

To whom it may concern:

I have served the State of Florida for almost 23 years, which includes over 4 years in the Department of Corrections. My eye sight has gradually gotten worse and although I have BCBS Options insurance, it is still hard to afford to keep updating my glasses and prescriptions. I have tried numerous types of different contacts and due to having astigmatism, they move the minute I blink and I see double, which I can not have happen, as I am a Patrol Supervisor Sergeant.

Approx. two weeks ago, I went to qualify with my firearms and for the first time in 18 years, I had to shoot a second round, as I did not qualify the first time. This was obviously due to my degeneration of eyesight ability. I admit that I am not a sharp shooter, but I always qualify with a passing score and take pride in being an example to my trainees, as I also train new officers.

I feel that I am a good candidate to have this surgery, as I believe that training our new generation of officers is so important, but it is difficult with out being able to have the eyesight quality and clarity that I need to keep myself safe, so that I am there to keep others safe and continue to train with pride and confidence.

My work ethic is far beyond that of any normal employee. I went two years with not one sick day until I had a bout of diverticulitis approx. 3 months ago. I have worked with a bad back and had one surgery in 2006 and I am now in need of a second open back surgery, for decompression/Fusion above and below the L4/L5, which I had repaired in the first surgery.

I do this job because I love it! I worked Clandestine/Meth Labs since October of 2003 and I now train officers to work methamphetamine labs, as well as train narcotics officers. I have had dry eye syndrome for years, but I also believe that accidental exposures in working Clandestine/Meth labs have added to the degeneration of my eyesight, although I have no proof of documented diagnosis.

I really want to finish my career with the ability to see without my glasses fogging up when I jump out on a call or Traffic Stops and have the ability to continue to train the future generation of Officers with pride.

I am no different that any one else nor any more deserving of this, other that I take pride in the oath, which I have taken, promising to protect those who can not protect themselves, with the acceptance that it may one day mean laying down my life for another. Until that time comes, I would just request the ability to register for this surgery. I believe in God, I believe in our Country, I believe in Family and I believe that no matter what type of situation that I am called on to respond, that I will treat others, just as I would want to be treated.

Thank You and God Bless!

Sincerely,

Sgt. Gary Schell