



Memorandum

TO: PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE AND STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

FROM: Anthony Mata

SUBJECT: POLICE DEPARTMENT RECRUITMENT AND HIRING ACTIVITY ANNUAL REPORT

DATE: August 2, 2023

Approved

Date

9/12/2023

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the annual report on Police Department sworn and Communications personnel recruitment and hiring activity for Fiscal Year 2022-2023, including recruiting climate, communication/marketing activities and analysis, qualified applicant pool diversity, resignation data, and sworn demographic data by rank.

BACKGROUND

On December 1, 2015, as part of their review of the Police Department Hiring Audit, the City Council directed the City Manager to report to the Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Support Committee on the San José Police Academy recruitment cycle with a Recruitment Activity Report, beginning in spring 2016. On October 4, 2016, the City Council heard and accepted a report from the Chief of Police entitled “*Police Department Staffing and Discussion of Options to Address the Unprecedented Low Staffing Levels in the Patrol Division,*”¹ which included a detailed overview of the Department’s police officer recruiting efforts. Subsequently, the Police Department provided semi-annual reports on police officer recruitment activity beginning in October 2016. As part of its consideration of the October 18, 2018, Recruitment Activity Report, the Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Support Committee directed those future reports be provided on an annual basis. This report is the fifth annual report, covering Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

In response to an information request from a Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Support Committee member, the Department presented information on the Department’s demographics as part of the February 18, 2021, *San José Police Department Operations and Performance Bi-Monthly Status Report*. The information included statistics on the gender and ethnicity of the Department as a whole, and at each rank within the Department. At the conclusion of the report, the Committee asked the Department to continue to provide demographic information annually

¹ Council report: http://sanJose.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&event_id=2156&meta_id=594329

as part of the Recruitment Activity Annual Report. This is the third annual recruiting report containing demographic information.

In summary, this report includes the following information for sworn personnel:

- Recruiting climate
- Recruiting Unit budget and activities
- Marketing, advertising, and social media
- Gender and ethnicity
- Resignations and retirements
- Diversity in recruiting practices
- Recruiting non-sworn personnel

Information regarding general recruitment and hiring activity for Communications personnel is also provided.

ANALYSIS

Recruiting Climate

The San José Police Department Recruiting Unit currently accepts police officer applications year-round and holds three academies per fiscal year in October, February, and June. The recruiting cycle is approximately four months per academy class. However, the timeline for each recruit may vary from four to nine months from the time of application to final enrollment in the Police Academy. This variation depends on when the applicant applies during a hiring cycle, as well as the complexity of the applicant’s background.

Initial enrollment in the past several academies has continually decreased. However, the number of recruits to graduate each of the last three classes has remained consistent. The below table shows the initial enrollment and results of the last three academy classes completed during Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

Academy Class	Began with	Graduated	Did not graduate
	<i>Recruits</i>	<i>Recruits</i>	<i>Recruits</i>
SJ 43 (Feb. 2022-Sept. 2022)	37	19	18
SJ 44 (June 2022-Feb. 2023)	28	22	6
SJ 45 (Oct. 2022-May 2023)	26	19	7
Total	91	60	31

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 3

There are two classes currently in progress at the Police Academy. The below table shows the initial enrollment and current status of each as of July 31, 2023.

Academy Class	Began with	Current	Change so far
	<i>Recruits</i>	<i>Recruits</i>	<i>Recruits</i>
SJ 46 (Feb. 2023-Sept. 2023)	19	14	5
SJ 47 (June 2023-Feb. 2024)	27	25	2
Total	46	39	7

Staffing for sworn personnel within the Department fluctuates based on the distinction between authorized staffing numbers, the number of “street ready” officers, and the number of “active full-duty” sworn officers. On June 30, 2023, the Department was budgeted for 1,173 sworn positions. However, 97 of those positions were vacant, 40 were in the Field Training Program, and 42 were in Academy Class 46, leaving the total number of “street ready” officers at 994. Additionally, of those 994 street ready officers, 73 were on disability, modified duty, or other leave, leaving a total of 921 active full-duty sworn officers.

