

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, which authorizes hiring incentive payments. This evaluation relied on quantitative and qualitative sources including HR data, employee surveys, and advertising analytics.

This evaluation report was written by the Innovation & Performance (IP) 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. This was a limited evaluation and not a randomized study, resulting in multiple factors that contributed to these findings, such as the duration of the incentive, amount of the incentive, data limitations, union relations, political climate, etc.

The sources of data used in this evaluation include:

- **Demographically Disaggregated Recruitment (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. (Please Note: it takes six to ten months for an officer to be hired from the time of the application so all new hires' start date had applied six months prior, which should be considered for all comparisons around the hiring incentive.)
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Previous Reports and Existing Literature:** Comparison to City-authored reports on recent SPD hiring incentives, including review of existing literature on national studies on hiring and retention incentives.

Commented [BT1]: I will have further comments on this conclusion later in the doc.

Commented [BT2]: Public safety was added to my portfolio in late July 2023 and significant changes were made: 1) we hired an outside ad agency to help with messaging and media placements, 2) we developed new messages and tested those messages in the marketplace, and 3) we began the process of shifting SDHR positions to SPD, along with other changes. This doesn't bear on this analysis but wanted to give that as context.

Commented [TB3]: Does this mean refunded to SPD because the officer who benefited from the incentive did not work long enough?

Commented [HM4R3]: Yes, that is what this means - we can flesh this out so that is clearer. It also might be helpful for us to see how many of the police officers actually returned the incentive.

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Background

This is not the first time hiring incentives have been authorized in recent years. In 2019, the Council passed [ORD 125875](#), which authorized a similar one-time hiring incentive and called for the same evaluation as instructed in ORD 126654 (sunset June 2020). During this time, a Recruitment and Retention Workgroup was created to understand better 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 included 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.

In October 2021, an Emergency Order was issued which authorized one-time hiring incentives that was implemented through January 2022. 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.

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 2020¹. 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 nationwide are raising concerns about current and future staffing levels."*

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

¹ January 2020 - June 2022, Hires =162, Separations =466, Net Loss of 304

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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".

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 who stay for five years of their hire, then more recruits will be motivated to join SPD, which will result in an increased public safety workforce and a safer Seattle."

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 per 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. Both the findings of the 2019 and 2022 analyses were considered in the planning phase of this evaluation. This report aims to take a closer look at the impacts of hiring incentive payments since the program's implementation in August 2022.

Data and Methods

The following information was requested in the ordinance:

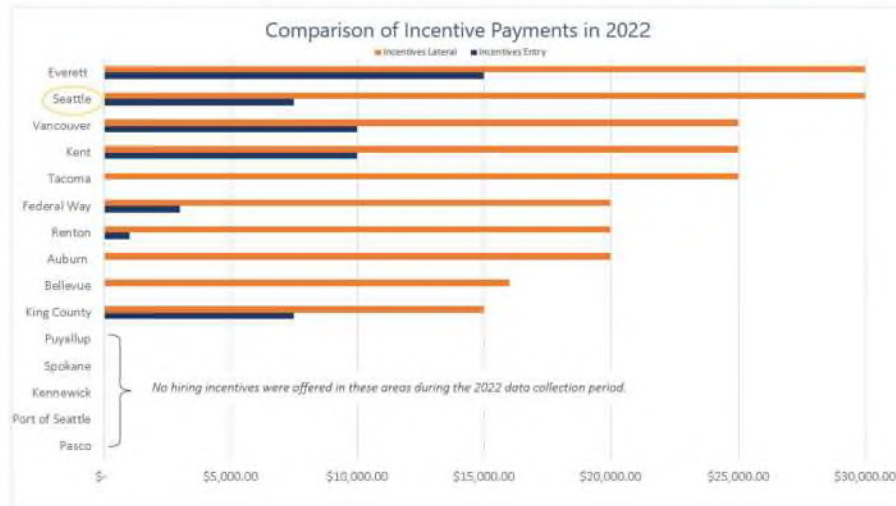
1. How the incentive compares with similar incentives offered by other local and state law enforcement agencies;
2. Responses to survey questions that specifically identify:
 - a. Whether the hiring incentive contributed to a new recruit's decision to work in policing versus another profession;
 - b. 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.

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

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What is Seattle offering in comparison with other jurisdictions?

