

Memo on Proposed Employee Referral Plan

To: Maria Valdez, City Police Commissioner
From: Samuel Jones, Director of Human Resources
Date: February 2, 2012
Re: Proposed Employee Referral Plan for City Police Department
Status: **APPROVED**

It is increasingly difficult to attract high-potential candidates for the entry-level position of police officer (police officer I). The shortage of qualified job candidates is due to several factors:

- Our state has one of the highest overall cost-of-living indices in the nation.
- Our state imposes high rates of income, property, and sales taxes on residents.
- Our state's overall job outlook—our city's police department notwithstanding—is poor.
- The climate is intemperate, with cold, harsh winters and warm summers.
- Tuition fees for private and public colleges and universities are among the highest in the nation.

Consequently, our state has one of the highest rates of out-migration in the nation. People in all age categories are moving out of the state to take up residence in the southeastern or southwestern United States. Many young people are choosing to find jobs or attend college out of state; poor job prospects, climate, and a high cost of living discourage many from returning. This has made finding qualified job candidates in the local labor market challenging.

Unfortunately, our need to recruit entry-level police has never been greater. The average age of current officers is 45. Within the next five years, 24% of the current force will be eligible for retirement, and allowing for promotion from within (required by our union contract with the officer's union), one quarter of the current force will have to be replaced. This demographic statistic does not account for additional factors that may increase voluntary and involuntary termination of officers, such as relocation, illness or death.

To address the shortfall of qualified entry-level police officers, I suggest immediate implementation of an employee referral policy. In accordance with this policy, any employee who refers a successful police officer I candidate will receive \$1500.00, to be paid as follows: one \$250.00 payment will be disbursed when the police officer candidate accepts the job offer; one \$250.00 payment will be disbursed when the police officer candidate successfully completes the 12-week training program at the police academy; and the remaining \$1000.00 payment will be disbursed after the police officer completes the first year of active duty. This policy offers several advantages for officer recruitment, selection, and onboarding:

- Employees will help the human resource department identify qualified candidates in the local region or those outside the region who are interested in returning or relocating.
- Employees are motivated to recommend only motivated, high-potential job candidates.
- Employees are motivated to assist the new officers throughout the training and orientation process to ensure their success.
- Retention of new police officers should increase with only a modest payment of \$1500.00 per candidate.

In my opinion, these benefits far outweigh the modest cost of the employee referral program for new city police officers.