



Fremont City California

Council Staff Report 5254

COUNCILMEMBER SALWAN REFERRAL: Proposal for Addressing Retention and Staffing Challenges in the Fremont Police Department

Information

Department:	City Council	Sponsors:
Category:	Council Referrals & Appointments	

Attachments

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Item Discussion

Councilmember Salwan Referral: Proposal for Addressing Retention and Staffing Challenges in the Fremont Police Department.

Purpose: To submit a City Council referral aimed at addressing the current staffing crisis within the Fremont Police Department by improving officer retention, enhancing officer recruitment efforts, and boosting police officer morale. This proposal outlines three key actions for the City Council's consideration and approval.

Body

Background:

The Fremont Police Department is facing significant staffing challenges, resulting in a critical shortage of officers. We have struggled to recruit and retain enough officers to adequately serve our large city. Currently, there are approximately 35 vacancies, with numbers fluctuating daily due to retirements and new hires. This shortage has negatively impacted public safety services, and placed unsustainable overtime demands on the remaining officers.

Public safety is one of the top three priorities for the City of Fremont and is a top issue of concern for our residents. To ensure that the Fremont Police Department can continue to effectively serve our growing city, it is essential to focus on:

1. *Recruitment:* Hiring more Police Officers
2. *Retention:* Retaining Police Officers and improving morale and working conditions
3. *Funding the Police Department:* Increased funding of the Police Department to fight crime.

The following proposal has been developed to achieve these goals.

Proposal:

1. Base Wage Rate Increase:

- Recommendation: Approve a 2% increase to the base wage rate for all classifications represented by the Fremont Police Association (FPA). This salary increase shall be effective the pay period following the enactment of this referral.
- Rationale: This increase is necessary to address the staffing crisis, reduce the burden of mandatory overtime, and make Fremont a more attractive workplace for current and prospective officers.

2. **Revised Educational Incentive Pay so it complies with PERS rules:**

- Recommendation: Amend Section 18.1 and 18.3 of the Fremont Police Association Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to comply with CalPERS requirements. The revision will ensure Educational Incentive Pay (EIP) counts towards employees' pensions, which was the original intent of council, and will not increase the City's contribution to CalPERS.
- Section 18.1 of the FPA MOU should be amended through the below revisions noted:
 - 18.1 A regular employee who attains one of the educational standards in one of the levels listed below in addition to the requirements of the job classification, shall receive an additional amount of the regular base salary as Educational Incentive Pay (EIP), provided that the particular educational standard is in a field directly related to the employee's job.
- Section 18.3 of the FPA MOU should be amended through the below revisions noted:
 - The above educational standards are not cumulative for determination of the percentage.
- Rationale: Aligning the MOU with CalPERS requirements reflects the city council's previous intent of EIP and preserving educational incentives will support officer retention and professional development.

3. **Temporary Patrol Overtime Rate Increase:**

- Recommendation: Implement a temporary policy that compensates officers at double their regular pay rate for mandatory patrol overtime required to meet minimum staffing levels. This compensation will apply in cases of holdovers, early ins, mandatory patrol overtime implemented under FPD's Mandatory Overtime Policy, and special events. The policy will remain in effect until the Patrol Division reaches at least 78 deployable officers assigned to the Community Policing Patrol Team (Patrol) and the elimination of Mandatory (Patrol) Overtime as determined by the Chief of Police. In maintaining 78 deployable officers on Patrol, the city council can ensure that services to the community are sustainable, even with two officers on every shift being sick, injured, or on vacation. This policy will be established through the side letter. The program will sunset as described above.
- Rationale: Some of our officers are overworked and forced to work overtime shifts due to staffing shortages. The temporary increase in overtime pay is crucial to address immediate staffing needs, alleviate the burden on current officers, and ensure services to the community are sustainable. *This measure is specifically intended to fill mandated minimum staffing levels and is not applicable to voluntary overtime worked for report writing, investigations, or call-outs. It is a temporary solution until staffing is adequately stabilized.*

Document Comments

Requested Action:

Councilmembers are asked to consider and approve this proposal to address the urgent retention and recruitment challenges faced by the Fremont Police Department. These measures are crucial for ensuring that the department can continue to provide the level of public safety that the residents of Fremont expect and deserve.

As we take steps to support the Fremont Police Department and its officers, I am hopeful that the Fremont Police Association will also take proactive measures to improve morale within the department and assist with the critical tasks of recruitment and retention. Working together, we can ensure a strong and committed police force that effectively serves our community.

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