

Recruitment and Hiring Incentives for Lateral, Academy Graduate, and Entry Level Police Officers

- **PURPOSE**

The position of Police Officer in the City of Alameda has been critically difficult to fill over the last 10 years. In response to recruitment and hiring challenges, the City of Alameda has established a *Recruitment and Hiring Incentive Policy for Lateral, Academy Graduate, and Entry Level Police Officers*, as set forth below. This policy defines specific recruitment and hiring incentives that may be offered to candidates and to City of Alameda employees who refer successful candidates.

The City recognizes that, in order for experienced Lateral Police Officers to transfer from other agencies, they may have to sacrifice accumulated years of service that provide for higher vacation accrual rates, time that is counted towards longevity pay incentives, civil service rights to their job, and progression in their respective salary schedule.

Additionally, the City endeavors to attract and recruit highly qualified Academy Graduate and Entry Level Police Officers. The City also recognizes that a significant monetary incentive may be required in order to attract qualified candidates and that word of mouth recruitment efforts from our Police Officers and other city employees is an effective method of attracting qualified applicants.

The City also recognizes that there are cost savings, operational benefits, and other community benefits when we are able to hire trained, experienced officers and maintain a fully-staffed police force.

- **OVERALL GUIDELINES**

The City of Alameda may offer qualified candidates any combination of the following hiring incentives as appropriate:

- 1) For Lateral Police Officer candidates only, a reduction of the 24-month probationary period by 12 months, allowing an experienced Lateral Police Officer candidate to achieve civil service status after 12 months of service. To be eligible for this benefit, Lateral Police Officer candidates must have at least two years of experience as a Police Officer.

For Lateral Police Officer candidates only, advanced step in the salary schedule to ensure the City can meet or reasonably exceed the candidate's current compensation.

- 2) For Lateral Police Officer candidates only, starting vacation accrual rate that is commensurate with the candidate's years of service as a peace officer. Said accrual rate shall increase in regular increments going forward as provided in the vacation accrual schedule described in the Memoranda of Understanding for the Alameda Police Officers Association. As an example: a Lateral Officer with seven years of experience will accrue twenty days of vacation per year upon hire and their accrual rate would increase to twenty-one days upon completion of one year of service with the City of Alameda and so forth.
- 3) For Lateral Police Officer candidates only, additional vacation hours for candidates with five or more years of experience. The City would grant up to 80 hours of vacation upon completion of 12 months of service. These vacation hours would be considered additional accruals and would not affect ongoing vacation accrual rates.
- 4) For Lateral Police Officer candidates only, year for year service credits up to a maximum of ten years to be used towards the years of service required to obtain the Retention Pay incentive as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding for the Alameda Police Officers Association. For

a lateral officer with ten or more years of service this would amount to a 3% increase in pay. As an example: a Lateral Officer with ten years of service credit would be eligible for the 10 year service retention pay rate of 3% upon hire and would be eligible for the fifteen year service retention pay rate upon completion of five years of service with the City of Alameda.

- 5) For Later Police Officer candidates only, front loading of up to 48 of the 96 sick leave hours police officers accrue annually. Front loading of sick leave accruals shall result in an employee not accruing additional sick leave until his/her service time is equal to that in order to generate the amount of front-loaded sick leave. At that time, accrual shall commence at the awarded rate.
- 6) For all candidates, a recruitment incentive totaling up to \$75,000 to be paid out as follows:
 - \$25,000 upon being sworn in with proof of having graduated from an accredited California POST academy. Out of state candidates would qualify if they successfully challenge and pass California POST academy standards and achieve California POST certification.
 - \$50,000 paid upon completion of the Field Training Program. To be eligible for this second incentive payment, hired personnel must commit to five years of service. Voluntary separation prior to five years of service would require a prorated payback at \$10,000 per year not to exceed \$50,000.

The City of Alameda will also provide its full-time employees with the option to choose either of the following recruitment incentives for the referral of a Lateral Officer who successfully completes one year of service with the City of Alameda:

- 1) Two days of vacation or the equivalent cash payment. The time would need to be used in the same calendar year as earned, unless it is within the last four full pay periods of the calendar year, in which case the employee will be eligible to receive the leave hours after January 1st of the following calendar year. Any leave awarded that is unused by the end of the calendar year, besides the exception noted above, will be paid out to the employee in cash.
- 2) A lump sum \$1,000 referral incentive bonus, paid in cash, not to be included in any CalPERS pension contribution calculations (non-PERSable).

In order for an employee to be eligible for either referral incentive option, the newly hired lateral candidate must have indicated on their application for employment the referring employee's name. Should the lateral officer separate from employment before one full year of service, the employee shall not receive either incentive option.

- **GENERAL PROCEDURES**

When the Police Department identifies a lateral candidate, the Chief of Police will prepare explanatory language on the Hire Request Form for approval by the Human Resources Director and City Manager prior to the offer being made. This explanation should include language addressing the Department's current hiring needs and the candidate's current years of service, compensation level, and benefits package. The memo should also identify if an advanced salary step will cause salary compaction with current police officers at the same salary level.

Should a recruitment incentive bonus payment be offered to a candidate, APD will notify the Human Resources Department once the candidate successfully completes Field

Training. Human Resources will process the first bonus payment, if applicable.

The Human Resources Department will review this policy annually at fiscal year-end to evaluate if Police Officer remains a hard to recruit position. The following criteria will be used in the evaluation.

- Does the Police Department have current long-term vacancy rates despite repeated recruitment efforts to fill vacant positions?
- Is there a documented shortage in the labor market for experienced Police Officers?

If the criteria above no longer exist, the Recruitment Incentive Program will be suspended.