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



Commented [BT5]: I'm not sure this graphic is accurate. Here is a link to what we presented to the Council in 2022: https://seattlegov-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/tim_burgess_seattle_gov/EXJAToFDU1tPnLEGqhGTfQUBKEt8BR9z4qeC16cZPFoEag?e=ZLBoWH

Commented [HM6R5]: We can look into this - the team received the data from SPD, the last dataset that they had - they were not able to get new data from other jurisdictions.

14 other agencies across Washington State were considered in what they offer in terms of incentives, salaries, and additional benefits.² The data referenced in the chart above was collected in 2022. Since then, in 2023 Puyallup and the Port of Seattle have implemented \$10,000 police hiring incentives as a part of their recruitment package.

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.

This evaluation compared agencies that were listed in this ordinance, and other cities of similar size to Seattle along the West Coast were not taken into consideration. Cities such as San Jose, San Francisco/Bay Area, Sacramento, San Diego, Long Beach, and Portland did offer police hiring incentives in

²In 2022, Puyallup, Spokane, Kennewick, and Pasco did not offer any hiring incentives, in other words \$0 in the graph. Puyallup has since started offering incentives. See Appendix for the detailed list of the 2022 comparisons.

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2023 ranging from \$5,000 - \$25,000. Further analysis could examine comparisons to cities across the West Coast that have similar properties as Seattle to better understand hiring practices and trends.

Who was Reached through the Ads?

Specific recruitment ads were run in 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 by the two platforms. Ad Results were based on Click-through Rate (CTR)³ – which is number of clicks divided by number of impressions⁴ (number of times people saw the ad).

There were 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 subcategory containing incomplete click-through rates of the ad types. For this evaluation, the data was filtered to the United States as the subcategory because this approach had the most complete data to analyze with over 99% of the total audience represented for each of the four ad types.

What Motivated Clicks?

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) testing was performed across the four ads' engagement levels for each platform. 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 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.

The ads' click-through rates on the two platforms are shown in the tables and graphs below:

³ 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).

⁴ 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.

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LinkedIn's Platform:

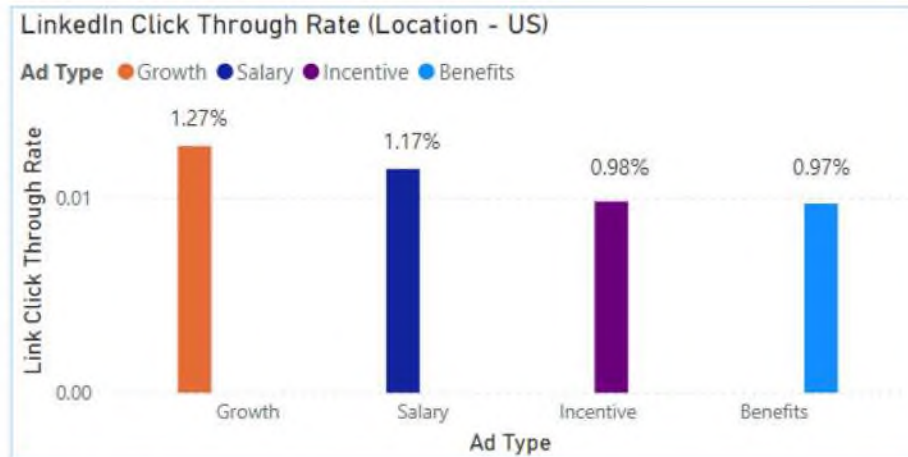


Table 1. LinkedIn Ads CTR by Ad Type

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%

Meta's Platforms:

Commented [BT7]: Are there statistically significant differences between these click-through rates? I'm not sure this supports your finding that incentives don't help.

Commented [HM8R7]: @Jordan, Janis can you please respond to this one.

