

City of
SACRAMENTO
Police Department

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Ref: COP 8-1

Honorable Russell L. Hom, Presiding Judge
Sacramento Superior Court
720 Ninth Street, Department 47
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Judge Hom:

The recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees in the Sacramento Police Department is one of the most important issues that our department and community faces. I am appreciative of the Grand Jury's analysis on such an important issue and welcome the opportunity to outline some of the initiatives we are undertaking in this area. Our responses to each recommendation are highlighted below.

R1: The Sacramento City Council and the Sacramento Police Department should work together to include the positions and budget authority necessary to permanently establish an on-going recruitment function in the Department. The position and budget authority should be included in the 2021-2022 Sacramento PD budget proposal considered for approval by the City Council.

The Sacramento Police Department currently has two Police Officer positions who work full-time on recruiting. Additionally, we have one Police Sergeant who splits time between recruiting and our Cops and Clergy Program. During the Fiscal Year 2019/20 midyear process, the Department requested a \$100,000 service & supply augmentation for recruitment advertising and related services to counter the declining number of applicants. The request was denied. The request was resubmitted as part of the Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget process, along with a request for an additional Police Sergeant to work solely on recruiting, but both were denied given the economic uncertainty caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Fiscal Year 2021/22 budget development process begins towards the end of the calendar year. Position requests are due in early January of 2021 and other budget requests are due later that month. The Department will evaluate conditions when the time comes and request the appropriate resources.

R2: The Sacramento Police Department should review potentially eliminating the A.A. degree and 60-unit requirement to attract new recruits. The review should consider waiving those requirements for potential recruits with professional training and expertise that could be equally relevant (military, later police transfers). This review should begin immediately with an implementation of its recommendations during FY 2020-2021.

The Sacramento Police Department does not currently require an A.A. degree for the position of Police Officer. We do require 60 semester or 90 quarter units from an accredited college or university at the time of appointment.

For individuals who are hired and have no prior law enforcement experience (referred to as a Police Recruit), the appointment to Police Officer would be no sooner than the conclusion of our POST Certified Basic Police Academy. During the Police Academy, Recruits earn 26 semester units from Los Rios Community College. Due to the college semester units earned during the academy, Police Recruits only need to have 34 college semester units prior to the academy.

If the Police Recruit does not have the necessary college units upon completion of the Police Academy, they are employed as a Community Service Officer (CSO) until they can complete their remaining college units. Upon earning the necessary units, they can be upgraded to the position of Police Officer without attending another academy.

The education requirement is waived for individuals who have four years of service in the United States Armed Forces and who have obtained an honorable discharge. There is currently no waiver for lateral officers.

The Sacramento Police Department places a priority on hiring the best candidates for our community, and individuals with a college education is one aspect of that. As an example, studies indicate that college-educated police are more likely to use reasonable force than those without a postsecondary education (Stickle, 2016).

http://www.cjci.org/uploads/cjci/documents/jpj_education_use_of_force.pdf

R4: This is a duplicate, and we were instructed to disregard it.

R6. The Department should explore ways to shorten the entire recruitment hiring process. This process should begin immediately with a completion date within the next 12 months.

Since the beginning of 2020, this has been a priority to our Department. This calendar year we have taken numerous steps to try and expedite the hiring process. Many of these processes are focused on the recruitment and hiring of individuals who have no police experience.

Through our analysis, we identified two areas that were causing unnecessary delays in the hiring process which consisted of how long the job postings remained open, and the initial written test. In working with the City Human Resources Department, we were able to significantly shorten our hiring timelines.

Prior to January of 2020, the average time from submittal of an application to a hiring interview was six-nine months. Through the changes we made, the process is now an average of three-four

months. We continue to seek out any other methods that will reduce the time spent in the process, while still maintaining our commitment to hiring the best candidates.

R7: The Grand Jury Recommends the Police Chief continue to work with POST officials to update or change cadet marksmanship and driving standards and to give candidates the attention needed to better prepare them for those requirements. The goal for completion would be within the next 12 months.

