

Information Item

Date: March 21, 2022

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Patrice Toney, Assistant City Manager
Catrina Thompson, Police Chief

Subject:
Winston-Salem Police Department Retention and Recruitment Strategies

Strategic Focus Area: Safe and Secure Community

Strategic Objective: Improve Public Safety and Service Quality

Strategic Plan Action Item: No

Key Work Item: No



The Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD) is in the fifth largest city in North Carolina and has 700 authorized positions to include sworn and non-sworn personnel. The Winston-Salem Police Department's employee vacancies are at an all-time high. The department is allocated 528 sworn positions and, as of February 24, 2022, they have 104 vacancies for a 20% workforce shortage.

In an effort to fill vacancies, the WSPD Recruiting Unit has focused considerable attention in the last year on developing a recruiting and retention strategy that will not only attract qualified applicants to the Winston-Salem Police Department but will also entice employees to remain loyal and committed to the agency.

Successful strategies have included \$1,000 to \$1,500 in moving expenses, residency requirement expansion, take home vehicle policy expansion, 2% supplemental pay, a partnership with Berkshire Hathaway Realtors (assists new hires with finding housing), interactive social media platforms (i.e., Tik Tok Challenges), Races, and traditional methods such as job fairs, military installation job fairs, scholarship programs, etc.

Other recruitment and retention strategies proposed by the WSPD include the following:

2022 Recruiting and Retention Strategies

- Signing Bonus - \$1,000 upon BLET Academy graduation (proposed: 10% of salary)
- Education Loan Forgiveness Program (if qualified, up to \$5,000 per year)
- Increased City-paid life insurance from 1-times annual salary to 3 times annual salary for sworn police and certified fire. (\$300,000 annually)
- Increased retirement savings account contributions for Public Safety employees.
- Career Ladder/Step Plan
- Holiday Rollover

- Mental Health Day
- Military/Education Incentive for Non-Sworn Personnel
- New Uniforms
- Meal with the Police Chief and Mayor (for potential police recruits)
- Partnership with Digital Strategy Solutions (web-based recruiting).
- Partnership with North Carolina Universities (5 Criminal Justice Programs)
- Recruitment Ride-Along Program (for potential applicants)
- Out-of-State Recruitment
- Communications Cadet Program