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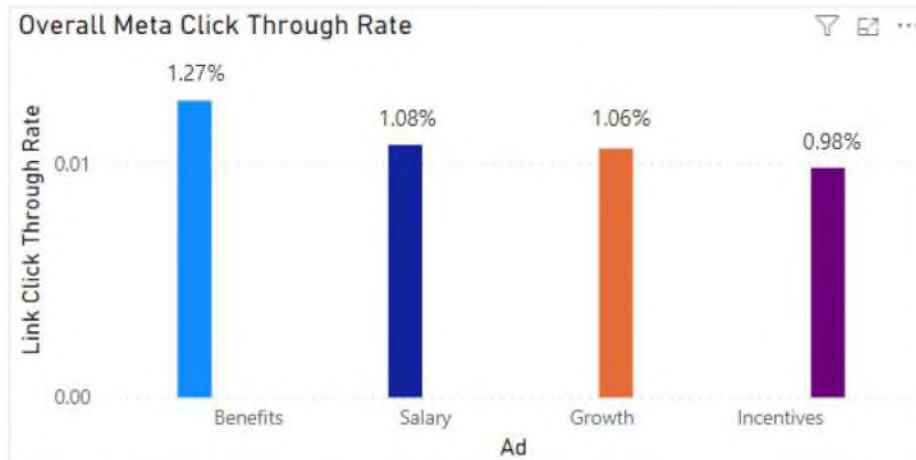


Table 2. Meta Ads CTR by Ad Type

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%

What Motivated New Hires?

There were 81 respondents⁵ to the Hiring, Recruitment & Retention survey, of whom seven responded they had previously taken the survey that was conducted between July 13, 2022 - May 31, 2023. 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. Overall, incentive pay was ranked third out of five in importance in the decision to become a Seattle Police Officer. 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.

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

⁵ Please see appendix for the descriptives of the demographics of those who filled out the survey.

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Commented [BT9]: Same here. Are these rates significantly different?

Commented [HM10R9]: @Jordan, Janis

Commented [TL11]: Why this time period? My understanding is the time period for the study should be August 2022-November 2023 (15 months after the inception of the R&R plan)

Commented [TL12]: Says 60 responses here, but the graph says 59. What was the total number of new applicants and lateral transfers during this time?

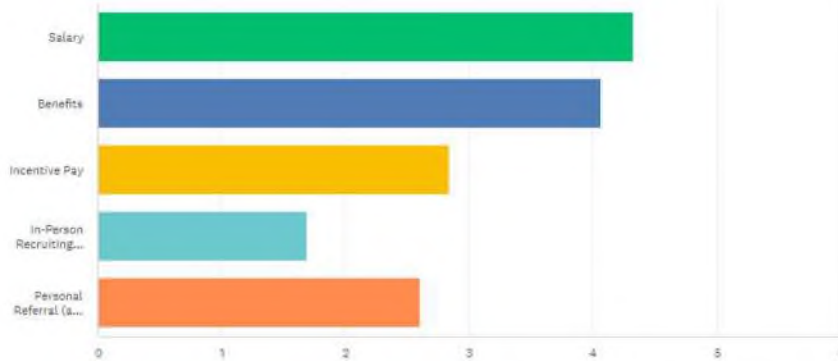
Commented [BD13]: @Hernandez, Madeliene @Jordan, Janis I would still push for this to be moved to appendix. I find it confusing to references all these demographics right before diving into a demographics section.

Commented [BD14R13]: The point of this survey was how people felt about the incentive and that should be what is spotlighted in the report, this makes it seem like the point was new hire demographics.

Commented [JJ15R13]: Oh the deleting did not show up! It is in the appendix and was supposed to be removed here.

Rank the following from most to least important in your decision to become a Seattle Police Officer.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 23



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.

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.. Another analysis could be done to provide a deeper dive into motivations of becoming a Seattle Police Officer.

Demographic, Race & Social Justice Analysis:

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 and separated from January 2013- July 2023 to understand the overall hiring trends and understand the effect the 2022 incentive had on these trends. Both hiring and separation data were included because section 6 (part b) of the ordinance requires "hiring incentives paid to new recruits, lateral transfers, and reinstated officers who leave Seattle Police Department employment before five years of completed service must be paid back to the City". This means then, that hiring data alone is not enough to understand the policy impact, and separations need to also be examined. However, this analysis does not isolate the incentive's impact on someone's decision to stay or leave—there are many variables that affect such important decisions.

The key findings of this equity analysis⁶ are:

1. 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 before the 2022 incentive.

⁶ Full analysis and methods of this demographic, racial and social justice analysis can be found in the appendix.

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Commented [TB16]: This is quite a leap, in my view. The "halo" effect in this type of research can be very strong, especially if the respondent believes a truthful answer will make them look bad. Or, in this case, greedy. How do you know that the respondents didn't include incentives when they mentioned salary and benefits? I don't believe you can conclude from this that the incentives were not an attraction.

Commented [TB17]: I believe you are on stronger ground with your conclusions here. But I would note that the diversity of new hires has gotten even better since the changes we implemented beginning in late July, except for women.

