



 **FITCHBURG STATE
UNIVERSITY**

LAW ENFORCEMENT Resume & Cover Letter Guide

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This Guide is for You

In this guide you will find instructions and samples to assist you in crafting your resume and cover letter for your professional positions after graduation. Having well crafted application materials is incredibly important when entering a competitive job market. You only get one chance to make a first impression, make sure your resume and cover letter are helping your reader to understand what an amazing candidate you are.

In addition to this guide you can also utilize the Career Services and Advising Center for feedback on your materials, interview preparation, and job search support both while you are a student and up to 5 years as a recent grad. Simply email careercenter@fitchburgstate.edu or call 978-665-3151

CRAFTING YOUR RESUME

What is the Purpose of a Resume?

A resume is often an organization's first impression of you. It should be used as a marketing tool to tell your story by presenting your skills, knowledge, and experience to a potential employer placement in a concise, easy-to-read way. The average employer spends only 15 to 20 seconds reviewing a resume. Your resume should be targeted at a specific organization/position, error-free and easy for a hiring manager to quickly skim and get an idea of your qualifications for a position.

There is not one perfect layout for your resume, but your resume should be:

- Organized logically
- Easy to understand
- Consistent (spacing, formatting, font, use of bold/italics, etc.)
- One page limit

Avoid:

- **Pronouns:** Personal or possessive pronouns (I, my, me, we, our) are not necessary
- **Typos and spelling mistakes:** Spellcheck does not always catch typos. Have at least 2 other people proofread your resume.
- **Premade templates,** these can be rigid and difficult to alter to your specific needs.
- **Excessive graphic design** (unusual fonts, color, bullet points, text boxes, etc)

Describe your experiences

Provide detail on each of your experiences that are related to the position you are applying to. This can include positions that have "transferable skills" like working as an RA and highlighting your leadership and communication skills or crisis management. Under each experience you should have bullet pointed "skills phrases" that:

- Starts with an action verb
- Highlights what you did and how you did it
- Demonstrates the result and skill used

Example:

Action verb skill used what and how

Demonstrated critical thinking and problem solving to address emergent health crises that arise on campus while waiting for additional medical services to arrive on the scene.

What should you include in your Resume?

Essential	Optional
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name and Contact Information: First and Last name, address, email, phone• Education: Degree(s), including anticipated masters program if enrolled, MTPC Police Academy, GPA, significant awards, graduation dates• Relevant Certifications/Trainings• Related Job and Internship Experiences• Relevant Research: Ex. honors research thesis/presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional Summary/Objective: most recruiters now prefer a professional summary to an objective. A professional summary is great for those with more experience (example: veteran students).• Academic & Co-curricular Activities• Awards• Skills: particularly language skills• Volunteer Experience: include especially if relevant• Unrelated Job Experience: Depending on how much policing experience you have you may want to add unrelated job experience to show transferable skills

Police Program Student

Home or School Address

Phone # • student@gmail.com

Education**Fitchburg State University** — Fitchburg, MA

Master of Science in Criminal Justice

May 2023

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, Police Program

May 2022

Internship Experience**North Andover Police Department**, North Andover, MA

January 2022-Present

- Observe the duties and responsibilities of on-duty police officers. Gain an insightful experience observing the various roles within a law enforcement agency that take place on a daily basis.

Haverhill Police Department, Haverhill, MA

December 2022-February 2022

- Shadowed officers while they performed various activities for their department. Participated in police training that is provided to department personnel. Observed dispatch activities to gain knowledge of 911 call operations.

Work Experience**Fishman Transducers**, Andover, MA

Summer 2021

Assembler

- Served clients worldwide by utilizing audio, firmware, and loading boards before final assembly.

CF Cold Storage, Haverhill, MA 01832

Summer 2020

Laborer & Packer

- Participated in supply chain management and packaging for daily operations.

Volunteer Experience**Lawrence Corundum**, Lawrence, MA 01843

Fall 2019

Volunteer

- Served hundreds of people every day amongst other volunteers. Learned about unique social issues and disparities present in Lawrence which leaves many individuals without enough money to adequately feed themselves and their families.

