



Police Department

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August 5, 2022 – Message from Police Chief Sean Washington Regarding Staffing and Recruitment Efforts

Dear Fremont Community,

I would like to give an update on the Department's current staffing and recruitment efforts as well as the temporary operational and administrative adjustments we've put in place to continue providing the highest level of service possible to this great community.

As you may know, the law enforcement profession continues to have difficulty recruiting and retaining staff. In addition to anticipated retirements, the impact of social/political unrest and most recently the impacts of the "Great Resignation" have severely affected the recruitment and retention efforts of police professionals across the nation, including here in Fremont. In fact, [an early 2021 survey](#) conducted by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) revealed that the typical hiring rate of police officers nationwide fell by 5% while resignation and retirement rates increased by 18% and 45%, respectively. Exacerbating our staffing situation is the ongoing impact of COVID and non-deployable officers due to job-related injuries.

To date, Fremont PD has **181 authorized sworn positions filled out of 202**. In the 2021-2022 fiscal year, we **hired 21 police officers**, which is believed to be the second highest number of hires in our Department's history. Currently, we have approximately fifteen newly hired officers in training.

Despite these encouraging numbers, it's been necessary to implement temporary, creative, and alternative staffing models to address the community's top three service demands: violent crime, property crime, and homeless-related concerns. To this end, it is imperative that the Patrol Division has adequate staffing to respond to these calls for service.

By necessity, we recently held several vacant internal investigative specialty assignments. In addition, several weeks ago, we asked four traffic officers to transition to a "hybrid" model. This model allows traffic officers to continue to conduct traffic enforcement and investigations in their discretionary time and support patrol with daily calls for service. To support the hybrid officers, the remaining Traffic Unit personnel, and our ongoing traffic safety objectives, we authorized patrol officers to work overtime and assist with enforcement and investigations.

The Department is working on a more ideal, longer-term sustainable staffing solution to address various law enforcement service objectives. We recently developed and are in the process of finalizing a comprehensive mandatory overtime staffing plan requiring sergeants and officers to work an additional shift a month. Despite these temporary staffing challenges, our officers continue to investigate, apprehend, and bring to justice those causing harm to our community.

Recruitment and Retention Efforts

Our Department's Personnel Unit is working exceptionally hard to identify innovative and unique recruitment and retention ideas to keep our Agency competitive in the market. Recently, the Fremont Police Association, consisting of sergeants and officers, negotiated a compensation package (17% increase over three years) that keeps members of FPD very competitive with other regional agencies.



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Some additional initiatives include:

- Re-establishing a \$1,500 referral incentive program for police officers and police sergeants
- Marketing our fantastic benefits, including the unique patrol schedule (four days on and four days off), a vigorous professional development and training program, a robust wellness program including a consultation with a fitness specialist and Police Chaplain, and access to the best equipment and latest technology available.
- Committing to the [30 X 30 Initiative](#), which affirms our decision to support, recruit, and hire women into the law enforcement profession.
- Identifying funds to purchase a recruitment vehicle used to travel and recruit throughout our state and beyond.
- Recently, additional funds were approved, increasing the budget earmarked for our department's advertising, messaging, and recruitment efforts.

I am optimistic that our temporary staffing situation will improve over time, and we will continue to do all we can to recruit and hire competent staff to serve this community. If you know someone who might be interested in the law enforcement profession, believe their service would meet or exceed expectations, and are motivated to join one of the finest police agencies in the state, please encourage them to [apply today!](#)

Throughout the global pandemic and even with increased staffing challenges in our organization, I remain incredibly proud of the members of our Department as they continue to work hard to protect and deliver exceptional service to our community. I look forward to continuing our Department's long-standing history as a leader in policing.

Sincerely,

Chief Sean Washington