

BIRMINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT PLAN



IMMEDIATE IMPACT PROPOSED STRATEGY

CURRENT STRATEGIES

1. Employment Benefits. BPD consistently emphasizes the unique benefits that apply exclusively to BPD Officers such as the opportunity to earn full pay while attending the local Birmingham Police Academy. Police Recruits also are able to go home each day after work. BPD currently has the following benefits in place:
 - Hire at age 19
 - Lateral entry program
 - Rehire program
 - Bilingual skills premium compensation
 - \$5,000 sign-on bonus
 - 30x30 initiative partnership
 - Competitive starting salary ranging from \$50,190.40 - \$77,854.00/annually
 - Wellness program
 - Retire after 20-years of service
 - Retirement DROP Plan option
 - Education premium compensation
 - \$1,200 uniform allowance
 - Largest municipal police department in Alabama
 - Specialized training opportunities
 - Advanced career development opportunities
 - 12-weeks paid parental leave
 - Domestic partnership benefits
 - Longevity compensation
2. Rehire Program. In November 2018, BPD became the first police department in Alabama to rehire retirees under the state's Rehire Program to address attrition and help get the department back to full strength. The goal of the program is to retain the officers and their institutional knowledge. BPD currently has 54 rehires.
3. Wellness Program. In 2022, BPD launched its Wellness Program. The program is led by the Fitness Administrator and a sworn officer. Each month a Health and Wellness newsletter is published to all personnel and various activities and events are held throughout the year. The goal is to provide support to all personnel specific to their physical, mental, emotional and financial wellbeing and professional development. The hope is that our personnel will have a healthy and prosperous life during their employment and upon retirement.
4. 30x30 Initiative. Nationally, women comprise roughly 12% of sworn officers and only 3% among leadership ranks. Research shows, women often produce better public safety outcomes. In 2023, BPD signed the 30x30 Pledge. The goal of the 30x30 Initiative is to increase the number of women

police recruits nationally to 30% by 2030. BPD is committed to helping to increase the representation and improve the experiences of women at BPD by evaluating our recruiting and marketing strategies, hiring process, and culture.

5. Dedicated Recruiting Team. In February 2023, the Birmingham Police Department (BPD) established a Recruiting Team that comprises two full-time police officers. Their primary duty is to research, develop, and implement various strategies to recruit new officers. The recruiters regularly visit various colleges and universities, attend career fairs in and out-of-state, and visit local businesses that are closing or laying off employees to recruit potential candidates.
 - BPD established relationships with staff at Jefferson State Community College, Miles College, Lawson State Community College, Shelton State Community College, Wallace State Community College, and the University of Alabama (UAB) for regular engagement with their students.
 - In 2023, the recruitment team attended (15) career fairs, and made contact with (232) potential candidates.
 - In 2024, so far, the recruitment team has attended (14) career fairs and made contact with (115) potential candidates.
6. Recruit Military. In 2023, BPD executed a professional services agreement with Recruit Military. The comprehensive military-to-civilian recruiting organization connects military veterans, transitioning military service members, and their spouses with employment opportunities. This service provides BPD with a direct pipeline of candidates who may have prior law enforcement training and experience.

Incentives

Increase Hiring Bonus for New Recruits and Laterals

Currently, the hiring bonus for new recruits and lateral transfers is set at \$5,000. To remain competitive in the recruitment market and attract high-quality candidates, it is proposed that the sign-on bonus be increased to \$10,000.

Under the proposed structure, new recruits and laterals hires will receive:

- \$5,000 upon successful completion of academy training.
- An additional \$5,000 after reaching one year of employment.

This adjustment is expected to enhance recruitment efforts, improve retention rates, and ensure that we continue to attract qualified candidates to meet operational demands.

Competing Agencies Sign on bonus

Memphis \$15,000

New Orleans \$20,000

Proposal for Yearly Retention Bonus for Police Officers

To retain experienced officers in today’s competitive law enforcement market, it is proposed to implement a yearly retention bonus of \$10,000 for officers with two or more years of service.

The retention bonus will be structured as follows:

\$2,500 paid quarterly to eligible officers. Current full-time BPD Sworn and correctional staff with 2 years or more are eligible to earn extra income through the retention incentive with a commitment to serve the Birmingham Police Department for the next 12months. Failure to honor the commitment will result in repayment of bonuses received.

