a well rounded workforce matching the available workforce of the State of Florida
- Screening candidates, assisting with the hiring process, conducting ride-alongs and internship opportunities

FWC Training Academies

Non-Sworn Academy (28 Weeks total)

- Basic Recruit Curriculum (20 Weeks)
- Breakout Training (8 Weeks)

Sworn Academy

- Breakout Training Only (8 Weeks)



Non-Sworn Academy - designed for applicants that do not hold a state law enforcement certification

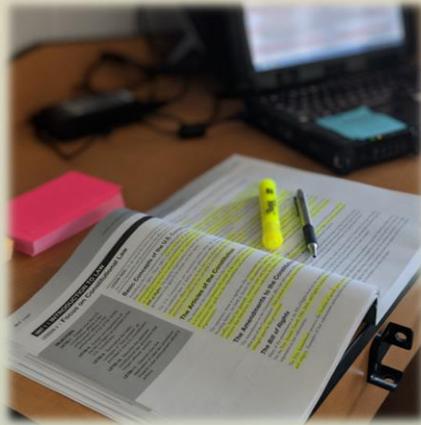
- Basic Recruit Curriculum (20 Weeks) – same training that all Florida certified law enforcement officers receive to include defensive tactics, firearms, vehicle operations, interviews, and report writing
- FWC-specific breakout training

Sworn Academy – designed for employees that hold a state law enforcement certification

- Selected certified applicants will join the Non-Sworn Academy class for breakout training (8 Weeks)
- FWC-specific training (breakout) including vessel operation to marine fisheries and wildlife identification to water safety and survival and mantracking

Basic Recruit Curriculum

- Criminal investigations
- Interviews and report writing
- Traffic stops
- High liability topics
 - Firearms
 - Defensive tactics
 - Vehicle operations
 - First aid



- Introduction to law enforcement
- Overview of the American legal system
- Interacting and communicating with diverse types of people and communities
- Interviewing and report writing
- Fundamentals of patrol
- Response and handling calls for service
- Criminal investigations
- Procedures for documenting and processing evidence
- Responding to significant critical incidents
- Traffic stops
 - DUI traffic stops
- Responding and managing traffic crashes

High-liability Topics

- Operation of law enforcement vehicles
- First aid for criminal justice officers
- Criminal justice firearms
- Criminal justice defensive tactics
- The dart-firing stun gun
- Criminal justice officer physical- fitness training



Non-Sworn Academy recruits in the FWC classroom



Basic recruit firearms training



Academy class photo after exposure to OC spray during defensive tactics training

OC spray exposure is a requirement for law enforcement certification in the state of Florida.

Breakout Training

- Vessel operation
- Water safety and survival
- Marine fisheries/wildlife law and species identification
- Land navigation and mantracking
- Advanced defensive tactics and firearms



Once FWC recruits have successfully completed the required curriculum and passed a state examination, they begin FWC-specific breakout training. Breakout training takes approximately 8 weeks and consists entirely of training related specifically to conservation law enforcement in Florida. This is when basic law-enforcement recruits transition into highly trained FWC officers capable of serving the citizens and visitors of Florida in the challenging and rewarding field of conservation law enforcement.

By design, breakout training pushes the limits of every recruit regardless of his or her experience or background. A few subjects covered during the BRC portion of training are revisited during breakout but trained at a much higher level and are more FWC-specific. Some of the subjects covered during breakout training are:

- Advanced defensive tactics
- Advanced firearms and tactical rifle training
- Water safety and survival technique training
- Hunting and fishing regulations
- Vessel operations
- Identifying and interpreting foot and tire sign
- Land navigation
- High-risk vehicle and vessel stops
- Species identification
- Case law relating to search and seizure for conservation law enforcement
- Federal fisheries training
- Imperiled species training
- Enforcement philosophy
- Public trust doctrine and agency culture
- Response to active shooter training
- Commercial and recreational fishing training
- Boating accident investigations
- Boating under the influence enforcement training



FWC recruits receiving mantracking instruction during breakout training.



FWC recruits receiving defensive tactics instruction.



