

Seattle Police Department: Hiring Incentive

2023 Evaluation Report

Introduction

This report presents an evaluation of the Hiring Incentive Payments for Seattle Police Department (SPD) police officers, as announced in the [Comprehensive Police Recruitment and Retention Plan](#). This evaluation aims to meet the requirements of ordinance [ORD 126654](#) which authorized hiring incentive payments. This evaluation relied on a mix of quantitative and qualitative sources including HR data, employee surveys, and advertising analytics.

This evaluation report was written by the Innovation & Performance (IP) Measurement & Evaluation (M&E) Team in collaboration with SPD, SPD Human Resources (SPD-HR), and the Mayor's Office (MO).

Summary Findings

This evaluation found that incentive pay did not significantly impact police hiring numbers compared to other recruitment factors. Statistical analysis of hiring numbers found no significant difference when comparing periods before the hiring incentive started and after. Survey results of new hires found that the hiring incentive averaged third in importance out of five items respondents were asked to rank, and no respondents mentioned hiring incentives in freeform responses about why they joined SPD. Analysis of engagement with recruitment ads found no significant difference in click-through rates of ads highlighting the hiring incentive compared to ads highlighting salary, benefits, or growth opportunities.

The sources of data used in this evaluation include:

- **Previous Reports and Existing Literature:** Comparison to City-authored reports on recent SPD and HR hiring incentives, including review of existing literature on national studies on hiring and retention incentives.
- **Hiring, Recruitment & Retention Survey (November 2022 – July 2023):** Questionnaire offered to new hires before finishing their training that examines potential reasons for new hire's interests in police work and joining SPD.
- **Demographically Disaggregated Recruitment/Separation Metrics (January 2013- July 2023):** Number of people recruited into SPD within the last ten years along with socio-demographic information; Number of people who left SPD within the last ten years along with socio-demographic information.
- **Recruitment Ads (February 15, 2023-March 8, 2023):** Tracking metrics on advertising to compare engagement rates with different recruitment messages during a three-week marketing sprint on LinkedIn and Meta platforms.
- **Hiring Incentive Expenditures (July 13, 2022 - May 31, 2023):** Number of dollars distributed and returned to SPD that are attached to hiring bonus within the last year.

Multiple types of mixed-methods analysis were conducted to come to this finding, including descriptive analysis, A/B testing, T-testing, ANOVA testing, time-series analysis, impact analysis (Cohen-d). An Equity Analysis was performed by conducting an ANOVA test across the available demographics for the ad data,

Commented [SS1]: This is not a part of the ordinance.

Commented [JJ2]: This is core to the evaluation because:

Commented [NJ3R2]: Provides important insight into the purpose of the evaluation and how the request was met using a mixed-methods approach, incorporating more than one methodology to improve the validity of the findings.

Commented [JJ4]: This is important to keep because it provides important insight into the purpose of the evaluation and how the request was met using a mixed-methods approach, incorporating more than one methodology to improve the validity of the findings. City Council called for IP to do this evaluation: "The Seattle Police Department and the City Budget Office Innovation and Performance Team shall also conduct an evaluation of the city's use of hiring incentives authorized in subsection 6.A of this ordinance that shall include, but not be limited to, the following information...". As the Central Evaluation Team, we took this language to meet the needs of the evaluation with our analysis and evaluation expertise to dig into the policy.

Commented [SS5]: SDHR's SLI response should not be considered a study.

Commented [BD6]: This is not a primary source of data for this study, it is relevant only in the background section. I don't see any links or references to academic literature or professional publications related to marketing even though a large part of conclusions are based on marketing data.

Commented [SS7R6]: Just finished reading it and I do not see reference to existing literature outside of being mentioned in the final recommendations. Am I missing something?

conducting a descriptive analysis of demographics of survey data, and conducting a Chi-Squared testing across the demographics over time for recruitment/separation metrics.

Commented [BD8]: Not sure why this needs to be in summary. Methods section

There are many factors that could be influencing this finding including, but not limited to, the length of the incentive implementation, the amount of the incentive offered, the short-term nature of hiring incentives, the size of the population, limitations in the data, the potential complexity of the Comprehensive Police Recruitment and Retention Plan, union relations, political climate, other non-monetary factors such as department culture, or potential downturn in morale that could happen when the incentive period ends for new hires, or the cost of living in the Seattle area

Commented [BD9]: Confusing and way outside of scope. Re-write to clearly state "This was a limited evaluation and further study is needed."

Background

In August 2022, City Council Central Staff sent a [memo](#) to the Public Safety and Human Services Committee providing analysis in advance of a vote on this now ordinance, stating that SPD had incurred a net loss of 304 police hires since 2020². Since 2022 The memo also states "SPD indicates that the department is struggling to attract qualified police candidates. This issue is not unique to SPD. Police departments across the nation are raising concerns about current and future staffing levels. Chief Adrian Diaz has indicated that recent separations have negatively affected the department's ability to respond to and investigate crime, as well as provide specialty services".

Commented [BD10]: Organization of this section is confusing. Time goes from 2022 to 2023 to 2019 and then back to 2022. Re-organize to have a summary paragraph and then chronological

To help address this hiring challenge, Council passed [ORD 126654](#), which authorizes the use of \$1.57 million of salary savings for various costs related to recruitment and retention of officers in SPD, creates four new positions in SDHR to support the recruitment of police officers, and authorizes a hiring incentive payment program for lateral and new recruits to SPD effective July 13, 2022. Lateral recruits may receive up to \$30,000 and new recruits may receive up to \$7,500, depending on market conditions. Hiring incentives paid to new recruits and lateral transfers must be paid back to the City if the recruits leave SPD employment before five years of completed service.

As stated in the ordinance, the hiring incentive program for lateral and new recruits is intended to support the recruitment and retention of police officers in the Seattle Police Department. As [analyzed](#) by Council Central Staff in the summer of 2022, "SPD and Mayor's Office indicated that the hiring incentive will assist the City's efforts to meet its staffing plan goals. As transmitted last month, SPD identifies 125 officer hires (105 recruits and 20 laterals) in 2023".

Commented [NJ11]: This is important to address so that it is clear what the reason for conducting this analysis is and to provide the context for the findings presented. Otherwise, it wouldn't be clear why we are doing this study (which has been conducted a couple of time before) again at this point in time.

Based on the ordinance language, the theory of change that drove SPD Hiring Incentive funding can be interpreted as:

If the City offers incentive payments for new and lateral police hires, then more recruits will be motivated to join SPD, which will result in an increased public safety workforce and a safer Seattle.

