

Salem Police Department Year-end Program Updates | Dec. 12, 2022

The Salem Police Department's overarching policing philosophy rests upon the dual pillars of *Principled Policing* and *Smarter Policing*. This philosophy serves to improve safety and quality of life while building and maintaining trust between police and our community. The department is working to turn that philosophy into meaningful, practical work.

With input from our community, staff spent 2021 developing the department's [2022-2024 Strategic Plan](#). The plan aligns our efforts according to three strategic priorities:

- *Safety* – Keeping our community and staff safe
- *Legitimacy* – Ensuring those we serve view us as competent, capable, effective, and trustworthy
- *Excellence* – Pursuing the highest levels of professionalism and performance as a forward-thinking, learning organization

This year, the department invested time building out the various strategies, objectives, and initiatives that will move us forward under each of the three strategic priorities listed above. More work is underway to fully develop the specific metrics needed for tracking and accountability.

Our work also directly supports the City's strategic plan and the Council's desired outcomes. This report outlines the programs and initiatives which dovetail Council Priorities, such as *Building Great Neighborhoods*, *Increasing Equitable Delivery of City Services*, *Creating Community Resilience*, and *Addressing Homelessness*.

We also recognize and share in the increased concern about crime and the continued critical concern around homelessness as reflected in the City's most recent community survey. Effectively preventing, intervening, and solving crime are core safety functions and remain top priorities. Details concerning several efforts the department is exploring to abate issues in areas around the city are included in this report. Additionally, as a key stakeholder in the City's work to address homelessness, we are focused upon ensuring the safety of all involved, convening partners, and connecting individuals to services. Our stated approach is to, "support collaborative efforts to prevent or otherwise make homelessness a rare, brief, and nonrecurring experience, while ensuring the safety of all involved." (Salem Police 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, p. 7)

At the same time, the department is experiencing substantial organizational change including the transition of all three deputy chief positions (executive-level leadership) and multiple mid-management level positions. Leadership development and succession planning efforts are underway while also supporting our staff through the change process.

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The department's limited personnel resources remain a concern and are hampering progress. Substantial staffing needs were identified in both the independent [2020 community engagement assessment](#) and [2021 staffing study](#). Over the past decade, increased workloads without commensurate staffing increases have diminished the ability to provide adequate emergency patrol response and investigate crime, our core functions, while also severely limiting our capacity for community engagement and trust-building efforts.


While the department is implementing multiple efficiency measures, including last year's reassignment of several officers from special assignments to patrol, a restructuring of patrol shifts for 2023, and continued adjustments to in-person, non-emergency call response, the need for additional sworn and non-sworn positions remains. We are beyond solving staffing issues with efficiency measures. Without additional personnel resources, continued adjustments to service levels are required.

Compounding the resource issues are immediate challenges related to hiring and retention. In Salem and across the nation police departments are experiencing a reduction in qualified applicants coupled with increased retirements and separations. The department must remain highly competitive in the market to attract and retain a qualified and diverse workforce.

The following general updates are provided for information and awareness. Each is organized under associated areas of City Council priorities and the Salem Police Strategic Plan.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Homeless Services Team in collaboration with the City of Salem Outreach and Services Team

SALEM CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addressing the Issue of Homelessness• Creating Community Resilience• Increasing Equitable Delivery of Service• Building Great Neighborhoods
SALEM POLICE 2022-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety Enhance Community Livability (p. 7)• Safety Increase Community Safety (p. 9) 

The department has two police officers dedicated to the City of Salem Outreach and Services team (SOS). The SOS is continuing daily outreach with unsheltered community members to connect them with services and shelter. Relationship-building

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through regular communication increases the chances individuals will connect with available services, and the two assigned Homeless Services Team (HST) officers do exactly that. The team's efforts also help keep conditions safer, cleaner, and healthier.

The two HST officers began this assignment June 2022. Both are senior officers with extensive experience and training in all areas of law enforcement, including de-escalation, crisis intervention, mediation, problem-solving, and trauma-informed practices.

HST partners with City departments and social service providers to address safety issues at unmanaged camps, while also respectfully providing support and referrals to those living outdoors. HST is present during times when larger cleanings occur to ensure the safety of everyone present. At times, HST will also coordinate with the Oregon Department of Transportation on state-owned property within the city which is affected by unmanaged camping.

