

SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2027



SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT

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SAFETY • TRUST • EXCELLENCE

A note from the Chief of Police

Building on a Strong Foundation

The Salem Police Department enters this next three-year strategic plan with a clear sense of purpose and a strong foundation. Our last plan introduced the guiding philosophy of principled and smarter policing, emphasizing the evidence-based strategies that define what we do and how we do it, alongside the integrity, character, and trust that define who we are and why we serve. That framework has guided our department through meaningful progress in safety, legitimacy, and excellence, and it remains an enduring part of our culture.

Continuity and Progress

This new plan represents not a departure, but a deliberate building upon past work. It reflects the lessons learned over the past three years, the feedback of our employees and community, and the values that continue to ground us. Just as the last plan aligned with best practices and incorporated recommendations from the 2020 Community Engagement Assessment, this plan draws on research, data, and ongoing community input to keep us accountable and responsive.

Our Path Forward

Our mission remains unchanged: to provide superior service to keep Salem safe while enhancing trust. This plan renews our focus on three strategic priorities:

- **Safety** — Protecting both community members and employees by reducing violent crime, addressing serious traffic collisions, and supporting overall well-being.
- **Trust** — Deepening legitimacy by strengthening relationships, practicing procedural justice, and ensuring transparency in our decisions and actions.
- **Excellence** — Continuing our commitment to learning, innovation, and professionalism so we that serve with consistency and distinction.

Shared Commitment

This document represents more than a plan; it is a public commitment to progress and accountability. By aligning our daily efforts with long-term goals, we will build on the progress already made while adapting to the evolving needs of our community. Together—with the dedication of our employees and the trust of the community we serve—we will carry forward the principles of smarter, principled policing into a stronger, safer, and more connected future for Salem.



Trevor W. Womack
CHIEF OF POLICE



Safety—Protecting both community members and employees by reducing violent crime, addressing serious traffic collisions, and supporting overall well-being.

the **SAFETY** *of our community*

Objective

Improve Community Safety

Safety, in partnership with our community, is a core component of the Salem Police Department’s mission. Informed by data and community input, two key initiatives in this strategic priority area emphasize the physical safety of our residents and strive to address increased levels of violent crime and serious traffic collisions.

Initiative One

Community Violence Reduction Initiative

Drawing from [nationally recognized models](#), Salem’s violence reduction initiative focuses on prevention, intervention, and ending cycles of violence for individuals and within neighborhoods. The initiative emphasizes two concurrent and collaborative efforts with criminal justice and community partners, fostering stronger relationships, promoting long-term solutions, and reinforcing the department’s commitment to protecting all residents.



Goal

Fewer fatal and non-fatal injury shootings each year than the previous three-year average.



Strategy One

Reduce the risk of violence in neighborhoods.



Activities

- Focus the right resources in the right areas through collaborative strategic meetings known as Intelligence, Communication, and Planning (ICAP).
- Engage with neighborhood-based stakeholders committed to preventing, intervening in, and ending cycles of violence.
- Align efforts between criminal justice system and community-based partners.



Strategy Two

Reduce the risk of violence for individuals.



Activities

- Focus the right resources on the right people through collaborative strategic meetings known as shooting reviews.
- Align efforts between local, state, and federal criminal justice partners.
- Support other regional violence reduction efforts.
- Directly and respectfully, communicate the choice between the consequences of violence and the availability of genuine support and resources to those at the highest risk.
- Direct enforcement efforts toward those who remain engaged in acts of violence.
- Refer lower-risk individuals to community-based partners for prevention and deflection efforts.



Strategy Three

Provide regular community updates.



Activity

- Leverage in-person and online opportunities—such as community meetings, traditional and social media—to share information about enforcement efforts, violent crime trends, and to highlight partnership successes.

Initiative Two

Reduce Fatal and Injury Collisions

Residents identified traffic safety as a priority. Reducing injury collisions improves a community’s physical safety and livability. In Salem, collisions disproportionately involve pedestrians and bicyclists, with approximately half of fatal collisions involving impaired drivers. Effective traffic safety strategies include focused enforcement efforts, community education and awareness, and environmental considerations such as street design, signage, and lighting.