Commented [JJ12R11]: Additionally, we need this context incorporated to understand what success looks like in the evaluation in order to know if the incentives should/shouldn't be continued. The beginning of the ordinance talks about the increase in crime, reduction in safety and the drop in police force. Please see the central staff analysis in the fiscal note that goes along with this ordinance: [View.ashx \(legistar.com\)](#)

An additional activity that supported this goal was a targeted ad campaign that ran through SPD and was led by the Mayor's Office, advertising the hiring incentive payment using targeted recruitment campaigns in accordance with the Retention and Recruitment Plan. This targeted approach was an additional strategy to test the effectiveness of the incentives and is included in this report.

This is not the first time hiring incentives have been authorized in recent years; In 2019, Council passed [ORD 125875](#), which authorized a similar one-time hiring incentive and called for the same evaluation as

Commented [JJ13R11]: Specifically for the Theory of Change: it is best practice for a program/service to have a logic model or theory of change clearly listed to know the vision and goals of the impact. We set this as best practice for all departments and it should be exemplified in our work. The theory of change was also verified with SPD along with being a summary of the ordinance.

² January 2020 - June 2022, Hires =162, Separations =466, Net of 304

instructed in ORD 126654. The ordinance sunset as scheduled in June 2020. In October 2021, an Emergency Order was issued which authorized one-time hiring incentives that was implemented through January 2022.

Additionally, this is not the first evaluation to assess the impact of a hiring incentive program in Seattle. In 2019, a Recruitment and Retention Workgroup was created to better understand why new hires and overall sworn officer counts were declining and to identify short- and long-term strategies to improve recruitment and retention outcomes. This workgroup comprised staff from the IP team, SPD, Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), City Budget Office (CBO), and City Council. As a result of this workgroup, the IP team conducted an evaluation to learn more about the effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies, such as the hiring incentive payments.

The 2019 report found that while hiring incentive payments are consistent with incentives currently offered by peer cities in the region, they alone are not enough to attract candidates to apply. The report also states that, at the time, it was too early to assess the full impact of the incentive payment program, but that research suggests that SPD would benefit from additional initiatives for increasing application rates. As a result, the workgroup recommended several alternative strategies to bolster recruitment, hiring, and retention aside from the incentive payments. Another evaluation was conducted in March 2022 by SDHR in a response to a Statement of Legislative Intent which analyzed the impact of a potential Citywide hiring incentive payment. The report found that SPD did not experience an increase in hiring since implementing a hiring incentive in October 2021. However, it also cited that the benefits from the incentives as a short-term strategy is incredibly difficult to conclude, because the incentives have been offered and removed several times. SDHR's report does note that hiring incentives may work for some departments but also risks equity issues for both employer and employees. The findings of the 2019 and 2022 analyses were taken into consideration in the planning phase of this evaluation. This report aims to take a closer look at the impacts of hiring incentive payments since the implementation of the program in August 2022.

Data and Methods

The following information was requested in the ordinance:

1. How the incentive compares with similar incentives offered by other local and state law enforcement agencies;
2. Responses to survey questions that specifically identify:
 - a. Whether the hiring incentive contributed to a new recruit's decision to work in policing versus another profession;
 - b. Whether the incentive resulted in a new recruit's or lateral officer's decision to work for the Seattle Police Department versus another local or state law enforcement agency;
 - c. How the recruit or lateral officer learned about the hiring incentive; and
 - d. Whether the incentive was more effective than other recruitment tactics, such as being contacted by a member of the Seattle Police Department or meeting Department representatives at a career fair or other event;
3. A demographic and race and social justice analysis of the information collected pursuant to subsection E; and
4. An analysis of costs and benefits of the City's use of hiring incentives and a recommendation about whether the City should continue the use of incentives as an ongoing recruitment strategy.

Commented [NJ14]: This is important for helping contextualize some of the recommendations

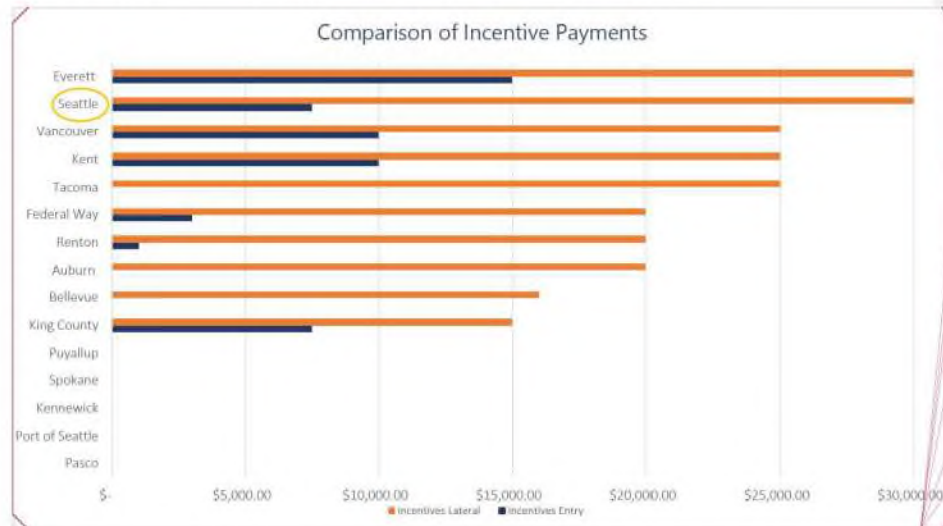
Commented [JJ15R14]: Added the incentive ordinances to clarify the context being provided for these previous reports.

Commented [NJ16]: This speaks to the purpose of the previous analysis. Otherwise, it would unclear why we are referencing it here

Commented [BD17]: This is very clear and a much better way to state the findings of this evaluation as well.

What is Seattle offering in comparison with other jurisdictions?

Seattle offers a competitive hiring incentive across some of the neighboring agencies:



14 other agencies across Washington State were considered in what they offer in terms of incentives, salaries, and additional benefits.³

Seattle offers one of the highest incentives for lateral hires and fourth highest incentives for new hires when compared to these local and state jurisdictions. Additionally, in 2022, Seattle offered the second highest starting salary in the state at \$83,640 and the fourth highest top salary at \$109,512; the highest starting salary was offered by Auburn at \$87,530 while the highest top salary was offered by Kent at \$117,000. While offering high salary, it should be noted that Seattle's growth of salary ranks ninth of the 15, with \$25,872 of potential growth for an officer to work towards the top step, taking an estimated 54 months to reach; in comparison, King County, Everett, Puyallup, and Pasco offered the fastest potential growth towards the top step, taking an estimated 36 months to reach.