HST's daily work includes responding to online complaints of camping on private and City-owned property, regularly visiting areas prone to complaints, such as Cascades Gateway Park (and other large, urban parks), and ensuring areas around managed micro-shelter communities remain clean and safe. HST coordinates their efforts and works closely with the SOS team to avoid duplication and increase their effectiveness in covering all areas of the city.

The priority of HST is not enforcement or statistic-driven but is focused on building relationships with both the unsheltered community and the various local service provider organizations. Developing relationships can build trust in the police to encourage the reporting of crimes which, in turn, can reduce victimizations within unmanaged campsites. Arrest is always a last resort and in limited situations. Rather, the goal is connection to services and deflection from the criminal justice system.

The department also acts as a convener for partner service providers. Open communication and a greater sense of partnership allows for open and honest dialogue and a greater coordinated effort to provide resources for those most in need. Monthly meetings between the police and service providers creates the space for that communication and provides an opportunity for both entities to share information related to program updates, discuss program needs, and share ideas on how we can better partner to serve the needs of the unsheltered.

During the past five months, there have been many success stories related to the collaborative work between HST, SOS, and local service providers. These stories include assisting individuals with obtaining food, gas for vehicles, clean clothes, or drug and alcohol treatment appointments. For others, it was identifying barriers to services and addressing them, such as attending court to remove warrants or connecting

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individuals on wait lists with the appropriate service providers, so they did not lose the service they were anticipating.

The graphic below reflects the HST duo's work between June and October. HST officers track camp locations, visiting sites used repeatedly and those which develop in new spots. It should be noted, referrals are tracked based on connecting an individual with a resource. Not every individual contacted is willing to accept a referral and at times there are no services available for a particular individual need. Thus, there is a difference between the number of individuals contacted and the number of referrals provided.



Mobile Crisis Response Team

The added HST officers also complement the work done by the department's Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT). MCRT is a long-established department program which partners a police officer and a qualified mental health professional to respond to calls within Marion County involving individuals in active mental health crisis yet may also include potential safety issues such as displaying aggressive actions or possessing weapons. Together the two find positive alternatives to arrest and assist in stabilizing individuals in crisis, as well as connecting them to resources and case management.

Marion County Health and Human Services has also secured funding to create additional non-law enforcement crisis response teams. Coordination and cooperation between these various forms of crisis response improves the quality, timeliness, and capacity of services for those experiencing behavioral health crisis in our community.

Intelligence-led Policing

SALEM CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating Community Resilience• Increasing Equitable Delivery of Service• Building Great Neighborhoods
SALEM POLICE 2022-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety Enhance Community Livability, p. 8• Safety Increase Community Safety, p. 9• Legitimacy Communicate with Those We Serve, p. 15• Excellence Increased Efficiency & Effectiveness, p. 17

Cross-boundary collaboration and highly focused departmental resources are key to efficient and effective policing, especially when personnel resources are stretched thin. That approach necessarily demands well-informed, data-driven decision making—factors specifically called out with the department’s strategic plan.

Staff are developing management structures supportive of this decision-making process, including the creation of area-based risk reduction strategy meetings dubbed *intelligence, communication, and planning*. The work is an evolution and improvement upon *hot spot policing* ideas of the past, in that the strategy intentionally includes strong community engagement and collaboration alongside more traditional law enforcement approaches.

Intelligence, Communication, and Planning (ICAP)

The Salem Police Department ICAP strategy is to reduce crime and improve quality of life while increasing engagement and trust with the community. The new effort uses a data-driven and intelligence-led approach to focus departmental resources within relatively small, geographic areas identified as at greater risk for crime. Risk is determined using objective computer forecasting models along with first-hand police officer awareness and experience.



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The strategy utilizes the foundational elements of [procedural justice](#) which emphasizes building community trust in addition to well-balanced enforcement efforts. The strategy is also research and evidence-based with results continually tracked and evaluated for effectiveness and improvement thereby creating a cycle of learning and informed decision-making.

Monthly ICAP meetings bring together department managers and other City stakeholders around three primary objectives:

- Putting into action the department's focused strategy
- Ensuring departmental accountability to the strategic plan
- Discussing other pertinent departmental updates and information

Categories of crime are reviewed each month. Recent statistics are reviewed and compared to the previous year to determine which category should be the focus for the upcoming reporting period. Examples of previous categories have been livability crimes, traffic safety, and violence.

Once a category is selected, related data helps determine what area(s) in the city is at highest risk for those incidents. Based upon data and human intelligence, two focus locations are selected.