- Those who were both **hired and left** the department since the 2022 incentive comprise a different racial/ethnic mix than those hired in that time frame, suggesting different experiences with different demographic groups. All employees who were hired and left since the 2022 incentive started to be offered—having to return their incentive payments— have been BIPOC; the sample size, though, is too small to draw observations or conclusions. Further analysis should be done to understand what underlies these different trends in hiring and longevity with the department. (10.6% of the employees who were hired since the incentive have left.)

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. Further analysis should be done to see what's motivated them. A Chi-Square test⁷ 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.

Employees were compared between those hired since 2013, separated since 2013, and those who were both hired and left 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 as well as the to the [Seattle population](#), in accordance with the 2020 Census:

Table 3. Demographically Disaggregated Hiring Statistics

Employee Race/Ethnicity	Hiring Comparisons	
	Hired August 1, 2021-July 31, 2022 (aggregate, %)	Hired August 1, 2022-July 31, 2023 (aggregate, %)
White	54.55	40.43
2+ Races	12.12	14.89
Hispanic/Latino	12.12	19.15
Black/African American	7.58	8.51
Asian	10.61	8.51
Nat.Hawaiian/Other Pac. Islander	3.03	4.26
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-
Unknown	-	-
Not Specified	-	4.26

There was no statistical significance found in the relationship between changes in diversity of new hires and the incentive. The table was compared to the Seattle population, in accordance with the 2020

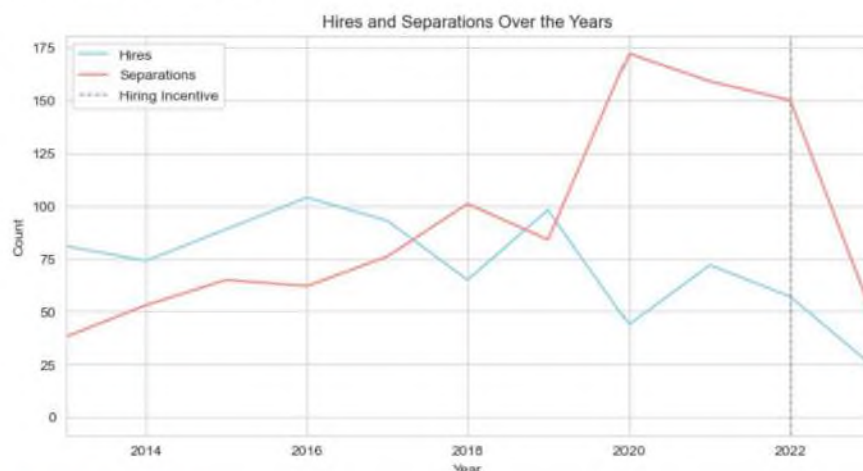
⁷ A Chi-Square Test is a hypothesis test used in statistics designed to test the significance of relationships between categorical variables.

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Census. Populations that are disproportionately lower notably lower are Asian (16.9% of the Seattle population) and American Indian/Alaskan Native (.4% of the Seattle population).

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 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.



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

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	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 5/31/2023⁸. 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 are 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.

⁸ 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.

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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 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.

Competitor Agencies

Given that many competitor agencies both locally and nationally are offering police hiring incentives, this analysis does not consider what the impacts would be on Seattle's police recruitment if the City did not offer a hiring incentive.

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.

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Commented [N(18)]: I'd suggest you add more content here to explain why you didn't. I fully expect skeptics will gravitate toward this.

Commented [TB19R18]: You acknowledge that you don't know what would happen if Seattle discontinued using incentives, but you said earlier that they aren't a factor in motivating applicants to apply. So which is it?

Commented [HM20R18]: @Smith, Sarah @Dalgetty, Ben let's talk about this one - this was an added limitations based on your feedback.

Commented [SS21R18]: @Hernandez, Madeliene This was a point that @Myerberg, Andrew and I both raised. Originally the recommendation was that this report should consider what would happen if we didn't offer incentives given that other competitor agencies will be. I believe someone said that was out of scope for the work, so we then asked for it to be mentioned as a limitation of the report.

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 staffing data and the publication cycles of key Federal datasets.

Recommendations

Ordinance 126654 calls for the evaluation to include a recommendation on 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, "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. This evaluation found that incentive pay did not significantly impact police hiring numbers compared to other recruitment factors within the timeframe of the analysis.

