

# EMPLOYEE VACANCY RATES AND CITYWIDE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION EFFORTS (AB 2561)

May 12, 2026



# LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

- AB 2561 (effective Jan 1, 2025) amended the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act to require public agencies to annually report on vacancies, and recruitment and retention efforts, prior to budget adoption.
- Legislative Intent:
  - High job vacancies are a widespread and significant problem that impact public service delivery, with understaffing leading to burnout and increased turnover that further exacerbate staffing challenges
  - Statewide interest in ensuring that public agency operations are appropriately staffed



# LABOR MARKET TRENDS

- Retirement/resignation wave and lower interest in public employment driving a “job seekers market”
- Historic inflation resulted in higher salary adjustments in competitor agencies for several years
- Competing for talent in a challenging market, especially for difficult to fill positions (e.g. Police Officer, engineering, accounting)
- In response, some agencies offering large bonuses (up to \$100,000) and salary increases (15% in one year), especially for Police Officers



# RECRUITMENT & HIRING TRENDS

- Annual positions filled has been over the past four years, which represents approximately 20% of total FTE staffing annually.
- Nearly 50% of City employees have been with the City for 4 years or less
- Increased number of positions filled, as well as internal promotions and appointments
- Time-to-Recruit (Position opening until candidates referred to hiring manager) dropped from 82 to 30 days (between FY20 to FY25)



# RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

- NEOGOV system implemented (2020) to streamline recruitment and applicant tracking
- Candidate pipeline programs: Office Assistant Pool, Fire Apprentices, Police Intern and Explorer
- Additional part-time HR staffing dedicated to recruitment oversight
- Consolidated testing and increased efficiencies, such as scheduled monthly testing for Police Officer (written and PAT), and more job-related recruitment exams (e.g. performance exams for Maintenance Workers)



# RECRUITMENT & RETENTION EFFORTS

- Council previously enhanced recruitment bonuses for Police Officer and hard-to-fill positions, and referral bonus for employees who refer Police Officers
- Wellness perks: Calm app, fitness memberships, additional holidays
- Negotiated increases to support both recruitment and retention
  - Prior retention incentives approved by City Council
  - Competitive labor agreements authorized



# VACANCY RATES

- The City currently budgets a 6% vacancy factor, which means that an assumes there will be at least an average of 6% vacancies Citywide at any time.
- Vacancy Rate = Positions Filled/Positions budgeted
- Vacancy rates can be broken down by bargaining unit, or department
- *Police Academy Trainee are for the purpose of eventually filling sworn Police Officer positions, but are not included in calculated vacancy rates. These employees therefore do not reduce the vacancy rate for either POA or Teamsters and do not reduce the vacancy rate for the Police Department as a whole*



# VACANCY RATES BY BARGAINING UNIT

Employee Group	Budgeted	Filled	Vacancies	Vacancy Rate
Unrepresented Employees	31	26	5	16.1%
Firefighters Association (MBFA)	30	28	2	6.7%
Mid Mgmt. Association (MBMEA)	59	51	8	14.8%
Police Mgmt. Association (PMA)	7	7	0	0.0%
Police Officer Association (POA)**	64	58	6	9.4%
Teamsters**	155	147	8	5.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8.6%</b>

Employee vacancy rates are as of April 30, 2026



# VACANCY RATES BY DEPARTMENT

Employee Group	Budgeted	Filled	Vacancies	Vacancy Rate
Community Development	39	38	1	2.6%
Finance	21	19	2	9.5%
Fire	41	38	3	7.3%
Human Resources	8	6	2	25.0%
Information Technology	12	10	2	16.7%
Management Services	10	8	2	20.0%
Parks & Recreation	21	19	2	9.5%
Police	119	112	7	5.9%
Public Works	77	68	9	11.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8.6%</b>

Employee vacancy rates are as of April 30, 2026



# POLICE OFFICER HIRING

2020 - 21

- Improvements in testing for Police Officer
- Increased resources for background investigations
- Application software expanded applicant pool
- Sworn police staffing remains at 65 FTE; 7 sworn vacancies

2023 - 2024

- Sworn staffing increase from 65 to 72, including civilian background investigator
- Enhanced recruitment and referral bonuses.
- Additional recruitment and retention incentives authorized.
- Ongoing testing continues.

2025-Current

- POA MOU authorized in 2025 to remain competitive in labor market.
- Vacancies reduced from 10 to 6.
- Increase in number of candidates placed into background process.



# POLICE OFFICER HIRING – DEFINITIONS

- Police Academy Trainee (PAT): Entry level position with no prior law enforcement training and experience
  - PAT: 4-6 month academy and 18 month field training and observation period (probation)
- Police Officer (Academy Graduate): Completed police academy but has not yet completed a year at a law enforcement agency
- Police Officer (Lateral): Completed police academy and sworn Officer experience over one year.
  - Academy Grad and Lateral: 12 month field training and observation (probation)



# POLICE OFFICER HIRING

January 1, 2024 to present

- 17 New Hires for Police Officer or Academy Trainee
- 2 retirements
- 10 resignations or separations
- 3 promotions to ranks above Officer
- 8 Academy Trainees graduated the academy to Police Officer



# POLICE OFFICER APPLICANT FLOW



\*January 1, 2024 - Present



# POLICE OFFICER – BACKGROUNDS

## Attrition during Background (May 2025 to Present)

67

Entered Backgrounds

47

Did Not Pass / Withdrew

10

Hired

10

Still in Background

17.5%

pass rate through  
background  
investigations



# CURRENT RECRUITMENT PIPELINE

- 6 sworn vacancies (does not include PATs)
- 2 Police Academy Trainees currently in the academy
- 2 additional Police Academy Trainees scheduled to start in academy June 1, 2026, with an additional 2 candidates in pre-employment with the same date as a target
- 1 additional Academy Trainee cleared initial pre-employment with a start date TBD
- 12 additional candidates in background



# CURRENT RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES

- The City Council has made several updates to recruitment and retention efforts for sworn police employees. Current recruitment incentives include:
  - Current recruitment bonus is 3 – 10% of annual salary, with a maximum of \$13,058.
  - Referral bonus open to any City employee, currently at to 5% of trainee salary (currently \$4,430)
  - Current recruitment and retention incentives: leave based on total sworn experience, initial bank of leave for laterals, health and wellness benefits



# POLICE OFFICER HIRING

Agency	Police Vacancy Rate	Recruitment Bonus
Manhattan Beach	8.3%	Lateral or Academy Trainee: 3-10% (Up to \$13,058 Maximum)
El Segundo	3.0%	Lateral: \$40,000
Hermosa Beach	5.3%	Lateral: \$40,000 Academy Trainee: \$30,000
Torrance	20.0%	Lateral: up to \$100,000 Academy Trainee: Up to \$40,000
Hawthorne	8.5%	n/a
Inglewood	10.5%	Lateral: \$40,000 Academy Grad: \$30,000 Academy Trainee: up to \$25,000
Beverly Hills	9.7%	Lateral: \$45,000 Academy Trainee: \$35,000
Santa Monica	2.1%	n/a
Redondo Beach	5.1%	Lateral: \$10,000



# POLICE CAPTAIN OVERHIRE

- In February 2026, City staff requested the addition of a Deputy Police Chief
- Council requested alternatives to providing additional management-level oversight
- Over hires have been historically approved within the Police Department, including at management levels
- Salaries savings from long-term (unpaid) leave and vacancies will be utilized for near term; Staff will return throughout the year with funding updates.
- Staff plans to utilize this authorization at the Police Captain level for an extended period of time, and seeks Council concurrence.



# QUESTIONS