A few years ago, the Sacramento Police Academy staff designed a Pre-Academy that is five weeks in length and designed to help improve the overall performance of academy recruits during the regular 24-week Police Academy. After conducting research and performing an audit on past academies as to why past recruits were failing out, the staff identified certain Learning Domains, or fields of study, that were responsible for multiple recruit failures. These topics include, amongst other things, both marksmanship and driving standards. The Pre-Academy recruits get one full day of Emergency Vehicle Operation Course training at our Sacramento Police Department Drivers Training Facility. They receive classroom instruction on firearm safety, nomenclature, and use of force. Additionally, they also receive firearm training at the shooting range for a minimum of two days. Since the implementation of the pre-academy training, we have seen less failures in marksmanship and driving. As a result, our graduation rates in the academy have increased.

R8. The Grand Jury recommends the Sacramento City Council and Police Department continue to expand and make permanent the CSO program and provide a strategy for the utilization of the CSO position by December of 2021.

The Sacramento Police Department created our current CSO program to recruit potential candidates into our Department while they are attending school. This pipeline program helps us to better attract individuals from our community, increase our diversity, and affords opportunities for individuals to further their careers while they are still obtaining their education. The program is structured so that while our CSO's are attending school, we can adjust their schedules and hours to work around their education, but still giving them an employment opportunity. This flexibility allows us to help them be successful in both endeavors.

In Fiscal Year 2019/20, the Sacramento City Council authorized an additional seven Community Service Officer I positions and 35 Community Service Officer II positions. The Department also converted 13 previously authorized Reserve CSO and CSO Limited Term positions into an additional 11 Community Service Officer II positions in Fiscal Year 2020/21. The increase in CSO positions have helped us continue to expand our program and provide more opportunities.

We have also increased the maximum number of years that an employee could be employed as a CSO from three to five years. The increase allows us to reach out to younger adults who are just starting their college careers and have an interest in law enforcement. This opportunity allows us to improve our recruitment of younger adults while providing them with stable employment through their college years.

R9: The Grand Jury recommends that bi-annual open forum style town hall meetings with the police officers moderated by the Mayor, City Manager, Police Chief and the Police Union representative be conducted that would give officers and management an opportunity to discuss areas of concern and interest with the goal of bolstering support between police

officers and community leaders. The Grand Jury recommends this meeting begin with the next six months.

The Sacramento Police Department supports bolstering support between our officers and community leaders and will research the viability of this recommendation.

R10. The Grand Jury recommends the Police Department establish a committee or forum of younger officers to provide input on the type of “incentives” or programs that are geared to the younger professional lifestyle in order to attract new officers. The goal would be to drive changes in the Police Department that will attract new candidates including lateral transfers and also assist in retaining current officers. The Grand Jury recommends this should be done within the next six months.

The Recruiting Unit has traditionally worked with the Sacramento Police Academy by engaging the current recruit class and soliciting their opinions to guide recruiting strategies. The in-session academy class is comprised of the newest members of the department, and therefore the demographics that we are most actively pursuing. As such, they are positioned to provide the most contemporary input on recruiting activities. We have solicited their input to create and implement our recruiting tagline and identify which recruiting programs they interacted with. The Recruiting Unit will work with the academy staff to schedule semi-annual meetings with the academy class to identify incentives and programs that will aid in recruitment and retention.

R11: The Grand Jury compliments the City and Sacramento Police Department for reviewing and relaxing restrictions on tattoos, and encourages them to take similar actions on body piercings and below the collar ponytails. The Police Department should reflect not only the diversity of the community but also what is now more prevalent and acceptable in order to increase the recruitment pool and better relate to the public they serve. The Grand Jury recommends this work begin immediately.

The Sacramento Police Department is currently revising our policy on ponytails and piercings to include gender neutral language. Our new policy will allow for hair that is worn in a single ponytail or braid to extend within three inches of the bottom of the shirt collar. Hair dye will be allowed but must consist of a natural hair color. Additionally, employees may wear one earring per earlobe while on duty.

Sincerely,



Daniel Hahn
Chief of Police

DH:dm

cc: Rebecca Castaneda, Grand Jury Coordinator