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

1. Given that this evaluation was limited, and not a randomized control study, the City should conduct a multi-year analysis and evaluation of cash police hiring incentives as well as consider other incentive interventions 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 to see if there is a difference in motivation based on incentive type.
2. According to the 2022-2023 survey, there was no single motivating factor to attract new recruits to Seattle's police force during the time of the incentive. The City should identify additional recruitment strategies as well as continue other improvements that have been incorporated into the Recruitment and Retention Plan following the [2019 study](#). 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.
3. Lastly, further analysis should be done for a more comprehensive view of motivating factors beyond just factors such as salary or hiring incentives as well as their impact on long-term retention of police officers including a demographic, race, and social justice analysis. The City should look at hiring trends of both neighboring, state, and cities of similar size to Seattle, considering what the impacts would be if Seattle offered no incentive at all, out the neighboring agencies 10 out of 14, or 71% of agencies offered lateral or new hire incentives. The City should also consider analyzing data of previous iterations of the hiring incentives since its inception and look at the impacts of hiring trends when the SPD did and did not have the incentive in place.

Commented [TB22]: Are you sure? I think your evaluation found that it is too soon to determine this. You would be on stronger ground if you reported your research as inconclusive. Why? Because you are relying on self-reported impressions without the precision of drilling down with recruits to uncover other motivators. Further, before 2022, the use of incentives was inconsistent.

Commented [TB23]: Recruits in Seattle are paid full-time wages while attending the academy, and the academy doesn't cost them anything. We don't offer housing assistance but have brainstormed how we might. Our recruits are paid full-time BEFORE they enter the academy during the Before the Badge program.

Commented [TB24R23]: Retirement benefits are already among the best in the country. Offering bridge medical coverage between retirement and 65 would be nice when one qualifies for Medicare, but this is very expensive.

Commented [TB25]: Determining core motivations is very difficult for any job, let alone policing. There are research examples we could lean on from the private sector, but merely asking someone what motivated them usually does not uncover core motivations.

[APG]

Appendix

Literature Review Sources

A literature review that looks at evaluations and findings from the City and outside agencies have been linked and referenced throughout the report were considered to inform this evaluation and recommendations. While other pieces of legislation and fiscal summaries can still be found linked in the report, below are the studies referenced:

1. 2019 Ordinance:
<https://seattle.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7109058&GUID=562565AC-68E0-4272-BDC5-1B5AE51CD9DC>
2. 2019 Recruitment and Retention Report:
<https://dn790006.ca.archive.org/0/items/6400158-SPDRecrRetain-Report-vFinal/6400158-SPDRecrRetain-Report-vFinal.pdf>
3. 2022 SDHR Response to SLI:
<https://council.seattle.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Response-to-SLI-CBO-013-A-002-Citywide-Hiring-Incentives.pdf>
4. 2023 Police Executive Research Forum Report, "Responding to the Staffing Crisis: Innovations in Recruitment and Retention":
<https://www.policeforum.org/assets/RecruitmentRetention.pdf>
5. 2023 US Department of Justice Report, "Recruitment and Retention for the Modern Law Enforcement Agency":
<https://www.policeforum.org/assets/RecruitmentRetention.pdf>

Demographics of New Hire Survey

Of those who filled out the survey, the following demographics noted:

- Of the 60 responses to the Hiring, Recruitment & Retention survey, 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.

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

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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

Additional Data, Racial and Social Justice Analysis

Table A. Demographically Disaggregated Hiring Statistics

Employee Race/Ethnicity	Hiring Comparison			
	2020 Census (%)	Current Staffing as of July 2023 (%) ⁹	Hired Since Current Incentive, August 2022 (%)	Hired Since 2019 Incentive, March 2019 (%)
White	59.50	63.50	40.43	53.05
2+ Races	7.30	6.90	14.89	10.75
Hispanic/Latino	8.20	7.10	19.15	10.75
Black/African American	6.80	8.0	8.51	8.96
Asian	16.90	7.10	8.51	10.75
Nat. Hawaiian/Other Pac. Islander	0.30	1.20	4.26	1.79
American Indian/Alaska Native	.040	1.10	-	-
Unknown	-	0.10	-	0.36
Not Specified	-	4.90	4.26	3.58

Table B. 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

⁹ 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.

[APG]

Commented [HM26]: CBO & MO still discussing whether this section of the appendix is included in the final report.