Who was Reached through the Ads?

Specific recruitment ads were run in the March 2023 with the intent to understand what factors might motivate people to apply to SPD. Four ads were run for three weeks over both LinkedIn and Meta's Facebook and Instagram platforms: this included News Feed, Marketplace, video feed and business explore on Facebook and News Feed and Explore on Instagram. The four ads were almost identical, the only difference between them being what message was highlighted, either salary, benefits, the hiring incentive, or career growth. LinkedIn data includes professional demographic information, while Meta data includes age and gender demographic information. It is unclear if there is overlap in those reached

³ Puyallup, Spokane, Kennewick, and Pasco do not offer any hiring incentives, in other words \$0 in the graph. See Appendix for the detailed list of comparisons.

Commented [SS18]: Just did some more searching. Puyallup also does a hiring bonus. [Entry Level | Puyallup, WA \(cityofpuyallup.org\)](#)

Commented [SS19R18]: Can we review all of this data to ensure its correct, please?

Commented [DB20]: Same comment as last version, why are we including Puyallup - Pasco on the graph when there's no data for them? If trying to make the point that not everyone has them, this graph is not the way to make that point.

Commented [SS21R20]: Same, we should include the West Coast 7 cities in this comparison. Comparing similar cities to Seattle, provides a closer comparison to similar departments. These cities are: San Jose, San Fran, San Diego, Sacramento, Portland, Long Beach, and Seattle.

Commented [BD22R20]: Also chart needs to say when this data is from. That's kind of a relevant piece of information

Commented [BD23R20]: This graph is officially wrong. Port of Seattle is 100% offering a hiring incentive. <https://aa243.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl>

Commented [HM24R20]: Ordinance asks local and state agency comparison, not similar cities to Seattle: *Whether the incentive resulted in a new recruit's or lateral officer's decision to work for the Seattle Police Department versus another local or state law enforcement agency;* Will check with team on data accuracy.

Commented [HM25R20]: @Dalgetty, Ben your link goes to a page that no longer exists :/

Commented [SS26R20]: Here is another one. I found it by searching the Port website. [Job Description - Exceptional Entry-Level Police Officer \(002258\) \(taleo.net\)](#)

Commented [SS27R20]: @Hernandez, Madeliene we need to compare our department to other similar departments; otherwise, we risk drawing incomplete and potentially misleading conclusions. Pasco is not the same as Seattle.

The ordinance does not exclude comparing other

Commented [SS28]: Add in comparison with West Coast 7 Cities.

Commented [BD29]: Ads were run in March 2023. Winter 2023 is very misleading way to write that

by the two platforms. Ad Results were based on Click-through Rate (CTR)⁴ – which is number of clicks divided by number of impressions⁵ (number of times people saw the ad).

There were 35 distinct employers, 28 distinct industries, 25 distinct job functions, and 32 different counties that saw the ad over the course of two weeks over LinkedIn. Over Meta, 28.6% of those shown the ads were women and 70.8% men. The ages varied from 18-65+, with 52% fitting into the 25-54 range.

LinkedIn provides their data divided among different subcategories, with each demographic containing click-through rates of the ad types, but with many subcategories' results missing significant portions of the audience base. This level of incompleteness impacts the quality of the data with a risk of inaccuracy. After looking at the percent of total impressions represented in each subcategory, it was determined that the Contextual Country subcategory data filtered for the United States would be the most complete to analyze, with the United States viewer share representing over 99% of each of the four ad types' total audience.

What Motivated Clicks?

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) testing was performed across the four ads' engagement levels for each platform. The ads' click-through rates on the two platforms are shown in the tables and graphs below:

Table 1. LinkedIn Ads CTR by Ad Type

Ad Type	Impressions	Clicks	CTR (%)
Growth	9,093	115	1.27%
Salary	11,263	132	1.17%
Incentive	11,925	117	0.98%
Benefits	10,792	105	0.97%

Table 2. Meta Ads CTR by Ad Type

Ad Type	Impressions	Clicks	CTR (%)
Benefits	104,811	1,328	1.27%
Salary	118,547	1,279	1.08%
Growth	117,290	1,247	1.06%
Incentive	116,890	1,147	0.98%

LinkedIn's Platform:

⁴ CTR in this study was looking into the Link Click-through Rate (clicks on link provided), distinct from overall Click-through Rate (clicks on images), and Unique Link Click-through Rate (clicks by unique users).

⁵ Impressions are defined as the number of times the ads were on screen. An individual person may (and in fact should) see an ad multiple times and generate multiple impressions. These ads were roughly 1.5 impressions per user.

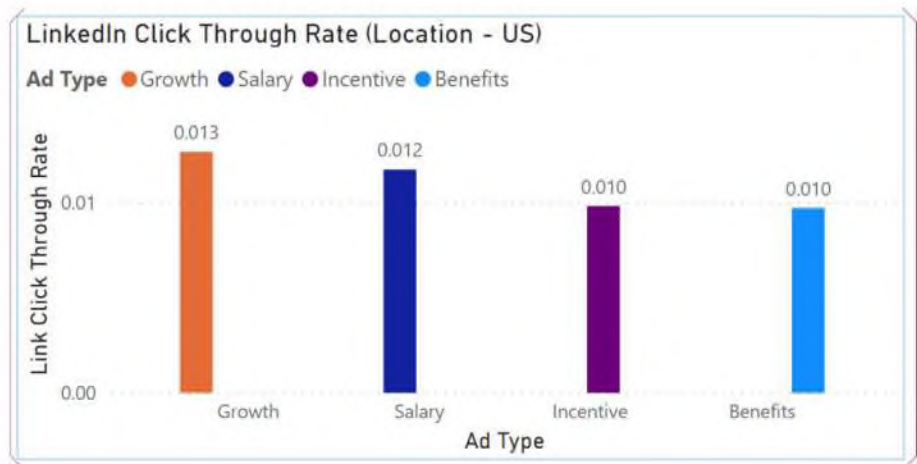
Commented [WC30]: Shouldn't we look at overall CTR rather than Link CTR? We don't care whether they clicked on the link or the image. We should get the proper data from Ben.

Commented [WC31R30]: Seems like we don't have access to that data, so we're working with Link CTR

Commented [DB32]: These are not total numbers. It only gave us counts for things above a threshold. There were many more than 35 employers, it's just that there were only 35 that had enough employees view the thing to cross the threshold.