Certifications

- MPTC Municipal Police Training Committee Police Academy

Expected September 9, 2022

- Introduction to Incident Command System, ICS-100

March 2021

- Introduction to the National Incident Management System, ICS-700b

March 2021

Leadership Roles and Honors

- Police Program Squad Leader

September 2019- May 2020

- Dean's List

Fall 2018-Present

Police Program Student
Home or School Address
Phone # • student@gmail.com

Education

Fitchburg State University — Fitchburg, MA
Master of Science in Criminal Justice May 2023
Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, Police Program May 2022
GPA: 3.75, Dean's List

MPTC Municipal Police Training Committee Police Academy September 2023

Experience

Groton Police Department, Groton, MA January 2022—Present
Intern

- Aide Site Supervisor with major projects including creating informative and engaging social media posts and analyzing police reports based on hate crimes and incidents to report back to the Federal Government.
- Engage in community policing events including Back to School Night and the annual Groton Fest Town Fair, handing out safety pamphlets, reflective gear, and bike lights.
- Ride along with officers on their daily patrols around Groton, MA responding to calls for service and observed motor vehicle stops.
- Shadow specialty officers such as Groton's Detective and School Resource Officer and K-9, gaining firsthand experience with legal processes, early intervention methods for juvenile behavior in a high school setting, and observed tracking and narcotics training with Groton PD's K-9.

Fitchburg State University EMS Rescue Squad, Fitchburg, MA December 2019—Present
Medic

- Respond to emergency medical emergencies on campus and provide care.
- Assisted in training 10 recruits in the EMS academy.

Fitchburg State University Police Department, Fitchburg, MA September 2020—May 2023
Student Security Officer

- Provided support to FSU Police through call box checks, lighting surveys, community policing, building checks, and safety escorts,
- Alerted officers to suspicious activity and completed reporting each shift.

YMCA Summer Camp, Wellesley, MA July 2019- August 2019
Counselor

- Supervised approximately 20 middle school age children and facilitate camp activities

Certifications

- FEMA Introduction to Incident Command System, ICS-100 March 2022
- FEMA Introduction to the National Incident Management System, ICS-700b March 2022
- EMS first responder certified October 2019
- Operation of a motorcycle (Class M permit)

Leadership Roles and Honors

- Class Leader of FSU Police Program (2021-2022), Platoon Leader in FSU Police Program (2020-2021), Squad Leader in FSU Police Program (2019-2020).
- Member of the Criminal Justice Honor Society (Alpha Phi Sigma) since March 2020.
- Member of National honor Society of Leadership and Success (Sigma Alpha Pi) since May 14th, 2020.

Skills

- Bilingual Spanish (Native Speaker)

Police Program Student
Home or School Address
Phone # • student@gmail.com

Education

Fitchburg State University — Fitchburg, MA
Master of Science in Criminal Justice May 2023
Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, Police Program May 2022
GPA: 3.8, Dean's List

Military Experience

Cadet at the United States Army Reserve 2016–Present

Assistant Company Executive Officer

- Assisted the Company Executive officer in managing distribution, supply and field transportation operations for the 368 Engineer Battalion HHC.
- Supervised as Officer in Charge (OIC), for monthly inventories of supplies and equipment in the absence of the Company Executive Officer.
- Assisted the Company Commander in resourcing logistics for the Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) field training exercise FTX, weapons ranges, and convoy movement of 120 soldiers and 19 vehicles.

The Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) 2018–Present

c/Battalion Executive Officer

May 2019–Present

- Selected above peers to serve as second in command in order to supervise and coordinate the efforts of the Bay State Battalion staff in planning, coordinating and execution of Battalion events across 10 universities in Central Massachusetts.
- Serves as a link between all 149 cadets in the Bay State Battalion and Cadre Battalion Executive Officer.

c/Company Commander January 2019–May 2019

- Responsible for the command, control, training, health, and readiness of 10 cadets at Charlie Company.
- Recognized by senior rater for the ability to do more with having less than my authorized manpower.

c/Company First Sergeant September 2018–January 2019

- Created a company Physical Fitness plan that helped increase the company's physical average by 25%.