Goal

Fewer traffic fatalities each year than the previous three-year average.



Strategy One

Conduct focused traffic enforcement.



Activities

- Focus the right resources in the right areas through collaborative strategic meetings known as Intelligence, Communication, and Planning (ICAP) by adding a new traffic safety component.
- Following Salem fatal collision data, actively enforce pedestrian, bicycle, and impaired driving violations in high-risk areas.
- Conduct multi-agency enforcement projects in and around the city in high-risk areas, such as school zones.



Strategy Two

Increase traffic safety education and awareness.



Activities

- Following Salem fatal collision data, promote traffic safety education and awareness targeted toward pedestrians, bicyclists, and impaired driving.
- Increase data-driven deployment of radar speed signs.
- Continue to participate in high-risk driver education with partner organizations.
- Participate in the City of Salem Vision Zero initiative programming.
- Participate in pedestrian safety education with the City of Salem Bloomberg American Health Initiative.
- Support safe modes of travel for students with partner organizations.



Strategy Three

Advocate for traffic engineering safety improvements.



Activity

- Advise and support the City of Salem Public Works Department’s traffic safety and environmental design efforts.



SAFETY



Trust – Deepening legitimacy by strengthening relationships, practicing procedural justice, and ensuring transparency in our decisions and actions.

Building TRUST

with our community

Objective

Community Trust

Building trust with our community is essential for effective policing, and procedural justice is foundational to that work. To maximize organizational effectiveness, the tenets of procedural justice—voice, neutrality, dignity and respect, trustworthiness—must be integrated throughout the department.

Initiative One

A Trust-building Culture

Influencing departmental culture requires attention to policy, practice, training, and performance and accountability measures. More importantly, this is about how we treat our partners and one another—up and down and side to side—within the organization.



Goal

- Integrate procedural justice into everyday interactions through effective policies, practices, training, and performance evaluations and accountability measures.



Strategy One

Further apply procedural justice to policies, practices, and training.



Activities

- Solicit input from the Advisory Council to the Chief and the Community Police Review Board for new or revised policy language impacting police-community trust before finalizing and publishing it for full transparency.
- Apply procedural justice to training plans and post-scenario discussions.



Strategy Two

Further integrate procedural justice into performance expectations and reviews, and accountability measures.



Activities

- Build procedural justice into employee evaluation processes.
- Ensure oversight and accountability processes are procedurally just.

Initiative Two

Community Connections

Effective and efficient policing demands high levels of police-community trust. Engaging, collaborating, and partnering with residents and organizations fosters mutual understanding and improves problem-solving. These intentional efforts lead to smart public safety strategies that best reflect the needs and values of our community.



Goal

Increase staff and community participation in trust-building activities.



Strategy One

Expand community participation in procedural justice class.



Activities

- With different organizations, co-host procedural justice classes throughout the community.
- Incentivize and increase the value of community and officer participation.
- Ensure broad representation of law enforcement perspective and experience.



Strategy Two

Actively engage with our community.



Activities

- Pursue engagement and partnership opportunities with a broad range of community-based organizations to foster transparency, trust, and shared problem-solving.
- Seek participation on boards and advisory groups in support of improved community safety and livability.

Initiative Three

Community Conversations

Police-community trust requires effective communication. Sharing information and listening to our community furthers transparency and mutual understanding.



Goal

Increase transparency and mutual understanding.



Strategy

Proactively share information and invite public feedback through multiple communication platforms.



Activity

- Develop and maintain a structured program that includes regular public reports, social media updates, and meetings to facilitate dialogue between community members and staff.

TRUST



*Excellence – Continuing our commitment to learning,
innovation, and professionalism so we serve with
consistency and distinction.*

In pursuit of
EXCELLENCE

EXCELLENCE

Objective One ***Recruit and Hire*** ***Highly Qualified Candidates***

The department is committed to building a qualified and community-centered workforce. Aligning recruitment practices with the values of collaboration, honor, integrity, and compassion, will cultivate a police force that best serves our community.

