




STAFF REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE: Regular Meeting of November 28, 2017

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBMITTED BY: Tammany Brooks, Chief of Police 

APPROVED BY: Ron Bernal, City Manager

SUBJECT: Authorize an Employee Referral and Recruitment Signing Bonus/Incentives for Qualified Lateral Police Officers

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the City Council authorize an employee referral and recruitment signing bonus/incentives for qualified lateral police officers.

STRATEGIC PURPOSE

Staff's efforts regarding this issue are prioritized in the City's Strategic Plan as follows:
Strategy A-1: Rebuild police services.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact will be determined solely by the number of lateral applicants hired while the program is in effect. Per lateral officer, the fiscal impact is estimated to be \$23,253. This assumes the lateral officer is hired at Step E and is eligible to take advantage of the full incentive package. However, financial incentives are distributed in three separate increments over the course of three years, and leave incentives would be taken in much smaller increments (if at all). It is believed most, if not all, of the costs would be covered through salary savings from vacancies.

DISCUSSION

After Measure C was approved by voters in November 2013, Police Department staff has worked closely with Human Resources staff in an effort to fill all sworn police officer vacancies. Since that time, forty-nine (49) sworn officers have been hired. During that same period however, thirty-five (35) sworn officers have separated employment, resulting in only a net gain of fourteen (14) sworn officers.

The Antioch Police Department has an authorized staffing level of 103 sworn officers. It is currently staffed at 96 sworn officers, with at least 5 anticipated separations occurring within the next year. The recruitment of qualified lateral applicants for the position of police officer is becoming increasingly difficult, as the job market is very open and competitive. Recently, the department scheduled interviews for five lateral officers from four different agencies, and none of them showed up. Additionally, we had two recent

lateral hires (from Oakland PD) that quit and returned back to their agency in large part due to financial incentives Oakland offered for them to return.

Many departments have adopted recruitment incentives to attract qualified laterals. Some local examples include:

Palo Alto is currently offering a \$25,000 hiring bonus for laterals, and \$10,000 for academy graduates. Each is paid in two installments – half upon hiring and the other half at one year anniversary.

Modesto is currently offering a \$15,000 hiring bonus for laterals, paid in two installments - \$10,000 upon hiring and \$5,000 at five year anniversary.

BART is currently considering \$10-15,000 hiring bonuses for laterals, but to date this has not yet been approved.

Fairfield is currently offering a \$10,000 hiring bonus for laterals, with half paid at time of hire and the other half paid at the successful completion of probation. In addition, laterals have a full year of vacation and sick leave front-loaded on the books at the time of hire.

When a lateral police officer is hired, the average time it takes for him/her to begin working in a solo officer capacity is generally between two to three months. When an entry level police trainee is hired, the average time it takes for him/her to begin working in a solo officer capacity is generally between twelve and fourteen months.

The reduced amount of time it takes a lateral to become a solo officer actually amounts to a cost savings to the City. This is due to the elimination of all costs associated with the police academy, salary for the trainee while attending the police academy, and salary/benefits of the trainee during the lengthened field training program. In some cases, this can amount to a savings of approximately \$60,000.

For those interested in law enforcement, Antioch proves to be a challenging environment to work. As the County's second most populous city with 114,241 residents, and with a current per capita staffing of only .83 sworn officers per 1000 residents, the volume of work required of police staff can be overwhelming. This, coupled with administration's commitment to remain steadfast in demanding the highest ethical, moral, and core value standards from potential applicants, exacerbates the already difficult task of recruitment.

Recommended Program Details for the Antioch Police Department Recruitment Bonus Incentive Guidelines (open to all lateral police officers hired after November 25, 2017):

To qualify for the bonus/incentives, the applicant must:

1. Be currently employed as a police officer within a California law enforcement agency.
2. Have two (2) years of experience and have successfully completed a probationary period.

3. Possess a Basic California POST Certificate.
4. If the applicant is a former Antioch officer who wishes to return to the department, his/her separation of employment must be at least eighteen (18) months to qualify.

The bonus/incentives will consist of the following:

1. Applicant will be allowed to carry over up to 200 hours of accrued sick leave from his/her department.
2. Prior law enforcement service seniority will be used to determine vacation accrual rate of the applicant.
3. Automatic credit of 40 hours vacation upon employment.
4. Signing bonus of \$10,000 with payments in the following increments:
 - a. \$2,500 – upon employment
 - b. \$2,500 – upon successful completion of probation
 - c. \$5,000 – upon three (3) years of service
5. Any current Antioch employee who recruits a lateral officer will receive his/her choice of \$1,000 or 20 hours of Comp Time upon the lateral's successful completion of the field training program.

ALTERNATIVES

Council could choose to deny the recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

None.