All department sections—from field operations to investigations, traffic team to graffiti abatement, community engagement staff to volunteer coordinator—offer and are assigned deliverables for their plan to lower risk of crime within the geographic focus areas. Deliverables include dual efforts to pinpoint resources and engage with the community. At the conclusion of the reporting period, each section reports their activities and results are reviewed during the follow meeting.

The department's Intelligence Support Unit completes a review at the end of the reporting period, typically about 30 days, to determine the level of impact within focus areas. The process is then repeated monthly to assess long-term impacts and needed adjustments.

With additional resources, ICAP is expandable. Our vision is to apply this framework within all six policing districts as staffing levels increase and in support of a more advanced policing strategy. We are laying the foundation for our 21st-century policing model and the effective and efficient use of future resources.

Body Worn Camera Program

SALEM CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:

• Increasing Equitable Delivery of Services

**SALEM POLICE
2022-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN:**

• Legitimacy | [Structure the Organization Around Trust, p. 12](#)



The department's first body-worn and in-car camera program was funded in July 2021. The program is supported by both the community and Salem Police managers and police officers. After months of necessary planning and preparation, full adoption demonstrates a commitment to transparency and is consistent with objectives outlined in the department's strategic plan.

Policy Development

The department consulted the City's Legal, Information Technology (IT) and Human Resources Departments, the Marion and Polk County District Attorney's Offices, Salem Police Employee's Union (SPEU), and convened internal discussions with command staff to develop a [body-worn camera policy](#). To ensure a community perspective, the policy was also discussed with the Advisory Council to the Chief.

Vendor Selection

After an initial cursory review of various body-worn camera and in-car camera systems, three vendors were selected for full-product evaluation: Axon, Getac, and Motorola.

The team of systems evaluators comprised SPEU leadership, patrol officers and staff from other units, and IT representatives. Evaluations included a presentation of system capabilities by each vendor with 30-days of in-field use by staff. Evaluators conducted testing scenarios to stress the capabilities of each system (hardware, software, and equipment) and ranked various performance measures. Following the assessment period, and in consideration of costs and authorized budget, the Motorola Watchguard system was chosen.

Camera System Budget

In FY22, the department was granted budget authorization for approximately \$400,000 in annual camera system costs, which includes software, hardware, and associated equipment. The initial budget authorization is funded for two years. Thus, ongoing funding must be identified for the program to continue.

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Each vendor provided a quote for software, hardware, and associated equipment, to include 193 body-worn camera systems, 60 in-car video systems. Motorola provided the lowest quote at \$324,069 (average annual cost over five-year contract).

Regardless of vendor, there will likely be some additional costs associated with program management, such as evidence systems integration, approximated at a one-time \$25,000 cost, and an annual LTE (wireless broadband connectivity) Verizon service cost, approximated at \$35,000.

Program-related Staffing

New staff positions funded to support the body-worn camera program include two (2) Property & Evidence Technicians, one (1) Records Technician, and one (1) Information Technology Support Analyst. Three of the four positions have so far been filled.

Police Legitimacy

SALEM CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating Community Resilience• Increasing Equitable Delivery of Services• Building Great Neighborhoods
SALEM POLICE 2022-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legitimacy Structure the Organization Around Trust, p. 12• Legitimacy Community Engagement & Inclusion, p. 12• Legitimacy Communicate with Those We Serve, p. 15• Legitimacy Increase Transparency, Information-sharing & Communication, p. 14• Legitimacy Community Engagement & Inclusion, p. 15

The department's [trust building plan](#) is well underway with the concepts of procedural justice at its core. Other important components include the Advisory Council to the Chief and a project to review and update all departmental directives and policies.

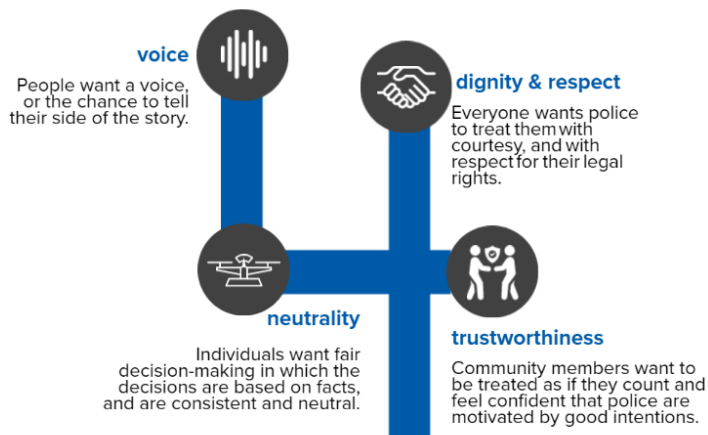
Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is an evidence-based approach toward increasing police-community trust. Procedural justice involves active listening, demonstrating neutrality in decision-making, treating people with dignity and respect, and acting in trustworthy ways. These commonsense standards are often referred to as the four tenets of procedural justice.