Commented [BD33R32]: Only the county number really adds anything useful here, the rest is just noise

Commented [BD34]: Re-write to more plainly say there were limitations in the data



Commented [BD35]: Confusing that your tables and graphs don't use the same significant figures, one shows decimals and the other percentages

Commented [AM36R35]: I'm also confused by this. The numbers also seem inconsistent with the above chart.

Meta's Platforms:



The click-through rates of the ads on LinkedIn ranged from .98% to 1.27% while on Meta the click-through rates ranged between .97% and 1.27%. These differences were not found to be statistically significantly different from one another – meaning none of the ad messages motivated people to click on the application at a significantly higher rate compared to the other ad messages. This could be because none of the four messages were particularly more or less interesting to viewers, or it could be that had

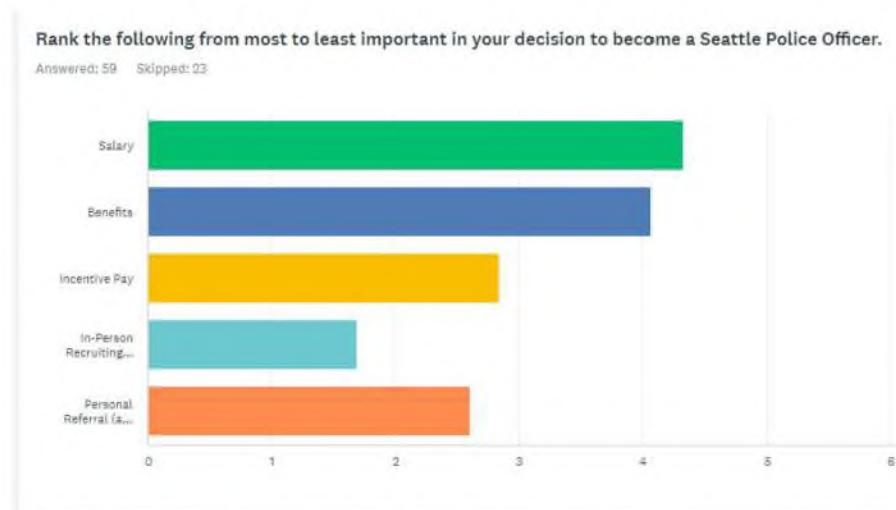
Commented [BD37]: THIS! This is all that was found from social ads. No message was more motivating than the other. Not incentives don't matter. Not incentives don't work. Only no difference in ad engagement rates.

the ads run longer and been shown to more people that statistically significant differences might have arisen, or it could be due to other outside factors.

What Motivated New Hires?

There were 81 respondents to the Hiring, Recruitment & Retention survey, of whom seven responded they had previously taken the survey. Filtering out the seven duplicates and the 14 respondents who answered no other question, these results analyze the remaining 60 responses, assumed to be distinct individuals.

Commented [SS38]: What is the timeframe for these responses? Please add.



Overall, incentive pay was ranked third out of five in importance in the decision to become a Seattle Police Officer, behind salary and benefits. When asked to select how important the incentive pay was in the decision on a hidden-number slider-scale (0-100), the mean response was 51, with a standard deviation of 27.4. The responses ranged from 0 to 100. The incentive pay rank of importance did not change across gender, or White-non-White race.

Commented [AM39]: This doesn't seem to be surprising. Salary and benefits would logically be the most important factors.

Salary was ranked most important in the decision to become a Seattle Police Officer.

Commented [BD40R39]: The whole paper seems to be pushing back against a straw man argument no one made "hiring incentives are the most important factor and will solve everything."

Nearly half (44.3%) of the respondents indicated that they also applied for work at other police and sheriff's departments, both locally and in other states.

Of the 60 responses, 59 self-reported their race in the expanded race/nationality question. 72.9% identified as White, 15.4% identified as POC (the highest of the POC that responded identified as Asian). 11.7% of respondents selected "other" and wrote in responses such as: "Hispanic", "Latino", and "White, South American Latino."

All 60 respondents completed the question, "Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?" 71.7% were not Hispanic, while 28.3% reported they were of Hispanic origin.

Most of the respondents identified as male (81.7%). Just 18.3% identified as female.

The majority of respondents were between 25-34 years of age (55.0%). 18.3% were between 35-44 years old, while 16.7% were between 18-24 years old.

16% of respondents identified as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community.

59 of the respondents answered the open-response question, "Why do you want to be a Seattle Police Officer?". Their reasons varied from improving public safety, location, opportunity, salary, benefits, serving their local community, helping others, family connection, retirement potential, training options, the equality programs offered, and a love for Seattle. Among all of the responses, the hiring incentive did not come out as a reason for being a Seattle Police Officer. Another analysis could be done to provide a deeper dive into motivations of becoming a Seattle Police Officer.

Staffing Trends by Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Zip Code:

A demographic and race and social justice descriptive analysis was performed to understand how the hiring incentive may have motivated a more diverse pool, in accordance with the ordinance. The data analyzed included employees who were hired from January 2013- July 2023 to understand the overall hiring trends and understand the effect the 2022 incentive had on these trends. This analysis was not able to isolate the incentive's impact on someone's decision to stay or leave—there are many variables that affect such important decisions.

Employees were compared between those hired since 2013, ⁶ and those who were both hired between 2013-2023. This comparison was done by race/ethnicity, gender, and zip code of employee's residence. The tables below show the current race/ethnicity demographic distribution compared with the demographics of people hired in the current incentive and the last incentive. The (+) or (-) labeled next to some of the numbers represent if the staffing populations are disproportional (+ higher or - lower) to the [Seattle population](#), in accordance with the 2020 Census. Those distributions are:

- White: 59.5%
- 2+ Races: 7.3%
- Hispanic/Latino ethnicity: 8.2%
- Black/African American: 6.8%
- Asian: 16.9%
- Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander: 0.3%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 0.4%

Table 3. Demographically Disaggregated Hiring Statistics

Employee Race/Ethnicity	Hiring Comparison		
	Current Staffing as of July 2023 (%) ⁶	Hired Since Current Incentive, August 2022 (%)	Hired Since 2019 Incentive, March 2019 (%)
White	63.50 (+)	40.43 (-)	53.05 (-)
2+ Races	6.90 (-)	14.89 (+)	10.75 (+)
Hispanic/Latino	7.10 (-)	19.15 (+)	10.75 (+)

⁶ The racial demographic has not drastically changed since June 2023, however, the total count of sworn employees has dropped from 1,080 on 6/1/23 to 1,038 on 11/7/2023 when data for this report was pulled.

Commented [BD41]: This feels out of place here given that the next section is all about demographics. Recommend cutting, could make an appendix about the New Hire Survey.