	Officers
Budgeted Positions	1,173
Vacancies	97
Field Training Program	40
Academy Class	42
Street ready officers	994

	Officers
Street ready officers	994
Disability	22
Modified duty	32
Other leave	19
Active full duty	921

Four lateral officers have been hired from other agencies during this fiscal year, two of which were “rehires,” or officers who had previously worked at the police department. Over the past four years, we have hired 29 lateral officers, 10 of which had previously worked at the San José Police Department. The following table shows lateral officers, including police department rehires, over the past four years.

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 4

Fiscal Year	Lateral Officers from other agencies	SJPD re-hires	Total
2019-2020	8	4	12
2020-2021	3	2	5
2021-2022	6	2	8
2022-2023	2	2	4
Total	19	10	29

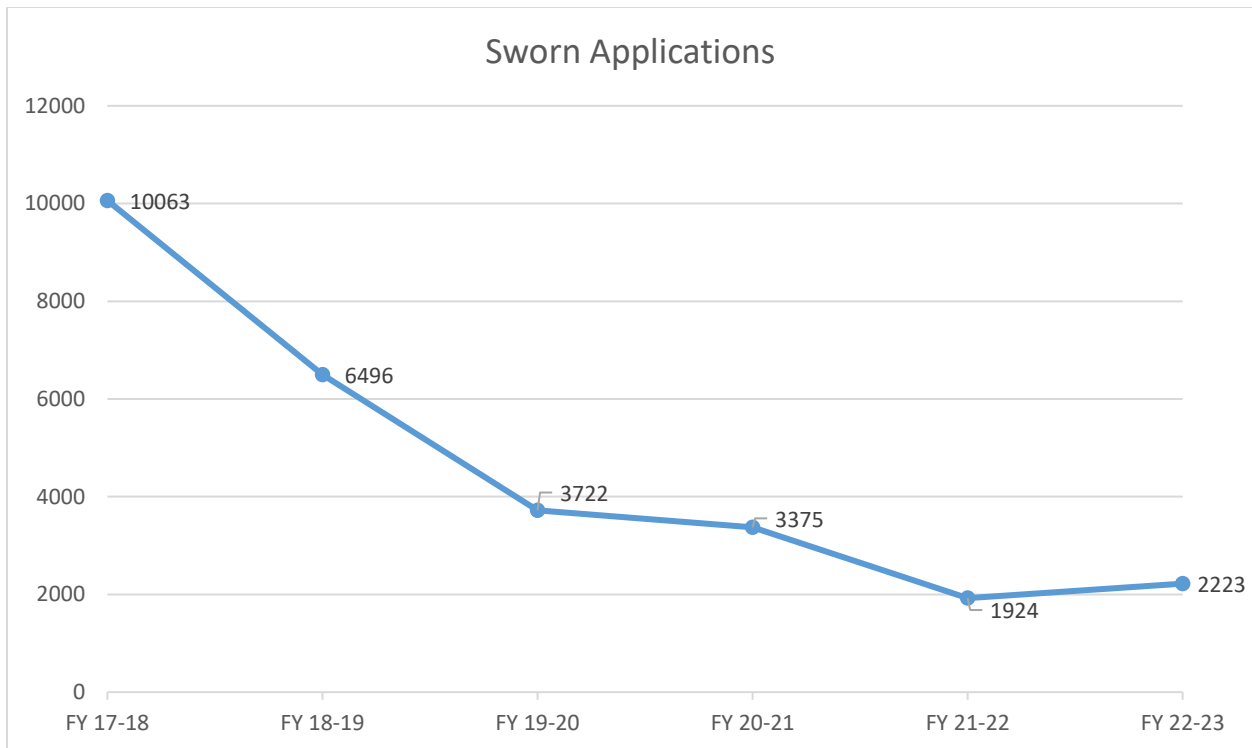
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the San José Police Department experienced success with recruiting efforts and filled academy classes with an average of 40 recruits per cycle. During the height of the pandemic, the Department’s recruiting numbers dipped, and finding qualified applicants has continued to be a challenge even as the pandemic has waned.