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SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT

PROCEDURAL JUSTICE TENETS



Police legitimacy means that the community views your organization as trustworthy, as capable, as qualified and skilled, effective. That's legitimacy in the eyes of the community.

— Salem Police Chief Trevor Womack

The procedural justice program began in September 2021 with a train-the-trainer class to develop in-house procedural justice instructors. The new team of procedural justice instructors, in turn, provided initial training to all staff in early 2022. Procedural justice instructor training was provided by retired police captain Scott Meadors. Captain Meadors was directly involved with the [National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice](#) and has extensive experience working with various police agencies and communities across the nation in trust building and procedural justice. In collaboration with department staff, Captain Meadors helped to tailor the core curriculum for Salem.

Objectives of the procedural justice training program include:

- Provide basic procedural justice training to each new employee
- Provide continued, further-developed training for all staff
- Include the community
- Incorporate an implicit bias training module

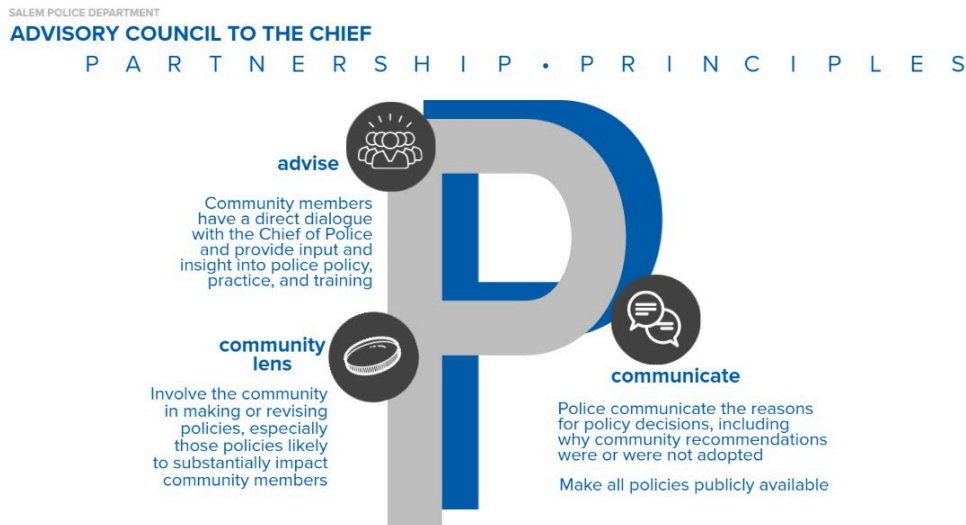
The procedural justice program is led by a police sergeant who oversees the trainers and curriculum. All employees participated in the course during annual in-service training at the start of this year. New officers also receive the training. Future modules of procedural justice training for staff will continue in the same fashion. In partnership with the Advisory Council to the Chief, community members have participated in training sessions alongside sworn officers. The effort is an example of the work to bring police and community together for increased shared understanding.

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Implicit bias curriculum is now being developed and incorporated into the next iteration of procedural justice training, which will be administered to all staff during the first quarter of 2023.

Advisory Council to the Chief

While getting to know the community better, Chief Womack met with hundreds of community members in various settings throughout 2021. Several connections made resulted in the creation of an informal advisory group in July of 2021 known as the Advisory Council to the Chief (ACC). Members represent a cross-section of our community with diversity of thought, perspective and lived experience. With procedural justice as a guiding principle, the ACC provides a community voice to help inform decisions related to police policy, practice, and training.



Current ACC members are:

Alexia Rodriguez, student
Ann Maria Omwere, language services
Rabbi Avrohom Perlstein, faith community
Fabiola Camacho, community connector
Hanneke Crumley, education
Kathleen Jonathan, community resource specialist
Ken Romig, local non-profit board

Jayden Jones, business owner
Levi Herrera-Lopez, community advocate
Quandray Robertson, business owner
Ramon Ramillosa, local non-profit board
Robert Do, northeast Salem resident
Rod Berg, faith community
Suzanne McKenna, downtown Salem resident

In 2022, the ACC convened five times. Meeting dates and primary agenda topics are listed below.

