

9. There was some apparent misunderstanding of the Peace Officer Standards Program sponsored by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training of the Department of Justice. Although the Commission suggests a minimum age of 21 for recruitment, it mentions no upper age limits. A few agencies, however, said their age limits on police jobs were set because of the Commission's rules.
10. Rigid physical examinations and requirements for recent education or experience may impose handicaps on older persons. Standards in excess of actual job performance requirements may be a kind of "hidden discrimination."
11. Some provisions exist for reciprocity in retirement coverage between the state and about 400 agencies contracting with the State Employees Retirement System for coverage. Twenty counties having pension plans under the 1937 County Retirement Act also have reciprocal arrangements with the state which permit employees, under some circumstances, to transfer their retirement credits when they move from county to state employment, or vice versa.

B. Recommendations

In view of the widespread prevalence of age limitations, whether expressed or implied, on employment in public agencies throughout the state, the Legislature is urged to give its guidance and support in efforts to eliminate practices which limit the opportunities of mature workers for entry or advancement in public employment. Toward this end, it is recommended:

1. That measures be taken to eliminate any age limitations in California state, county, and city employment which violate provisions of the Government Code prohibiting such limitations.
2. That present provisions of the Government Code exempting law enforcement positions from general prohibition against age discrimination in government employment be reexamined to determine whether such exemptions are realistic or necessary, in view of the following considerations: (a) public agencies are experiencing difficulty in recruiting law enforcement officers; (b) the federal government has not found it necessary to establish entry age limits for employees in law enforcement or "safety" positions; (c) there is no evidence that chronological age is an accurate measure of an individual's physical or mental capacities.
3. That all cities and counties be apprised of recruitment standards promulgated by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training of the Department of Justice. These standards have sometimes been misinterpreted as proposing age ranges for peace officer jobs, when in fact the recommendation is for a minimum age of 21 years, without maximum age limits.
4. That the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training should be given all possible support in its program of assisting counties and cities to establish standards for physical and mental examinations related to the performance requirements of specific law enforcement positions.