

VERMONT STATE POLICE

Headquarters

Memo



To: Commissioner Jennifer Morrison

From: Colonel Matthew T. Birmingham

Date: September 21, 2022

Re: Recruitment and Retention Initiatives

After three years of an extremely challenging hiring and retention landscape, the Vermont State Police executive staff recommend the following recruitment and retention initiatives for FY23 (through a budget adjustment request), and FY24. These initiatives have been preliminarily discussed with VTA Executive Director Mike O'Neil and DHR Director of Labor Relations John Berard. The consensus is that a side letter agreement between the VTA/VSEA and the State would be most effective way to implement each proposal.

Hiring Bonuses (Sworn and ECDs): We propose issuing \$5,000 hiring bonuses paid to all new sworn members and Emergency Communication Dispatchers (ECD).

Two payments for ECDs: 1st payment of \$2,500 at successful conclusion of training period, and 2nd payment of \$2,500 at successful conclusion of probationary period.

Cost per person: \$5,000

1st Payment: ECDs

- 2019: 14
- 2020: 19
- 2021: 15
- 2022 YTD: 10
- Annual average: 14.5
- **Average cost of 1st payment: \$36,250/year**

2nd Payment: ECDs

- 2019: 10
- 2020: 14
- 2021: 11
- 2022 YTD: 9
- Annual average: 11
- **Average cost of 2nd payment: \$27,500/year**

Total Average Cost: \$63,750/year

Three payments for sworn members: 1st payment of \$500 at successful completion of the police academy, 2nd payment of \$1,000 upon successful completion field training program, and 3rd payment of \$3,500 at the successful conclusion of probationary period.

Cost per person: \$5,000

1st Payment: Sworn

- 2018: 40
- 2019: 27
- 2020: 30
- 2021: 24
- 2022 YTD: 16
- Annual average: 27.4
- **Average cost of 1st payment: \$13,700/year**

2nd Payment: Sworn

- 2018: 32
- 2019: 23
- 2020: 23
- 2021: 13
- 2022 YTD: 11
- Annual average: 20.4
- **Average cost of 2nd payment: \$20,700/year**

3rd Payment: Sworn

- 2018: 32
- 2019: 23
- 2020: 23
- 2021: 13
- 2022 YTD: 11
- Annual average: 20.4
- **Average cost of 3rd payment: \$72,450/year**

Total Average Cost: \$106,850/year

Recruitment Awards (Sworn only): For the past several years we have issued recruitment awards in the amount of \$1,000 to current members for successful recruitment of a new member (criteria dependent). We propose increasing the monetary value of this award and issuing it in two payments: 1st payment of \$500 at the point of hire, 2nd payment of \$2,000 at the completion of the police academy. There would be no individual annual cap on this award:

Cost per person: \$2,500/award

1st Payment:

- 2018: 3

- 2019: 3
- 2020: 1
- 2021: 5
- 2022 YTD: 3
- Annual average: 3
- **Average cost of 1st payment: \$1,500/year**

2nd Payment:

- 2018: 3
- 2019: 3
- 2020: 1
- 2021: 5
- 2022 YTD: 3
- Annual average: 3
- **Average cost of 2nd payment: \$6,000/year**

Total Average Cost: \$7,500/year

Student Loan Debt Repayment (Sworn only): An important benefit for many job applicants is the repayment of preexisting student loan debt. We propose offering up to \$10,000 per new hire toward the repayment of preexisting student loan debt, paid out over five years.

Anyone who participates in this program would sign a commitment to remain employed with the state police for at least five years. If a participant of this program leaves employment before five years, he or she will be required to repay all money previously awarded.

Payments will vary depending on specific requests, with a maximum annual payout of \$2,500 and maximum total payout of \$10,000 per member.

Cost per person: \$10,000 (maximum)

Total Average Cost (maximum): \$51,750/year

Total Average Cost (all 3 initiatives): \$229,850/year