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- January 28: Procedural justice training for police employees • Listening sessions with Chief Womack • ACC Partnership Principles • Follow-up on the Body-Worn Camera Program
- March 25: Salem Police 2022-2024 Strategic Plan • Professional standards overview • Incorporating ACC feedback into review of department policing • Protocols for incidents of officer deadly use of force
- June 3: Procedural justice training for ACC with SPD officers
- August 26: Organizational transitions • Reflections on the procedural justice and legitimacy training
- November 4: Crowd management and overview of police policy, equipment, and training

In 2023, ACC meetings will increase in frequency as we explore various formal policies which directly impact police-community trust. These meetings will also provide more opportunity for relationship-building between ACC members and police upper management, as a different command staff member will present information and facilitate discussion.

Policy Review and Update

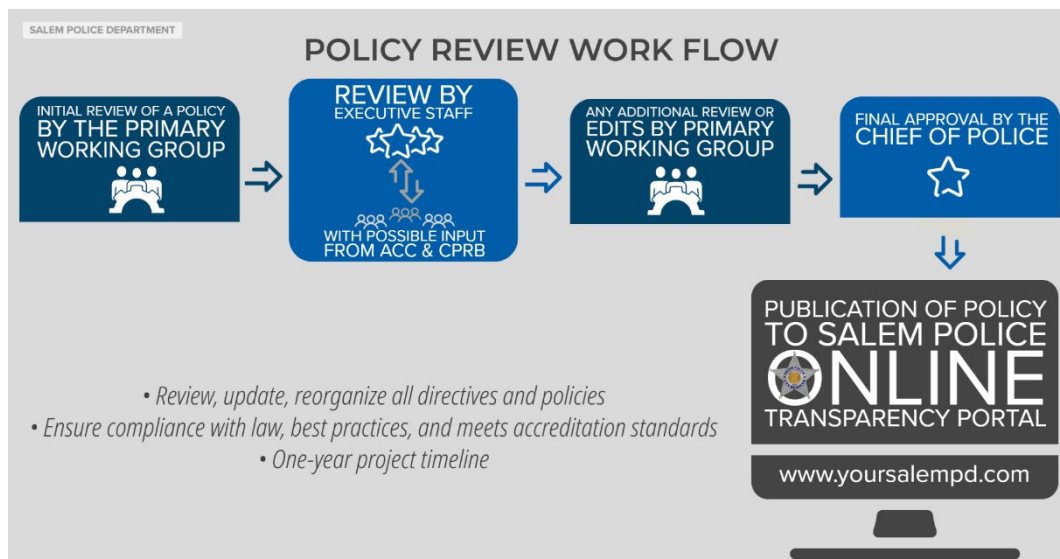
Providing clear direction for staff and strong accountability measures are fundamental to a project underway to review, update, and reorganize all 177 departmental directives and policies. The review will ensure the department's policies comply with state and federal laws, reflect recognized best practices, meet all accreditation standards through Oregon Accreditation Alliance, and support increased transparency.

[Lexipol](#), a nationally recognized leader in providing support and review of law enforcement policy, procedure, and training has been contracted for the project. A Lexipol project manager has been assigned to help facilitate the process and help staff achieve a 12-month timeline.

A policy review committee consisting of police department staff and representatives from the Human Resources and Legal Departments has also been formed.

The committee meets weekly to review each policy, ensure reviews by subject matter experts, and incorporate any needed changes into updated draft policies. Police staff will assist the committee as needed for policies and directives that may involve their area of expertise or supervision. For policies that directly impact our community, the department is exploring ways to give the community a voice in the review process, including possibly presenting updated draft policies to the Advisory Council to the Chief and the Community Police Review Board.

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Final steps involve review and approval by the Chief's Office and publicly posting finished policies via the Salem Police [Transparency Portal](#). This will be the first time Salem policies have been made available to the public online.

Accountability

The department is taking steps to increase accountability. These include renaming Internal Affairs to Professional Standards Unit (PSU), sending investigators to additional professional standards training, and doubling our capacity to conduct administrative investigations by adding a second PSU sergeant. Previously, some investigations were conducted by the involved employee's supervisor and manager. Those investigations are now conducted by PSU, improving quality, timeliness, and objectivity. The change also allows more time for patrol sergeants to provide active supervision in the field and team building.