Initiative One ***Relationship-based Recruiting***

Attracting high caliber candidates demands engaging, hands-on recruitment strategies that resonate with potential applicants. These efforts, coupled with community collaboration, can create a powerful recruitment engine.



Goal

More sworn officer applications each year than the previous three-year average, striving for a 15% increase overall.



Strategy One

Communicate broadly and effectively.



Activity

- Develop a robust media presence, including targeted advertisements, staff testimonials, and videos showcasing departmental culture, values, and community impact.



Strategy Two

Collaborate with educational institutions.



Activity

- Increase direct connections with students to provide comprehensive, firsthand insights into the profession through career fairs, guest lectures, and expanded internship programs.



Strategy Three

Showcase the benefits of a Salem Police career.



Activity

- Invite potential applicants into behind-the-scenes experiences that increase their interest and understanding, best preparing them as competitive candidates.

Objective Two

Enhance Employee Retention ***and Professional Development***

Investing in the professional growth, well-being, and satisfaction of all employees is crucial for fostering a culture of excellence. By offering ample opportunities for training, career advancement, and wellness support, the department will best ensure the long-term retention of skilled personnel.

Initiative One ***Retention through Wellness***

Acknowledging the physical, mental, and emotional demands of law enforcement, the department will continue expanding safety and wellness programs that support employee well-being. These programs focus on stress reduction, work-life balance, and a supportive workplace culture, increasing retention and service quality.



Goal

Maintain a sworn officer vacancy rate of 5% or less.



Strategy One

Support flexible scheduling.



Activity

- Consider flexible scheduling options that help employees balance professional responsibilities with personal commitments.



Strategy Two

Provide mental, physical, and nutritional support.



Activities

- Offer employees mental resilience and emotional well-being tools and resources, such as additional counseling services, stress management workshops, and peer support groups.
- Organize regular fitness challenges accessible to all fitness levels, fostering a culture of health and wellness within the department.
- Support nutritional wellness by focusing on healthy eating habits, meal planning, and nutrition education; ensure meal vendors provide healthy snack options.



Strategy One

Strengthen mentorship programming.



- Activity**
- Connect new officers to tenured mentors to guide them through their probationary period and ongoing career development. Mentors will also benefit by bolstering their leadership skills and boosting personal fulfillment.



Strategy Two

Empower employee ownership of career trajectories that align with their interests and aspirations.



- Activity**
- Create a comprehensive list of career development pathways that outline specialized training and experiences tailored to each track.



Strategy Three

Cultivate next-level leadership.



- Activity**
- Expose managers to training and experiences that strengthen their leadership skills and prepare them for lateral movement or higher-level positions.

Initiative Two

Organizational Excellence through Employee Development

For the organization to be as efficient and effective as possible, the department must prioritize individual employee development. Continual learning and skill building at the individual level prepares each employee to successfully navigate the evolving law enforcement landscape.



One: Each year, provide more department-sponsored employee development training than the previous three-year average.

Two: Ensure each employee completes at least one professional development activity by the end of the strategic plan period.

Initiative Three

Career Development Projects

Career development opportunities that tap into employees' unique skills and interests foster a greater sense of purpose and commitment to the agency, increasing retention and positive community outcomes.



Goal

Each year, engage at least 10% of employees per division to identify and implement feasible new employee-interest projects that benefit community safety.



Strategy

Identify, vet, and implement feasible projects.



- Activities**
- Create a project identification and vetting process.
 - Create a learning platform of resources, tips, and best practices.
 - Recognize successful projects and achievements.

EXCELLENCE

2025-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

the
SAFETY *of our community*

Building
TRUST *with our community*

In pursuit of
EXCELLENCE

MISSION

To provide superior service to keep Salem safe while enhancing trust.

VISION

To be a model for 21st-century policing using effective, innovative, community-informed approaches toward improved safety.

VALUES

Collaboration
Honor
Integrity
Compassion