Benefits of a Quarterly Retention Bonus vs. Yearly Bonus

- **Increased Motivation and Engagement:** Quarterly bonuses provide more frequent incentives, keeping officers motivated throughout the year rather than waiting for an annual reward. It creates a continual cycle of motivation, aligning efforts with immediate rewards.
- **Improved Retention:** More frequent payouts can reduce the risk of officers leaving before receiving a large annual bonus. Quarterly bonuses provide ongoing financial incentives, encouraging officers to stay in the long term.
- **Financial Stability:** Quarterly payments offer officers consistent financial boosts, which can help them better manage their personal finances and improve their overall satisfaction with the job.
- **Lower Impact of Delayed Turnover:** Instead of officers leaving after receiving a large annual bonus, the quarterly structure spreads the incentive over the year, reducing the likelihood of mass departures following a single payout.
- **Improved Workforce Planning:** Regular quarterly payouts allow leadership to identify retention trends earlier, enabling proactive adjustments to workforce planning and morale management throughout the year.

Competing Agencies

Tuscaloosa PD	\$10,000
New Orleans PD	\$10,000
Atlanta PD	\$4,000

Take Home Vehicle Program

- Currently the Birmingham Police Department is one of three agencies (Bessemer/Fairfield) in the Birmingham Metro Area that does not provide take home vehicles. BPD has lost countless new-hires and active-duty officers due to the lack thereof.
- It is proposed to make an immediate investment in the purchase of 75 vehicles for the next 4 years to establish a Take Home Vehicle Program. 50 vehicles will serve to begin assigning take home vehicles and 25 would serve to stabilize the current fleet in addition to the yearly fleet received. Take home vehicles will be assigned to officers that reside in the Birmingham city limits. Currently, there are approximately 140 police officers and sergeants combined who are assigned to the Patrol Bureau that live in the City of Birmingham.

AGENCY	TAKE-HOME VEHICLE PROGRAM	AGENCY	TAKE-HOME VEHICLE PROGRAM	AGENCY	TAKE-HOME VEHICLE PROGRAM
Bessemer	No	Huntsville	Yes	Pleasant Grove	Yes
Birmingham	No	Irondale	Yes	Tarrant	Yes
Calera	Yes	Jefferson County	Yes	Trussville	Yes
Fairfield	No	Leeds	Yes	Tuscaloosa	Yes
Fultondale	Yes	Mobile	Yes	Vestavia Hills	Yes
Gardendale	Yes	Montgomery	Yes	Warrior	Yes
Homewood	Yes	Montevallo	Yes	Shelby County	Yes
Hoover	Yes	Mountain Brook	Yes		
Hueytown	Yes	Pelham	Yes		

Benefits of a Take-Home Car Program in Police Departments

- **Increased Officer Presence:** A visible police vehicle creates a constant law enforcement presence, deterring crime and increasing community safety, even when officers are off duty. BPD Officers engage heavily in off-duty employment providing security in your local entertainment districts and businesses.
- **Enhanced Officer Morale and Retention:** A take-home car is often seen as a valuable benefit, leading to higher job satisfaction and aiding in the recruitment and retention of officers in competitive markets.
- **Extended Vehicle Lifespan:** Since officers take personal responsibility for the care and maintenance of their

vehicles, take-home cars often experience less wear and tear than shared fleet vehicles, extending their service life.

- **Cost Savings on Fleet Management:** Departments will see cost savings in vehicle maintenance and management, as take-home vehicles are better maintained by individual officers and require less frequent rotation. Officers tend to take better care of vehicles assigned to them personally, leading to reduced damage, better maintenance, and fewer accidents.
- **Increased Availability for Overtime or Call-Backs:** Officers with take-home cars can be more flexible and responsive for overtime shifts or call-backs, as they are equipped and ready to deploy immediately.

Relocation Assistance

To enhance recruitment efforts for the Birmingham Police Department (BPD) by offering a \$5,000 relocation incentive to new qualified candidates residing 80 miles or more outside of the City of Birmingham. This incentive aims to attract skilled professionals, increase department diversity, and fill critical vacancies with committed personnel.