During the pandemic, the Department benefited from the fact that almost all of our neighboring law enforcement agencies instituted a “hiring freeze” and made no attempts to recruit and/or hire new police officers for approximately 18-24 months. This enabled the Department to capitalize on almost every recruiting opportunity in Northern California. For example, the Peace Officer Standards and Training Entry Level Law Enforcement Test Battery is the certified, California-specific, standardized written test for law enforcement and it is offered by many police training facilities throughout the state. During the hiring freeze, most of our neighbor agencies were only able to test and train recruits, not hire them for full-time employment. Members of the San José Police Recruiting Unit traveled to many of these testing sites and were given the opportunity to provide in-person recruiting presentations to testing classes of on average 30-60 applicants. These candidates were interested in law enforcement, paid a fee to take the standardized test, and were congregated in a single location. Almost none of them had any solid job prospects. This gave us an excellent opportunity to discuss the benefits of working at the San José Police Department, without competing interest from other agencies.

As of today, September 2023, every law enforcement agency in the state is proactively recruiting and hiring. We are no longer the only agency giving a presentation at testing events and now must set up an outside booth along with up to a dozen other agencies. Once again, virtually every neighboring agencies is competing for the applicants at recruiting events. Many of these agencies offer lucrative hiring incentives. The San José Police Department hired a total of 75 police recruits and laterals during this fiscal year which is down by 32% from the previous fiscal year.

The number of applications received by the Department in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 is higher than those received in Fiscal Year 2021-2022. The total number of applications received this year was 2,223 compared to 1,924 applications received during the previous fiscal year. That is an

increase of 299 applications, which represents a 16% overall increase. Despite the increase from the last fiscal year, the number of applications is still significantly down from Fiscal Year 2017-2018 and Fiscal Year 2018-2019, during which the Department received 10,063 and 6,496 applications respectively. A report from the Police Executive Research Forum documents that the decline in applications is a national trend. The Police Executive Research Forum stated, “The policing profession is facing a workforce crisis. Fewer people are applying to become police officers, and more people are leaving the profession, often after only a few years on the job.”² The following chart illustrates the number of applications received by the Department over the last six years.



Source: Recruiting Unit - NeoGov

The Police Executive Research Forum report points to several potential causes for this trend, including the complex challenges faced by modern police departments, such as the need for officers to spend a significant amount of time doing work that is more akin to social work than to law enforcement.

The Department will continue its recruiting efforts in Fiscal Year 2023-2024. At a minimum, the Department needs to keep up with attrition, which can be difficult to project. The Department is able to project the number of officers who will retire during a future fiscal year, but it is impossible to project how many will resign, be terminated, or resign in lieu of termination during

² Police Executive Research Forum, *The Workforce Crisis, and What Police Agencies Are Doing About It*, (2019), <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/WorkforceCrisis.pdf>

that period. For example, the Department projected that 47 sworn personnel would retire during Fiscal Year 2022-2023, but the total number of officers to leave the Department was 139. The San José Police Department must also brace itself against a nationwide trend of increased attrition. Law enforcement agencies across the entire nation are experiencing an increase in both retirements and non-retirement resignations. The New York Times reported that “a survey of almost 200 police departments indicated that retirements were up 45 percent and resignations rose by 18 percent in the year from April 2020 to April 2021 when compared with the previous 12 months, according to the Police Executive Research Forum, a Washington policy institute.” The Times added, “New York City saw 2,600 officers retire in 2020 compared with 1,509 the year before. Resignations in Seattle increased to 123 from 34 and retirements to 96 from 43. Minneapolis, which had 912 uniformed officers in May 2019, is now down to 699.”³

Recruiting Unit Budget and Activities

For Fiscal Year 2022-2023, the Recruiting Unit’s budget allocation was \$2.4 million, with expenditures and commitments for the year totaling \$3.293 million through the end of the fiscal year. (Note: these funds represent only Recruiting Unit expenditures. The costs of the Background Unit are not included.)