Commented [BD42]: This section is confusing and seems to go beyond scope. Specific ordinance assignment is "demographic and race and social justice analysis" related to the 2022 hiring incentive. All the references to 2019 incentive and looking at data since 2023 seem out of place.

Here were demographics for hiring for 6 months before incentive, here were demographics for hiring for 6 months after incentive, here's the difference.

Commented [JJ43]: Analysis is required by ordinance. Longevity was needed to understand the trends to see if the incentive motivated diversity and caused any changes in demographics when the policy was implemented. While there are many factors going into the change in diversity, the chi-squared test should indicate if the incentive was a lever for the police hiring crisis. A recommendation is also provided that encourages a study on all the components impacting hiring and retention, which should also include an equity analysis.

Commented [BD44]: Why are separations being discussed in this report? The ordinance is specifically focused on the impact of incentives on hiring. You can make a recommendation to study separation data in future but that does not seem relevant to this analysis.

Black/African American	8.0 (+)	8.51 (+)	8.96 (+)
Asian	7.10 (-)	8.51 (-)	10.75 (-)
Nat.Hawaiian/Other Pac. Islander	1.20 (+)	4.26 (+)	1.79 (+)
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.10 (+)	-	-
Unknown	0.10	-	0.36
Not Specified	4.90	4.26	3.58

Table 4. Demographically Disaggregated Staffing Changes Statistics

Employee Race/Ethnicity	Staffing Changes Comparison		
	Current Staffing as of July 2023 (%)	Hired & Left since current incentive, August 2022	Hired & Left since 2019 incentive, March 2019 (%)
White	63.50	-	44.23 (-)
2+ Races	6.90	100% of employees who were hired and left since August 2022 are BIPOC ⁷	9.62 (+)
Hispanic/Latino	7.10		9.62 (+)
Black/African American	8.0		5.77 (+)
Asian	7.10		21.15 (+)
Nat.Hawaiian/Other Pac. Islander	1.20		3.85 (+)
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.10		-
Unknown	0.10		1.92
Not Specified	4.90		3.85

There does seem to be a higher diversity of new hires in race/ethnicity since the authorization of the incentive in August 2022, though it appears to be the continuation of a trend that started earlier seeing as the new hires at the time of the 2019 incentive were also more diverse than the police corps overall. Further analysis should be done to see what's motivated them. A Chi-Square test⁸ was performed to understand the relationship of the changes in racial diversity and the incentive; there is no statistically significant difference showing a causal relationship between the intervention and change. This could be due to a small sample size or the increase in diversity could be due to other factors such as the recruiting efforts that have also been undertaken to increase the number of applicants coming in. Further analysis should be done to understand the changes in hiring demographics.

⁷ Due to the small percentage of staff that were hired and left, this set was disaggregated on BIPOC to Non-BIPOC level to protect employee privacy.

⁸ A Chi-Square Test is a hypothesis test used in statistics designed to test the significance of relationships between categorical variables.

Commented [NJ45]: These two potential causes were referenced to provide examples of variables that should be included in future analyses.

Commented [NJ46]: A statistical analysis was conducted to understand the relationship between the demographic changes and the incentive itself (we do have enough information to assess this variable on its own without any combination of other variables). However, since the demographic changes weren't explainable through the incentive alone, we recommend in this section further analysis to see what created that change.

At the same time, those who were both hired and left the department since the 2019 incentive comprise a different racial/ethnic mix than those hired in that time frame. Further analysis should be done to understand what underlies these different trends in hiring and longevity with the department.

Looking overall at 2013-2023, hiring, and employees who were both hired and left within that timeframe are reasonably consistent percentagewise across the different demographic categories, with some exceptions⁹:

- Since 2013, a majority of the employees hired were male. When looking at race/ethnicity, employees hired since 2013 were mostly White, with the second highest being Two or More Races. Location of residence varies, mostly across the Seattle region.
- Since 2013, a majority of the employees separated were male. When looking at race/ethnicity, employees hired since 2013 were mostly White, with the second highest being Black or African American. Location of residence varies, mostly across the Seattle region.
- Since 2013, a majority of the employees who were hired and then left were male. When looking at race/ethnicity, employees hired since 2013 were mostly White, with the second highest being Hispanic or Latino. Location of residence varies, mostly across the Seattle region.

Hiring Incentive Analysis

To better understand the effect and impact the 2022 incentive had on hiring, a time series analysis was performed. The data analyzed included employees who were hired and separated (including all separations) from January 2013- July 2023. This included employees that may have left the workforce in or after 2013 and may have started prior to 2013. The data was first visualized on an annual basis (as seen below) to understand the high-level trends that may be happening in staffing. The hiring and separation trends can be seen to have a disruption to historical trendlines with an increased spike of terminations and a decrease in hirings beginning around 2019.

Commented [BD47]: Speculative, way outside of scope

Commented [SS48]: We should not be talking about separations as it was not asked for in the ordinance. Remove all analysis on that.

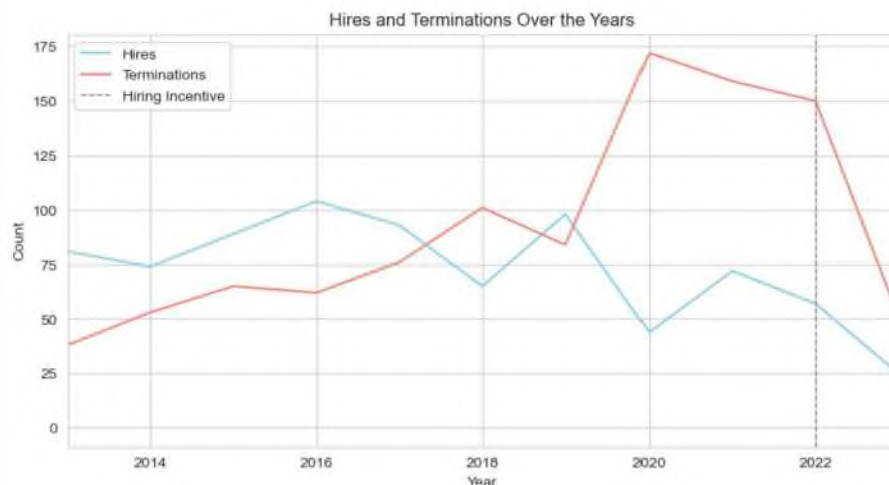
Commented [BD49]: Then cut this analysis and the whole table devoted to it

Commented [SS50R49]: Agree.

Commented [JJ51]: This set of descriptives is to set a baseline of trends over a 10 year period to understand what the incentive can compare to.