This relocation incentive will strengthen BPD's recruitment efforts by attracting candidates from a broader geographic range. The structured payout plan ensures a commitment to the department, fostering both immediate and long-term benefits.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Candidates must reside 80 miles or more from Birmingham at the time of application.
- Candidates must be offered and accept full-time employment with the Birmingham Police Department.
- Candidates must successfully complete all pre-employment requirements, including background checks, training standards, and the successful completion of Birmingham Police Academy.
 - **Structured Payout Plan** will consist of an initial relocation reimbursement of \$2,000 within the first 30 days of successful employment and completion of Birmingham Police Academy entry training standards.
 - A second payment of \$1500 will be paid within 30 days upon the successful completion of the APOSTC Standard Legal Examination and Firearms Qualifications.
 - A third payment \$1500 will be paid within 30 days upon the successful completion of the Birmingham Police Academy.

Recruitment Referral

To enhance recruitment efforts and encourage current employees to assist in the recruitment process, the Birmingham Police Department proposes the implementation of a \$1,000 Referral Bonus for employees who refer successful candidates. This initiative aims to increase the number of qualified recruits who successfully complete both the Police Academy and the Field Training Program. The Recruiting Referral Bonus is designed to incentivize employees to actively participate in recruiting high-quality candidates. The guidelines in place will ensure honesty and fairness, with accountability measures to maintain the integrity of the program.

Referral Bonus Details:

- A bonus of \$1,000 will be awarded to an employee for each referred candidate who:
 1. Is successfully hired by the Birmingham Police Department.
 2. Completes the Police Academy training program.
 3. Successfully finishes the Field Training Program.

Eligibility Criteria

- The referring employee must be an active full-time employee at the time the candidate completes all required training.
- Referred candidates must meet all Birmingham Police Department hiring qualifications and successfully pass all recruitment stages, including background checks and interviews.
- The referred candidate must acknowledge the referring employee during the application process for the referral to be valid.

Operational Guidelines

- **Submission Process:** The referring employee must complete a referral form through the Birmingham Police Department's Payroll Unit before the referred candidate's interview process.
- **Referral Validation:** The BPD Payroll Unit will track the referred candidate's progress through the academy and field training to ensure they meet all program requirements. Once completed, BPD Payroll will review and validate the referral before releasing the bonus.
- **Honesty and Integrity:**
 1. The referral must be a personal referral. Employees cannot claim candidates they do not know or have not personally recruited.
 2. The referred candidate cannot be a previous employee or an individual already in the hiring process.
 3. If multiple employees refer the same candidate, the bonus will be awarded to the first employee to submit the referral form, as timestamped by HR.

- **Transparency & Accountability:**
 1. A referral bonus committee will review and audit all referrals to ensure compliance with the guidelines.
 2. Misrepresentation or manipulation of the referral process will result in disqualification from the bonus program and could lead to disciplinary action.

Competing Agencies

Mobile PD

\$1,000 referral bonus to city employees (recruit must complete the academy)

Tuscaloosa PD

\$2,500 referral bonus to city employees at the completion of employee probationary period

LAPD

\$2,500 referral bonus paid 50% upon hiring, 50% upon completion of academy

Memphis PD

\$2,000 referral bonus to city employees. Pay schedule is \$500 at hire date, \$500 at completion of academy, \$1,000 at the completion of probationary period

Mental Health Observance Leave for Police & Corrections Officers

This proposal recommends offering 8 hours of Mental Health Observance leave per month to all police and correctional officers. The goal is to enhance the mental health and wellness of officers, fostering a more resilient and effective police force.

Police officers face high levels of stress, trauma, and emotional exhaustion due to the nature of their work. Chronic exposure to these conditions can lead to burnout, PTSD, anxiety, and depression, which affect job performance, decision-making, and community relationships. Investing in mental health through designated leave can help mitigate these effects, promoting overall officer wellness.

Benefits

- **Improved Officer Well-being:** Regular mental health breaks can reduce stress, improve mood, and increase resilience, allowing officers to perform their duties more effectively.
- **Increased Retention and Job Satisfaction:** Providing mental health support demonstrates that the department values its employees, leading to higher job satisfaction and retention rates.
- **Enhanced Public Safety:** Healthy, well-rested officers are better equipped to make sound decisions, de-escalate conflicts, and maintain positive interactions with the community.

- **Reduction in Sick Leave and Injuries:** Proactively addressing mental health can reduce stress-related illnesses, injuries, and the need for longer sick leave.
- **Positive Department Culture:** A focus on mental health builds a culture of trust and support, encouraging officers to seek help when needed.