Leadership Experience

Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA 2020–Present

Resident Assistant

- Support the social, academic, and personal adjustments of 21 students to the residence hall and University.
- Serve as a positive role model to residents and peers by adhering and enforcing housing policies.

Fitchburg State Emergency Medical Service, Fitchburg, MA 2020–Present

- Provide first aid medical support when a medical emergency exists on campus.

Fitchburg State Police Program, Fitchburg, MA. 2020–Present

Class Leader

May 2022–Present

- Created and directed the first-ever police program Physical Training Plan to increase the fitness level of student officers.
- Created a counseling program to maintain the commitment and discipline while maintaining the retention of student officers in the police program.

Platoon Leader September 2021–May 2022

- Enforced the highest standards in 34-student officers through appearance, morale, discipline and safety.
- Planned and organized Drill and Ceremony activities to promote professionalism.

Squad Leader September 2020–May 2021

Certifications

- MPTC Municipal Police Training Committee Police Academy September 2022
- EMS first responder certified October 2019

What is the Purpose of a Cover Letter?

Always include a cover letter with your application if you are able. It allows you to personalize your application, demonstrate how you are a great match for the position, lets you show your personality and passions, and serves as a writing sample. This can be a powerful tool especially when you are in an applicant pool of candidates with very similar qualifications and experiences. Use your cover letter to show them what you bring to the table and why you are a perfect match for what they are looking for!

Tips

Customize your Letter

Don't just send a generic letter with all your applications where you change the name of the company and position only. Employers can spot a form letter a mile away. This sends the message that you do not really care about the position.

Contact Information

Include the name, correct spelling, and job title of the person to whom you are writing. If it is not stated in the position or you are unable to identify the receiver, address the letter to "Hiring Manager."

Do Your Research

Know something about the company's products, services, mission, or values and reference this in your letter.

Keep Your Audience in Mind

Focus on what YOU can do for the EMPLOYER, not what you will get out of the experience. Describe how your skills and experience make you a great candidate for this position.

Use Specific Examples

Don't just state that you have experience, back it up with evidence! Don't just repeat what you have on your resume, but rather elaborate on two or three key skills/experiences and describe how they directly relate to the position you are applying to.

Align with the Job Description

Read the job description carefully. What is the employer looking for? Are they seeking someone with resilience? Someone who can work in a fast-paced environment? Provide an example of a time when you developed and demonstrated those traits.

Write Well and Proofread

Employers scrutinize the letter for proper grammar, spelling, style, and coherence of thought. If your cover letter is sloppy, they will assume this is a sample of how you work.

Do not overthink this!

It's easy to get really in your head about professional language and trying to sound fancy that you use words that are not reflective of who you really are. You want to be professional and polished, but not sound like a robot.

Be brief!

Cover letters should be limited to one page, 3-4 paragraphs at most.

Your Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Date

Contact Name
Title and/or Department Organization
Name Street Address City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr. _____, Ms. _____, or Hiring Manager,

Opening Paragraph

In your first paragraph, attract the reader's attention. State your reasons for writing, indicating the position or type of work for which you are applying. State why you are interested in the position/ employer/the field. Focus on something that sets this organization apart from similar employers and why that appeals to you. State why you are qualified for the role, i.e., what you can do for them.

Second Paragraph

Explain your background for the employer. Elaborate on which of your experiences have prepared you to meet the specific requirements of the position. Don't just tell them about your skills: show them with specific examples. This could include how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate, work or volunteer experience. Do not reiterate all the information that is on your resume, but rather focus on a few key points that highlight how your skills/experience match up with what the employer is looking for.

Closing Paragraph

Indicate your desire for a meeting or interview and how they can contact you to follow up. Include your contact information (email and phone number). Thank the reader for their consideration and reiterate your enthusiasm for the position/company

Sincerely,

Your Name

INFORMATION TO GATHER AND CONSIDER WHEN APPLYING

- Do I need to take the civil service exam to be eligible for employment?
- Is residency in the municipality required for employment? If so, how long do I need to be a resident?
- What additional requirements does the application process require? (written test, physical test)
- Does this department accept the Municipal Police Training Committee Police Academy that I will be completing?
- Are there application deadlines or test dates I need to be aware of?



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