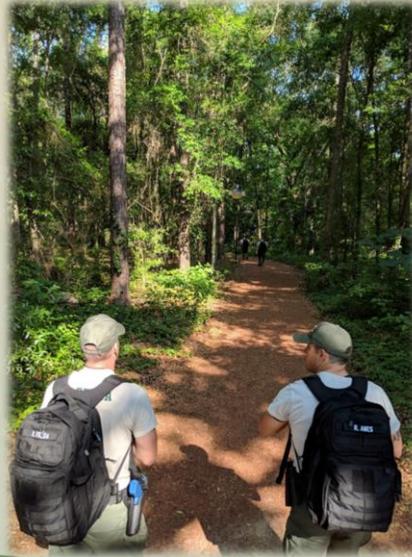
FWC recruits receiving vessel operation training during breakout training.



Video of water safety and survival training.

Recruit Life

- Daily physical fitness
- 8+ Hours of training
- Recruit dormitory
- Cafeteria



Recruits generally start their day with fitness training around 5am and receive training from 8a-5p Monday through Friday most weeks. Meals and lodging are provided while recruits attend the academy. They generally have weekends off for personal time.

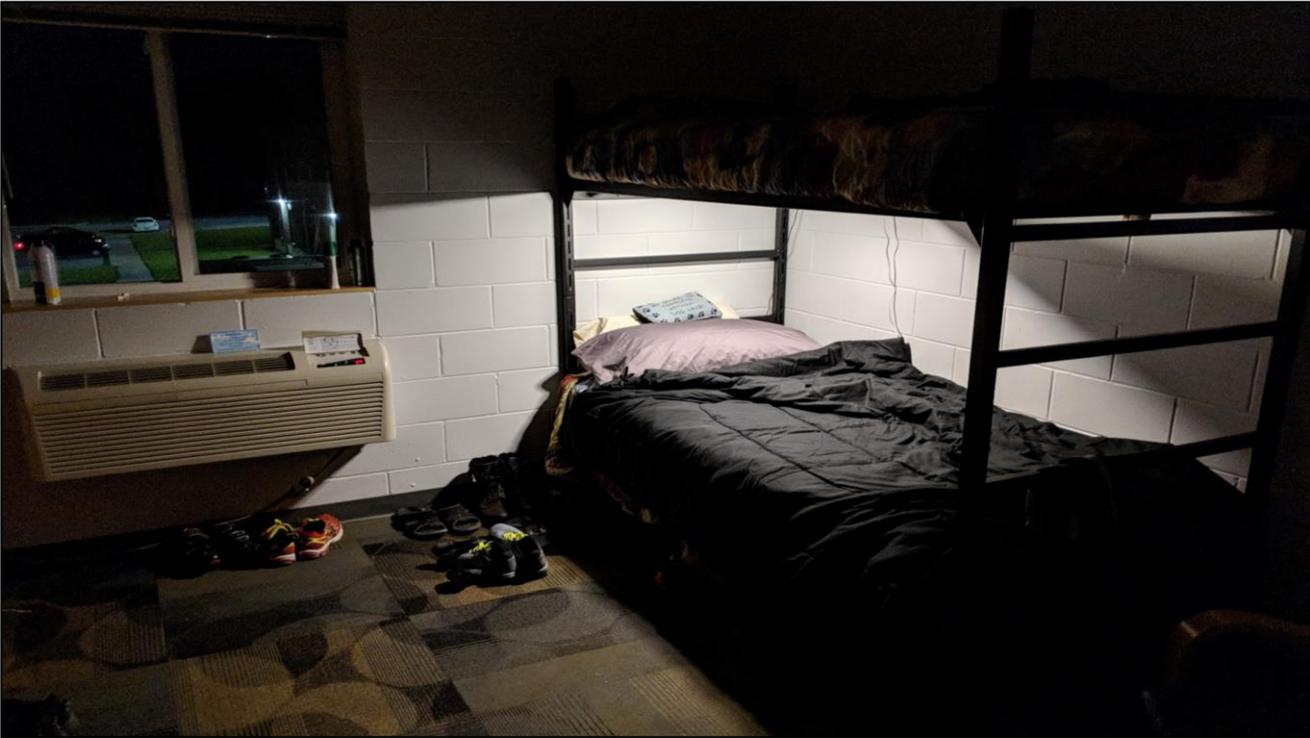




FPSI Dormitory



FPSI Dormitory



FWC recruit dorm room



FWC recruits at the FPSI Cafeteria for lunch



Graduation



At the completion of their training, new officers are sworn in at a formal graduation ceremony before reporting to their first duty station.



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