

## Information Item

**Date:** March 21, 2022

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

**From:** Johnnie Taylor, Assistant City Manager  
Marquis Barnett, Human Resource Director

**Subject:**  
Information Regarding the City of Winston-Salem's Recruitment and Retention Efforts

**Strategic Focus Area:** Service Excellence

**Strategic Objective:** Ensure Service Delivery Efficiency and Effectiveness

**Strategic Plan Action Item:** No

**Key Work Item:** No



The City of Winston-Salem has experienced an unprecedented number of vacancies during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The current vacancies are at 603 including summer temporary positions. Given the number of vacancies, the below efforts to recruit new employees and retain current employees are imperative to be market competitive within the employment industry. Other organizations have enhanced their reward packages to meet the industry demand; therefore, the Human Resources Department has identified a series of total rewards efforts designed to attract and retain top talent. A summary of those efforts is below:

- Sign-On Incentive – A financial incentive to new employees who accept positions deemed “hard-to-fill” by the Human Resources Department. Half of the incentive amount will be paid within the first 30 days of employment. The remaining amount will be paid during the sixth month of full-time continuous active employment in the originally hired position. (*\$125,000 annually*)
- Referral Incentive - A financial incentive payable to current City employees who refer successful candidates for positions deemed “hard-to-fill” by the Human Resources Department. The first incentive payout will be paid to the referring employee after the new hire has been actively employed full-time for six months. The remaining amount will be paid after the new employee has been actively employed full-time for a one-year period in the originally hired position. (*\$100,000 annually*)
- Expansion of Paid Parental Leave Program – Expanding the current program from six-weeks of paid parental leave to 12-weeks. If both parents and/or legal guardians are City employees who meet the eligibility criteria, they will be granted 12 weeks of paid parental leave during the rolling 12-month period according to our current Paid Parental Leave Program guidelines.

- Change to Adjusted Seniority Provisions – Implementing a policy permitting the City Manager to adjust seniority for employees hired into certain classifications as it pertains to the accrual of vacation time. This would allow employees to count the years of full-time service at other government entities toward the City of Winston-Salem’s vacation accrual time.
- Telework Optioning – Continuing to permit City employees the flexibility to work remote as is feasible for their job and scheduling in their department. The City Manager will also consider options for some job classifications to be designated as accepting 100 percent remote work.
- Zero Dollar Employee-Only Healthcare Premiums – Working with benefits brokers to provide paid employee only health insurance. (*\$2 million annually*)
- City-Sponsored Commercial Driver’s License – Implementation of a City-sponsored class to help employees and newly hired employees to obtain their CDL under agreement to remain employed by the City for a period of one year or repay training expenses. (*\$90,000 program to train and deploy 20 additional CDL holders*)
- In-Service Vacation Payout – Program to permit employees to receive a pay-out of up to 80 hours of accrued vacation time while in active service. The payout option will be offered one time during the calendar year to be paid out in the first paycheck in the month of December.
- 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.
- Additional Recognized Holidays – The Human Resources Department will propose the recognition of two additional holidays for Christmas and one additional floating holiday during the calendar year to remain consistent with peer agencies and to lead innovation in our quest to be an employer of choice. This item will also revise the current policy permitting employees to accrue all holidays in a calendar year and not lose them at the end of the year.
- Down Payment Assistance Program – Financial assistance to City employees to cover down payment expenses when purchasing a home in the corporate city limits of Winston-Salem. (*Financial impact – Capped at \$100,000 per calendar year annually*)

Any items requiring City Council consideration and/or adjustment to the Personnel Resolution will be brought before the Council as appropriate at a future meeting.