Commented [BD52R51]: Delete. Separation analysis is outside of scope

⁹ For a visual comparison of these demographics, please see the appendix.



A statistical analysis of the monthly hiring data (graphed below) found:

1. No statistically significant difference was found in hiring before versus after the incentive went into effect.
2. Although there was an improvement in hiring numbers after the incentive went into effect, it appears not to have been due to the incentive.

By transforming the data to be seen on a monthly basis (in the graph below), the data showed stationarity, meaning there was consistency in the trends that allow for a more accurate time series analysis with a stable and predictable pattern to work with.

Hiring and separation trends were analyzed in comparison to the intervention date (August 2022), as seen by the dotted line. The intervention point was defined as the point at which the most recent hiring incentive went into effect. When testing for the accuracy of this model in the time series analysis, this method proved to fit well over the time series.

T-Tests¹⁰ were initially conducted to compare hiring before and after the incentive went into effect. These results came up statistically insignificant. Potential reasons could be sample size of the workforce or other factors that impact hiring not included in this evaluation. For an additional layer of insight to the T-Tests, Auto-Regressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMA) models were built to conduct an interrupted time series analysis. The analysis compared the trends before and after the large change in hirings and terminations to the trends before and after the intervention (August 2022) to measure the impact of the incentive intervention on hire rate. Along with the actual data visualized, the chart below also plots the standardized residuals on the same axis to understand if any trends or outliers may exist in the data.

¹⁰ A T-Test is a hypothesis test in statistics used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means (average) of two groups while taking their distribution into account.

Commented [BD53]: Point one seems to contradict point two, unless you're just parsing that it wasn't statistically significant but it was real? Can you definitively know it was not due to incentive?

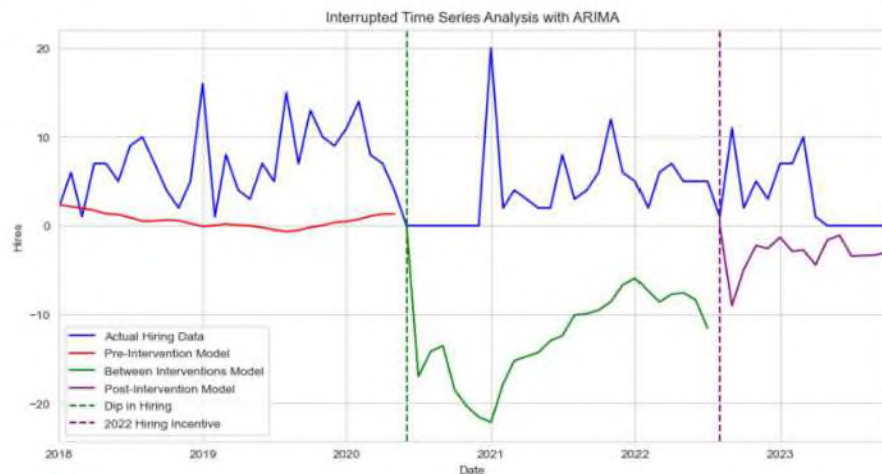
Commented [AM54R53]: I have the same issue with this.

Commented [MA55R53]: Ultimately, this report is basically inconclusive for a number of reasons. and the sample size is also super small. I struggle with understanding how we get from these two findings to the recommendation to no longer use incentives.

Commented [AM56R53]: Ultimately, this report is basically inconclusive for a number of reasons. The sample size is also super small. I struggle with understanding how we get from these two findings to the recommendation to no longer use incentives.

Commented [BD57]: This. This is all the conclusion you get. Based on available data, we did not find a statistically significant difference in hiring patterns between before the hiring incentive and after. But this was not a controlled experiment with a non-intervention group and other factors besides incentive could have impacted hiring positively or negatively during the period studied

According to the time series analysis, there was no significance found in the relationship between the intervention and the hirings that happened.



Commented [BD58]: This graph has too much going on and does not add clarity

How Much was Spent?

SPD can issue hiring incentive payments up to \$30,000 to new lateral candidates and to officers reinstated after two or more years and up to \$7,500 to new recruit candidates. The hiring incentive payments are paid in two parts. The first payment is included in the first paycheck following receipt of the signed incentive agreement, and the second payment is issued upon completion of the probationary period of twelve months of full-time work as defined in the [Public Safety Civil Service Commission \(PSCSC\) rules](#).

[ORD 126654](#) section 6E requires SPD to provide quarterly reports on the use of hiring incentives. The [2023 Q1 report](#) revised the hiring projections from 120 to 115 and the projected separations from 105 to 106, noting that 84% of the budget allocated to the Hiring Incentive 1st Payment has remained unspent. The report also provided updates on the moving expenses, recruitment technology/process, SDHR positions and other relevant budgeted expenses, including the plans for the spending that was allocated to the marketing and advertising plans later that year:

Table 5. 2023 SPD Recruitment and Retention Budget and Expenditures

	2023 Adopted Budget	2023 Expenditures (through 3/31/2023)	Remaining Balance
Total	\$3,802,030	\$228,339	\$3,573,691

It was reported that between July 13, 2022 and May 31, 2023, SPD welcomed 58 new hires and 4 lateral hires, and 2 re-hires of employees who had been gone for more than 2 years. Sixty-one employees have received their first payment:

Table 6. Hiring Incentive Payments Made

	# of first half payments	# of second half payments	Total Paid
New Hires	55	0	\$206,250
Lateral Hires	4	0	\$60,000
Rehires	2	0	\$30,000
Subtotal	61	0	\$296,250

Additionally, as of July 2023, the following incentive payments were pending employee/payroll action, or completion of the probationary period:

Table 7. Hiring Incentive Payments Pending

	# of first half payments	# of second half payments	Total Future Payments
New Hires	3	58	\$228,750
Lateral Hires	0	4	\$60,000
Rehires	0	2	\$30,000
Subtotal	3	64	\$318,750

All data is current as of 5/23/2023 and was submitted to Council on 5/31/2023¹¹. The complete report was presented by Central Staff to the Public Safety and Human Services Committee. The 2024 Q4 report is set to be presented to City Council providing an update on these numbers.

Limitations of this Report

The following data/analysis limitations should be considered for this report:

Political Awareness

Law enforcement and public safety work are political in nature and inextricably linked to issues of race and social justice in our country. Recent hiring and retention challenges within SPD are likely impacted by these factors. Any potential changes in public perception of law enforcement work in Seattle, particularly amongst the population of potential applicants, is a confounding variable that can't be controlled for or measured in this evaluation. Additionally, this study can't account for notable news events related to police that may impact public perception and interest from potential candidates.

