

City of San Leandro

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City of San Leandro Addresses Police Department Staffing Shortage with Resiliency and Retention Pay Incentives

San Leandro, CA – The City of San Leandro City Council will consider a groundbreaking pay incentive to many San Leandro Police Department (SLPD) officers and dispatchers to meet the challenges of an active deployable staff of less than 60%. The recommended incentive, which offers a maximum of \$20,000 per eligible staff member over the next two fiscal years, will be discussed at the July 5, 2022, San Leandro City Council meeting.

All police officers, dispatchers, and command staff, would be eligible for the incentive, which will be made in three payments over the next two fiscal years to encourage retention; the Police Chief would not be eligible. Payments would recognize the contributions made by SLPD officers and dispatchers to the San Leandro community during the extraordinary past several months of severe vacancies necessitating mandatory overtime and emergency shifts. It would also be accompanied by a renewed commitment to recognize staff through several venues, including social media, online forums, and public meetings.

“I frequently hear from our community members that they truly appreciate the hard work of our police department staff and it’s important that we recognize the sacrifices our first responders make every day to keep us safe,” noted Mayor Pauline Russo Cutter. “This action isn’t just about money, though. We want all San Leandrans to know how much we value our police department staff.”

Eligible staff will receive a first payment of \$10,000 within thirty days of Council approval, a second payment of \$7,500 no later than six months following the first payment, and a third payment of \$2,500 no later than six months following the second payment. There is sufficient funding in the City’s budget from vacant positions to accommodate the incentive payments. Retaining experienced staff also helps minimize significant recruitment expenses - which is about \$88,000 per position - and the loss of institutional knowledge that is essential to keep the community safe.

“Keeping our community safe and secure is my top priority and I’m confident that these incentives are just a first step in reducing our police staffing crisis and sending our officers and dispatchers a clear message that we appreciate all they do for San Leandro every day,” added City Manager Fran Robustelli. “I am not aware of any other city that is acting as aggressively to

meet hiring challenges, and it's vitally important that we take the lead with this issue that is afflicting almost every public safety agency."

"This agreement resulted from a productive negotiation process, and I'm pleased that we were able to find a solution to help ease our staffing issues," said San Leandro Police Officers' Association President Michael Olivera. "We appreciate the City recognizing the need to retain our valued officers, who work diligently around the clock to provide outstanding service to our residents, business operators, and visitors."

The City recently conducted an employee engagement survey and outreach to a cross-section of Police Department staff, and the incentives are an initial step in taking genuine action and accountability in response to feedback received. Investment in organizational culture is a top priority for the City and it will take ongoing fiscally prudent actions focused on resiliency and retention.

For members of the public interested in applying for an outstanding first responder opportunity in a world-class department where staff are appreciated and valued, please visit: www.wearourblue.org

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