Future plans include the development of quarterly and annual use of force reports, which will be presented to the Community Police Review Board and made publicly available online.

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Hiring and Retention

SALEM CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	• Increasing Equitable Delivery of Services
SALEM POLICE 2022-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN:	• Excellence Enhance Recruiting & Hiring Efforts • Legitimacy Community Engagement & Inclusion



Combined hiring and retention challenges continue for the department. At present we are authorized for 193 sworn officer positions, increasing to 199 in January 2023. The numbers, however, contrast with a sworn officer vacancy rate approaching, and projected to surpass 10%.

Over the past two years, 44 sworn officers have departed the agency, which represents 22% of the authorized 193 sworn officer positions. This is more than double the annual average of separation for the three years prior. The number of entry level applicants has dropped significantly in the last four years, going from 200 applicants in the second quarter 2020 to 39 in our latest November 2022 recruitment—evidence of an extremely competitive job market.

The continual battle between employee departure and hiring requires the department to invest substantially in hiring, recruiting, and retention efforts.

Recruitment Strategy

We are refreshing the department’s recruitment strategy with an emphasis on diversity of thought, perspective, and lived experience. We are including community members as part of the process (participation in hiring interview panels, assistance with recruiting new staff), conducting exit interviews to better understand perspectives of employees leaving employment, and creating an organizational culture wherein everyone is a recruiter.

Near-term and longer-term strategies are underway and expanding.

Near-term recruiting focuses upon attracting an immediately qualified, diverse applicant pool from across the nation and here locally to include current-certified police officers (laterals) from other jurisdictions.

Longer-term, we seek to engage and attract future applicants from within our own community by establishing career pathways with existing programs and exploring potential new partnerships, such as Western Oregon University’s criminal justice and athletics programs and Salem-Keizer Public School’s [Career Technical Education Center](#).

A snapshot of current and developing recruitment initiatives is included below.

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2021-2022 Efforts

Hiring Bonuses: Hiring bonuses to attract lateral applicants were a temporary measure authorized by the state legislature and have since expired.

Relationships and Branding: Actively connect with applicants to build and maintain relationships throughout hiring process. The new police station is also used as a branding feature, noting the facility's modern design, expanded training capacity, efficient workflow, and fitness amenities.

Streamline Hiring Process: Entire hiring process was reduced from five to six months down to four months, reducing the likelihood of losing qualified applicants to other job opportunities during our process.

Recruiting Events: Participated in 18 recruiting events since April 2022.

Reflecting the Community we Serve: We have made strides in changing the composition of our officer workforce. In the past two years, the racial and ethnic makeup of our personnel has grown. In that same time frame, we have also increased the number of female officers.

Employee Wellness: A focus on wellness promotes employee retention and projects a healthy culture for potential applicants.

2023-2025 Near-term Efforts

Rehire Incentives: Established a new re-hire program allowing for newly retired officers to return to temporarily fill vacant positions.

Marketing Campaign: Consider budget authority to hire a marketing agency that offers a diverse set of strategies to attract qualified applicants within the current competitive hiring market.

Develop Career Pathways: Expanded presence in regional colleges and within Salem-Keizer Public Schools via the Career Technical Education Center.

Hiring Objectives: Best projections indicate the need to hire 22 sworn officers per year to cover annual attrition and fill all vacancies by 2026. Retention must also remain a priority. Seek budget authority for several new full-time non-sworn Community Service Officers (CSO) to compliment and expand existing part-time CSO staff.

2023-2025 Longer-term Efforts

Expansion of Cadet and Internship Programs: Dedicated training for college students who show an interest in becoming a police officer through internship and practicum

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experience. Leverage current Cadet Program (ages 16-21) and create a new Explorer Program (ages 12 to 15).

Remain Competitive in the Marketplace: Salary and benefit packages matching or surpassing comparable agencies helps to retain existing staff while attracting qualified applicants and preventing their loss to other agencies prior to completing our hiring process.

Dedicated Department Recruiter: Seek to create a fully dedicated recruiter, able to solely focus on recruiting strategies.

Equitable Career Development Opportunities: A new leadership development program will provide directed training and operational experiences to improve skillsets and retain existing staff.

Legitimacy: The department is becoming known as a leader within the region and state regarding procedural justice training and implementation. Department-wide training in 2023 will focus on instilling a recruiting culture through the department, creating ambassadors proud to recruit others into the Salem Police Department.