

SPD-WalkOn-1

Sponsor: Councilmember Pederson

Add \$2.14 million GF to SPD for Retention Incentives

Effect: This Council Budget Action (CBA) would add \$2.14 million GF to the Seattle Police Department (SPD) for a one-time retention compensation incentive, as a form of front line worker acknowledgement or hazard pay, that would support a cash payment of up to \$1,750 per sworn officer. This CBA would fund retention incentives to stabilize the SPD sworn workforce by directly addressing a recent trend in higher-than-normal officer separations.

The 2022 Proposed Budget added \$1.09 million GF to SPD for a hiring incentive program that would fund \$7,500 hiring bonuses for recruits and \$15,000 hiring bonuses for lateral hires, but did not include funding for retention incentives for existing officers.

The Law Department advised that authorizing legislation and collective bargaining would be required before the City could provide police officers with cash retention incentives.

Background: SPD has incurred a net loss of 211 officers since the beginning of 2020. In an attempt to address SPD's goals for response times and patrol coverage, the department has in the last year transferred 100 officers from specialty units into 911 response and created a new city-wide Community Response Unit (CRU) to provide additional coverage during the daylight, high call volume hours.

Despite efforts to address the staffing shortages in Patrol, SPD declared "Priority Call Handling" status on 225 days last year, meaning the department delivered a reduced level of 911 services for at least part of the day because on-street resources from one or more precincts were below minimum required staffing levels. Under this circumstance, certain categories of callers are requested to re-contact SPD and given an approximate time when routine services will be restored. Additionally, 911 response times have been increasing steadily over the last year.