Implementing 8 hours of Mental Health Observance leave is a strategic investment in the long-term health, effectiveness, and morale of our officers. This initiative will lead to a healthier workforce, improved public service, and a more positive community-police relationship.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Currently BPD recruiters (2 recruiters) work in collaboration with the BPD Media Team to create flyers and videos highlighting our personnel, and the employment benefits on social media platforms. Although a valiant effort is made, its just not enough to engage quality candidates on a stronger national and international level.

Workforce Solutions and Domestic Marketing

- The Birmingham Police Department (BPD) will execute a professional service agreement to expand the current workforce solutions strategy to invoke a aggressive campaign to identify, educate and attract qualified candidates. These efforts will aggressively engage in multi-phased approach that includes research, audience mapping, strategic recommendations, creative concepts and campaign assets, followed by implementation.
- By utilizing workforce solutions, BPD can increase outreach with Creative Asset. The workforce solution and domestic marketing strategy will pursue a long overdue media plan, graphic design, video production, motion graphic design, and website development.
- This strategy will allow us to showcase nationwide the great career opportunities at the Birmingham Police Department.

Utilization of Talent Acquisition Recruiters

Utilizing talent acquisition recruiters to accompany the workforce solutions strategy presents a unique opportunity to streamline the hiring process, attract top-tier candidates, and ensure that the department

continues to build a skilled and diverse workforce.

- **Access to a Wider Talent Pool-** Talent acquisition recruiters have extensive networks that span beyond traditional recruitment channels. This allows the BPD to tap into a broader range of qualified candidates, including those who may not be actively seeking employment but are open to new opportunities. Through their expertise, recruiters can identify individuals with unique skills, backgrounds, and experiences that align with the department's needs.
- Talent acquisition recruiters is an essential component in modernizing the recruitment strategy to meet the growing demands of law enforcement in the 21st century and remaining competitive nationally.

Police Trainee Program

The Birmingham Police Department recognizes the critical need to recruit, retain, and prepare highly qualified candidates for service. In recent years, one of the primary challenges faced by the department is the loss of potential recruits between the completion of their physical agility screening and the start of the next police academy session. This gap in time allows competing agencies to recruit and onboard candidates who initially started the hiring process with BPD, resulting in a significant loss of qualified individuals. To address this issue and enhance candidate readiness, the BPD seeks investment in a Police Trainee Program.

The BPD Trainee Program is designed to bridge the gap between a candidate's physical agility screening and the beginning of the Birmingham Police Academy.

Benefits

- **Retention of Candidates:** By offering immediate employment opportunities, the program mitigates the risk of losing candidates to competing agencies during the waiting period for academy start dates.
- **Academy Preparation:** Trainees will engage in academy prep training, ensuring they are physically, mentally, and academically prepared to succeed in the police academy. This preparation is expected to increase academy graduation rates and reduce drop-out rates during training.
- **Skill Development:** Trainees will participate in pre-academy education, including basic law enforcement skills, physical fitness training, and exposure to department protocols, giving them a strong foundation before formal academy instruction begins.
- **Early Integration into BPD Culture:** Through structured mentorship and orientation, trainees will become familiar with BPD values, ethics, and operations, fostering early loyalty and long-term commitment to the department.

The Birmingham Police Trainee Program is a strategic investment that addresses the current challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified candidates. By offering employment opportunities before the start of the

academy and providing early academy prep training, BPD will be able to retain top talent, improve academy success rates, and ensure that new officers are well-prepared to serve the community. An investment in this program is an investment in the future strength, preparedness, and stability of the Birmingham Police Department.

Part-Time Reserve Officer Program

The Birmingham Police Department (BPD) faces the ongoing challenge of balancing daily operations with the demand for police presence at special events. As Birmingham continues to host a wide range of public events such as parades, festivals, concerts, and sports games, these gatherings often require increased police staffing. To meet these demands without straining current resources or pulling officers away from essential crime-fighting and emergency response duties, the BPD will leverage additional staffing opportunities with the implementation of a **Part-Time Reserve Officer Program**.

This program will provide an innovative, cost-effective solution by recruiting certified officers from other law enforcement agencies to work special events in Birmingham on a part-time basis. This allows BPD to focus its core officers on daily operations while enhancing public safety during large-scale community events.