Commented [SS27R26]: @Dingley, Julie This is the section I want to cut. Let's chat about it today if we can find time.

Commented [TB28R26]: What conclusions should I draw from this table? The demographic mix of hires since August 2022 matches or exceeds overall city demographics. Hiring since March 2019 is good as well, but not quite as good as the 2022 numbers. So, what is the point here?

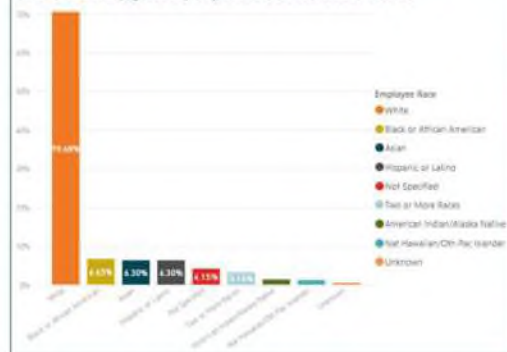
2+ Races	6.90	100% of employees who were hired and left since August 2022 are BIPOC ¹⁰	9.62
Hispanic/Latino	7.10		9.62
Black/African American	8.0		5.77
Asian	7.10		21.15
Nat. Hawaiian/Other Pac. Islander	1.20		3.85
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.10		-
Unknown	0.10		1.92
Not Specified	4.90		3.85

Commented [TB29]: How many employees hired and left since August 2022 have left? What is this body count? Does this mean left for any reason? So, not one white officer was hired and then left since August 2022?

SPD Officers (by Gender) separated since March 2019



SPD Officers (by Race) separated since March 2019



SPD Officers (by Zip) separated since March 2019



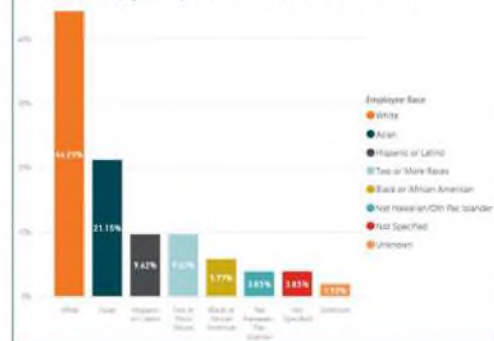
¹⁰ Due to the small percentage of staff that were hired and left, this set was disaggregated on BIPOC to Non-BIPOC level to protect employee privacy.

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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



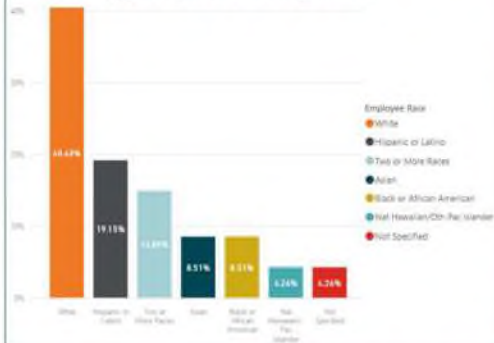
2022 Hiring Incentive Demographics (Hirings, Separations, Hiring & Left):

[APG]

SPD Officers (by Gender) hired since August 2022



SPD Officers (by Race) hired since August 2022



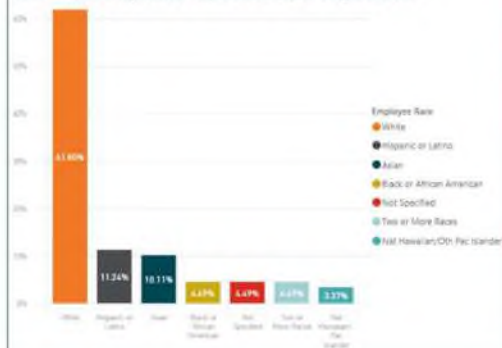
SPD Officers (by Zip) hired since August 2022



SPD Officers (by Gender) separated since August 2022



SPD Officers (by Race) separated since August 2022



SPD Officers (by Zip) separated since August 2022



[APG]

The visuals for the demographics of SPD officers who were *Hired and Left* since August 2022 was omitted due to the small population and risk of identifiable information.

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

- 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.

Commented [TB30]: These three bullets all say the same thing.

Commented [HM31R30]: @Jordan, Janis can you clarify? These sentences seem redundant but it looks like you are referring to different races in each bullet.

[APG]