Neighboring Data

Neighboring jurisdiction data referenced in this report was collected in 2022 and has not been updated since then. It is likely that the numbers included in the 2022 dataset have changed since it was last collected. It is also possible that some of the cities cited in that dataset as not providing different types of incentives in 2022 are now offering those incentives in 2023. Since not all this data is publicly available and we were unable to fully obtain updated data from all neighboring jurisdictions, we are not able to assess the entire applicability of the 2022 dataset in this 2023 evaluation. Analysis was only performed on

¹¹ While there were separations between July 2022 and May 2023, dollars returned based on this incentive could not be calculated due to the overlapping incentives.

Commented [NJ59]: Considering what might happen if we don't offer incentives when other neighboring agencies are is not a data limitation or a limitation to the analyses conducted in this study. This consideration is outside of the scope of this assessment, which solely calls for an evaluation on the effectiveness of the existing incentive as a method for improving hiring and retention. If this is of interest, this would need to be followed up with analysis that includes greater partnership and data sharing across other local jurisdictions that both do and do not offer incentives for a broader comparative analysis. While this is not a part of the scope of this requested analysis, this could be investigated in a future analysis as cited in the recommendations.

Commented [AM60R59]: I disagree. Removing incentives when all competitor agencies offer them is a valid consideration and should be addressed.

Commented [BD61R59]: +1

Commented [SS62R59]: It needs to be added.

Commented [BD63]: This needs to be mentioned when you're drawing conclusions from it up top

Commented [SS64]: Why was this data not collected in 2023? It seems like this would be an easy google, especially since this is when the team was working on this eval.

SPD hiring incentives, and analyzing the incentives of neighboring jurisdictions on their departments' hiring and retention rates was outside of the scope of this evaluation.

Ad Data

The ad data analyzed in this evaluation is limited to a specific point in time when the ad campaign was running. There is a chance that ad campaigns run at a different time of the year or run for a longer period could have led to different results. However, the impact of the time and length of the ad campaign are unknown.

The ad data analyzed in this evaluation originated from a campaign that posted ads on two different platforms: LinkedIn and Meta. These two platforms likely serve different demographics and attract different kinds of potential applicants. However, the impact of using two different platforms in this analysis is not directly measurable.

Only Meta provides demographic data for ad engagement. Although it was possible to slice Meta ad data by some demographics like age or gender, platform limitations in targeting made it infeasible to slice ad data by other demographics like race or ethnicity to gain a better understanding of which ads attract which audiences. This limits our ability to conduct an equity analysis on the hiring incentive marketing strategy.

The ad data analyzed is not necessarily randomized, as Meta and LinkedIn use machine learning to adjust targeting on who would seem to want to engage.

Based on the way data is collected from LinkedIn and Meta, the data was subcategorized in different sheets, with each demographic containing click-through rates of the ad type. Because of this, each sheet had to be treated as a different population and could not be compared in a cross-tabulation.

Survey Data

The mandatory survey was completed by lateral and new recruits when completing the required Before the Badge training program (a training for new recruits to attend before their mandatory Basic Law Enforcement Academy to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the people they will eventually swear to serve and protect). All program participants were required to take the survey. The first question of the survey asks if the respondent has already completed the survey before as a method of preventing duplicates. However, it is possible that some participants accidentally took the survey more than once.

Survey respondents were given the option to skip any of the survey questions. As a result, some of the completed surveys consist of data that is not usable in this evaluation.

Previous Study

The comparable, quantitative analysis of other jurisdictions included in the 2019 report was hampered by the lack of publicly available force-level data and the publication cycles of key Federal datasets.

Recommendations

Ordinance 126654 calls for the evaluation to include recommendation about whether the City should continue the use of incentives as an ongoing recruitment strategy. It's important to understand the successes and challenges in this program to know how to better solve the hiring and recruitment challenge faced in Seattle. As Mayor Harrell pointed out in the Police Recruitment and Retention Plan,

Commented [JJ65]: This section is included to mark the data limitations while analyzing the 2019 report. It would be inconsistent to keep the other limitations and pull out this one.

Commented [JJ66]: The Ordinance requests a recommendation about whether or not the City should continue to use the incentives. To be responsive, the report should offer recommendations

"This plan will continue to be iterated and improved as we evaluate success and challenges based on historical and real-time data".

The hiring incentive is a short-term intervention that does not seem to impact the long-term problem of hiring. New police hires on average give it middling ranking in importance out of five factors when surveyed for what influenced their decision to join SPD, and no respondents mentioned hiring incentives in freeform responses about why they joined SPD. The incentive payment also did not attract more clicks than salary, benefits (both of which are long-term factors of a job's compensation), or growth opportunities on recruitment ads.

Based on the data findings, the following recommendations are provided:

1. The City should not continue the use of the hiring incentive as currently designed as an ongoing recruitment strategy. Given the need to use limited City resources as effectively as possible, if the salary savings should only be used for SPD recruitment and retention, SPD should consider other incentive options as outlined in the [2023 Police Executive Research Forum report](#), which includes housing assistance, free academy training, paid salary during academy training, or improved retirement options. Other potential interventions should be explored for recruitment and hiring strategies: this could include work culture, union relations, or improving police relationships with communities. The [2019 study](#) listed various efforts to motivate recruitment efforts (many of which have been incorporated into the Recruitment and Retention Plan) and additional follow-up could be done to analyze the progress of the implementation. Additionally, in October 2023, the Justice Department released [recommendations for law enforcement agencies](#) facing recruitment and retention challenges; these short-, medium- and long- term strategies have some overlap with previous SPD efforts and should be considered.
2. Additional analyses should be performed that look into the multi-factor approach that the City is taking for improving recruitment and retention as well as the trends and influences in hiring, retention and separation. Many factors could influence hiring and retention, and a comprehensive study could investigate the role that the current incentive payments play, along with the short-term and long-term strategies being implemented. This way, efforts such as recruitment or the hiring incentive are not siloed from each other but can be seen if they work together.

Commented [AM67]: See my comment above. I think it's logical that pay and benefits are higher priorities for new hires than incentives.

Commented [AM68]: Didn't incentives have more clicks than both growth and benefits for LinkedIn ads?

Commented [BD69R68]: It received more clicks and had more impressions for the same amount spend, but because of the spread between them ended up with a lower click through rate (clicks/impressions)

Commented [AM70]: This is why the discussion on risk of removing incentives is relevant. At the very least, that risk should be further assessed prior to making this recommendation.