Program Overview:

The Part-Time Reserve Officer Program offers law enforcement officers from surrounding agencies the opportunity to work alongside BPD at special events in a part-time capacity. These officers will bring their training, experience, and law enforcement certification to help enhance public safety and security at events. The program will be voluntary, offering flexible, part-time work for officers who may already be working full-time for other agencies but are seeking additional opportunities to serve in a different jurisdiction while earning extra income.

Benefits:

- **Increased Staffing for Special Events:**
 - The program alleviates the need to divert BPD's full-time officers from their regular assignments during special events. By bringing in reserve officers, the department can maintain its focus on crime-fighting and emergency response across the city.
 - It ensures sufficient police presence at high-attendance events, improving overall public safety and crowd control.
- **Cost-Effective Solution:**
 - Hiring part-time reserve officers reduces the need for overtime pay to BPD officers who are typically asked to cover special events. This creates a cost-effective staffing model that reduces financial strain on the department's budget.
 - Reserve officers will be compensated at a competitive rate, but the flexible part-time nature of their employment reduces the long-term costs associated with full-time benefits packages.

- **Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:**
 - The program fosters collaboration between BPD and surrounding law enforcement agencies, allowing officers to share best practices, regional intelligence, and training expertise. This enhances inter-agency cooperation and strengthens regional law enforcement partnerships.
 - Reserve officers bring diverse experiences and perspectives, benefiting BPD with fresh approaches and new skills.

- **Reduced Officer Burnout:**
 - With reserve officers handling the additional workload at events, BPD officers can focus on their primary responsibilities without being overextended. This reduces the likelihood of burnout and allows full-time officers to be better prepared for emergency response and day-to-day crime prevention efforts.

 - It improves officer morale by creating a more balanced workload, especially during periods of high demand for police presence.

- **Enhanced Community Relations:**
 - The increased police presence at special events will help to improve relationships with the community. Reserve officers, serving in a temporary and highly visible capacity, will also contribute to the department's efforts to build trust and engagement with the public.

 - Having a well-staffed police presence at public gatherings shows a commitment to public safety and promotes a positive police image during important community events.

Operational Framework:

- **Eligibility Requirements:** Officers must be certified law enforcement professionals, in good standing with their home agencies, and meet BPD's established vetting criteria for temporary employment.

- **Training:** All reserve officers will undergo a brief orientation and be trained on BPD policies, local ordinances, and procedures specific to event management in Birmingham. This ensures that reserve officers are fully prepared to uphold BPD's standards while working in the city.

- **Deployment:** Reserve officers will be deployed for special events, community engagements events and other duties sanctioned and approved by the Chief of Police. The Part Time Reserve Officer Program allows BPD officers to continue their daily crime-fighting and emergency response activities. Their deployment will be coordinated by BPD's Special Operations Command, ensuring that both reserve and full-time officers are strategically utilized and aligned.

Conclusion:

The Part-Time Reserve Officer Program will significantly benefit the Birmingham Police Department

by bolstering staffing capacity for special events, ensuring a consistent focus on crime prevention, and reducing operational costs. With the help of qualified officers from other law enforcement agencies, BPD will enhance its ability to serve and protect the City of Birmingham, while fostering cooperation with regional law enforcement partners. This flexible, cost-effective program is an ideal solution to manage the growing demand for police presence at public gatherings without detracting from the department's daily operations. By implementing this initiative, BPD can achieve its mission of maintaining public safety while optimizing its resources and improving officer well-being.

FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

CATEGORY	BUDGETED
Take Home Vehicle Program 75 Vehicles) 50 to initiate program and 25 to sustain current fleet.	\$4.5million
Increase sign on bonus to 10K	\$100,000 ALLOTTED - Projected for 100 new applicants
Quarterly Retention Bonus \$2500 per quarter	\$8,510,000 Officers with at least 2 years of service and new 1 year commitment.
Mental Health Observance Leave	8 hours per month
Media Marketing/Recruitment Campaign/ Reputation Management	\$600K
Talent Acquisition/ Recruitment Consultants	\$200k
Part-Time Reserve Officer Program \$45 Flat Rate (35 PRO'S) Max of 29 hours per week	\$1,187,550
Police Trainee Program -allows Bpd to hire immediately and began academy prep.	\$561,600 Grade 17 Step 1 \$18.00 per hour/ 37,440 Annually
Relocation Assistance	\$100,000 (Goal-Average 20 out of state candidates per year)
Referral Incentive \$1,000	\$100,000 Allocated
Total	\$15,858,550