The allotted overtime budget for the Recruiting Unit was \$370,444 and the actual amount spent was \$888,018. The Recruiting Unit exceeded its overtime budget during the previous Fiscal Years 2021-2022 and 2020-2021 by more than \$95,000 and \$179,000 respectively. One of the primary cost drivers for the Recruiting Unit was overtime. Overtime costs are high mainly due to recruiting events Department personnel must attend. Most of these events are on weekends and/or in the evening on weekdays. Often, there are two events at the same time at different locations which require additional staff. At the end of November 2022, the Recruiting Unit opened a recruiting center at Oakridge Mall. The recruiting center is open three days a week and is staffed by Police Department personnel on overtime.

As mentioned above, every law enforcement agency in the state is actively recruiting and hiring. To set us apart from other agencies, the Recruiting Unit provides personal attention and follow-up to ensure applicants have a clear understanding of the process and any additional steps they may need to take. The Recruiting Unit is dedicated to guiding applicants through the process, answering questions, and providing support whenever necessary. During Fiscal Year 2022-2023, the Recruiting Unit implemented a text messaging process that allows us to engage with applicants through text messaging. With the success of text messaging, the Recruiting Unit implemented a Meet the Recruiter Question & Answer, through which applicants can meet the recruiting staff and ask any questions they may have. These engagements take place after the applicants are off from work and school, which is outside of the Recruiting Unit’s work hours.

During Fiscal Year 2022-2023, general and overtime expenses funded in-person and virtual recruiting events and career and job fairs at colleges and universities, military bases, unaffiliated

³ The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/24/us/police-resignations-protests-asheville.html> (6/24, A1, MacFarquhar)

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 7

police academies, and outside Peace Officer Standards and Training testing sites. These included the following:

- South Bay Regional Training Center presentations (67)
- College/Universities class presentations (48)
- High school/middle school/grade school (6)
- Presentations at military bases (12)
- Non-affiliated police academy presentations (3)
- Career/job fair booths/community events (133)

Community events attended by Department recruiters included, but were not limited to, the Vietnamese Moon Festival, Tet Festival, Black April Commemoration, Vietnamese events at Grand Century, Vietnamese Language School, Assyrian Festival, Greek Festival, Italian Festival, Sikh Gurdwara Celebration, and National Night Out.

In addition, overtime expenses fund staffing for the following events:

- Physical agility testing at the Substation (20)
- Peace Officer Standards and Training Entry Level Law Enforcement Test Battery testing at the Substation (12)
- Nation Testing Network testing at the Substation (7)
- Zoom oral board preparations classes (29)
- Communication information sessions (10)
- Meet the Recruiter Q&A presentations (8)
- Conducting oral board testing for sworn, Communications, Records, and CSOs (22)
- Oakridge Mall Recruiting Center (92)
- Wednesday Night Fitness Series sessions (52)

All these events are critical to the ongoing recruiting efforts for the Department. The Recruiting Unit recognized the potential value in conducting our own in-house testing for candidates, as it ensures candidates are not recruited by competing agencies during the testing process. As such, the Recruiting Unit is certified to test for the physical agility and written tests. While some testing costs are offset by accepting scores for unaffiliated candidates from the academy at South Bay Regional Public Safety Training, the number of candidates being tested by the Department remains steady.

Staffing within the Recruiting Unit is currently two civilian administrative staff, two full-duty officers, one full-time Communications Recruiter, and one full-duty sergeant. Personnel from throughout the Department are used to assist as test administrators and satellite recruiters on an overtime basis, as needed.

Marketing, Advertising, and Social Media

The Department renewed its contract with Civilian, Inc., a professional marketing firm, during this fiscal year. The agreement began in February of 2023 and will expire in March of 2024. The

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 8

total cost is \$200,000. The objective of Civilian, Inc. is to increase recruiting efficiency in finding and retaining highly qualified candidates. Civilian, Inc.'s campaign strategy is designed to reach audiences representing the diversity of San José's residents, as well as women, military personnel, college students, and police officers employed at other agencies. This strategy includes the use of social media tools (advertising through Indeed, Facebook, Google, LinkedIn) and using programmatic display tactics (banners). The Department also introduced a new series of video and media advertisements that feature several Department members.