Commented [BD71R70]: Fundamentally the findings of this report is that the evidence about hiring incentives are inconclusive. There's no data showing that increased hiring by 1000% when implemented but also no data showing people hated the incentives or it caused a drop in hiring. The evidence is inconclusive, the recommendation is to gather more data.

Commented [BD72]: This report says that 38% of agencies have a signing bonus. That's a pretty relevant detail to dismiss out of hand.

Commented [SS73R72]: And this percentage is likely higher...

Commented [BD74]: Stop mentioning this study

Commented [AM75]: What about an analysis of the hiring trends in other jurisdictions that do and don't offer incentives?

Commented [BD76]: We are already doing this. Does not need a recommendation.

Commented [JJ77]: Separations and turnover rates are relevant to the incentive beyond its recruitment effect, which is to say its retention effect, because the ordinance is clear that the incentive gets returned if

Commented [AM78R77]: This depends on how we are evaluating the success of an incentive. Is it to get an officer in the door or to retain them? It seems like

Commented [SS79R77]: Agree with Andrew. This bullet seems out of scope. Cut.

Commented [SS80]: All of these recommendations should be either cut or re-written to the effect of:
1) Gather more data - current results are inconclusive,

Appendix

Comparison of Jurisdictions in 2022

Agency	Starting Salary	Salary Top Step	Months to Top Step	Incentives Entry	Incentives Lateral
Auburn	\$87,530	\$106,415	54	None	\$20k
Bellevue	\$78,263	\$100,231	48	None	\$16K
Everett	\$81,408	\$106,692	36	\$15K	\$30K
Federal Way	\$73,044	\$97,980	48	\$3K	\$20K
Kennewick	\$83,472	\$115,361	48	None	None
Kent	\$83,000	\$117,000	56	\$10K	\$25K
King County	\$73,401	\$102,777	36	\$7.5K	\$15K
Pasco	\$81,161	\$110,400	36	None	None
Port of Seattle	\$81,078	\$103,251	48	None	None
Puyallup	\$76,740	\$102,312	36	Unknown	Unknown
Renton	\$74,699	\$97,932	48	\$1K	\$20K
Seattle	\$87,530	\$109,512	54	\$7.5K	\$30K
Spokane	\$55,645	\$101,226	54	None	None
Tacoma	\$78,998	\$109,200	48	None	\$25K
Vancouver	\$75,612	\$101,328	84	\$10K	\$25K

Commented [SS81]: Port offers incentives.

Commented [HM82R81]: @Dalgetty, Ben I found a port JD that has "currently offering of \$10,000 for hiring incentives". I'll check with the team, but it's possible that the Port wasn't offering during the period of this evaluation hence why the chart reflects no incentive.

Hiring & Separation Visual Comparisons

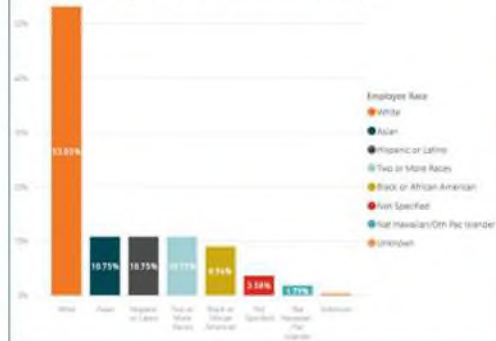
2019 Incentive Demographics (Hirings, Separation, Hiring & Left):

Commented [BD83]: Why do we keep talking about 2019 and referencing that data?

SPD Officers (by Gender) hired since March 2019



SPD Officers (by Race) hired since March 2019



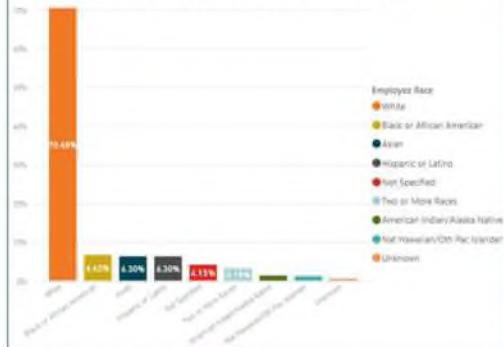
SPD Officers (by Zip) hired since March 2019



SPD Officers (by Gender) separated since March 2019



SPD Officers (by Race) separated since March 2019



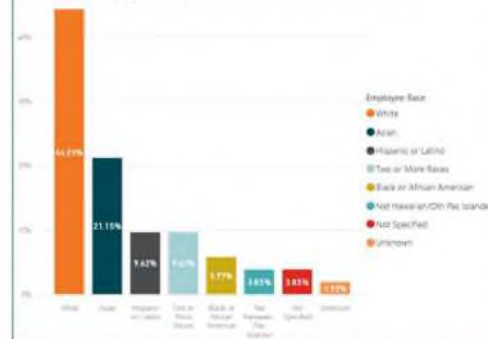
SPD Officers (by Zip) separated since March 2019



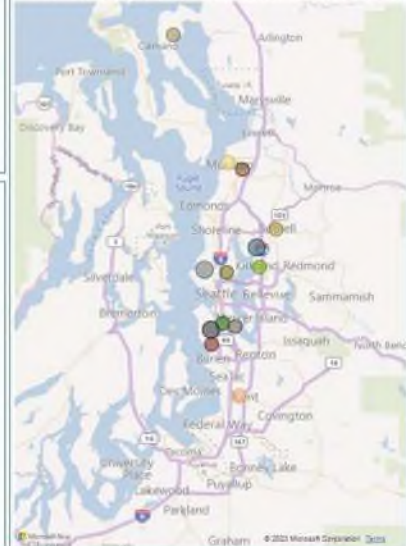
SPD Officers (by Gender) hired & left since March 2019



SPD Officers (by Race) hired & left since March 2019



SPD Officers (by Zip) hired & left since March 2019

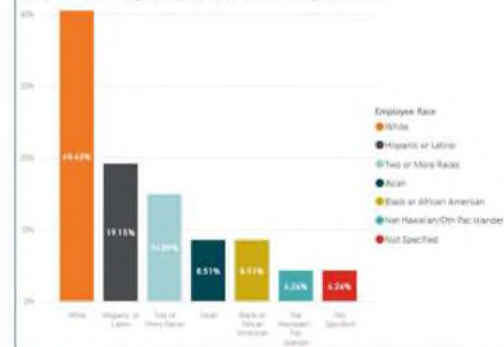


2021 Hiring Incentive Demographics (Hirings, Separations, Hiring & Left):

SPD Officers (by Gender) hired since August 2022



SPD Officers (by Race) hired since August 2022



SPD Officers (by Zip) hired since August 2022