Since the new term with Civilian Inc. began in March of 2023, the Department has received 881 sworn applications. Additionally, we received 531 applications for Communications, Records, and Community Service Officers during that same time. The total payment to Civilian, Inc. for this contract was \$41,427.15. That puts the cost per application at approximately \$29.34 each. The consultant and the Recruiting Unit learn from each campaign and activity. Strategies and tactics are redirected to the best-performing digital marketing tools. The goal is to reach the highest number of individuals within the target audiences. To do so, the campaign uses location-based Geo-fencing technology (virtual geographic boundaries using Global Positioning System data). Civilian, Inc. has been highly successful in reaching audiences throughout the region and country. Our plan is to utilize them for targeting recruitment efforts toward events in which the Department participates. This way, prospective applicants will be informed in advance about the locations where they can meet our recruiters and the specific dates for testing with us.

As part of their contract with the Department, Civilian, Inc. uses the Indeed platform. Indeed is one of the most successful job recruiting platforms in the world for all types of organizations, not just law enforcement. In an effort to streamline the tracking of sworn applications, the Recruiting Unit recently began a monthly subscription directly with Indeed. This is in addition to the Indeed platform used by Civilian, Inc.

The Department also has a contract with a company called Interview Now for an annual cost of approximately \$10,000. This is a cellular text-based application for contacting, screening, and providing information to potential job candidates. The candidate texts, "JoinSJPD" to a designated phone number and receives a reply text prompting them to provide preliminary information. The system captures this information, then asks a series of screening questions to ensure the candidate meets the job requirements. Once completed, the candidate is then directly connected with a recruiter, via phone or email, or assisted with completing an application online. The system also provides answers to numerous frequently asked questions. The Recruiting Unit is using Interview Now to proactively reach out to applicants. Text messaging has clearly emerged as the preferred mode of communication for many applicants and potential applicants and has become the primary means of communication between applicants and the recruiting staff.

Included in the contract with Interview Now were magnets that were affixed to the Department's marked patrol cars.



Gender and Ethnicity

The Department currently divides ethnicity into 18 different self-reported categories. These categories were filtered into the six race-data categories used by the U.S. Office of Civil Rights, which are: 1) American Indian or Alaska Native; 2) Asian; 3) Black or African American; 4) Hispanic or Latino; 5) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; and 6) White.⁴ The Department also included a seventh category, “Not Specified,” for employees who chose to not specify their ethnicity. Under California State law, disclosure of one’s race and gender are voluntary and Department members will continue to have the option to select this category.

The Department strives for diverse recruitment which mirrors the ethnic make-up of the City. According to the July 2022 United States Census population estimates, the City of San José had an estimated population of 971,233 residents. The ethnic breakdown for the City of San José is as follows: 37.5% Asian, 31% Hispanic or Latino, 24% White, 3% African American, and 4.5% other.

⁴ American Indian or Alaska Native includes is defined by the US Office of Civil Rights as “A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.” Asian is defined as “a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.” Black or African American is defined as “a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Terms such as ‘Haitian’ or ‘Negro’ can be used in addition to ‘Black or African American.’” Hispanic or Latino is defined as “a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term ‘Spanish origin’ can be used in addition to ‘Hispanic or Latino.’” Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander is defined as “a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.” White is defined as “a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.”

As of May 5, 2023, the Department was made up of the following self-reported ethnicities by rank:

	Officer	Sergeant	Lieutenant and above
<i>American Indian</i>	N/A		
<i>Asian</i>	103	27	N/A
<i>Black or African American</i>	20	N/A	N/A
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	169	38	17
<i>Native Hawaiian or Pacific islander</i>	N/A		
<i>White</i>	234	91	29
<i>Non-Specified</i>	260	10	N/A
TOTALS	793	172	58

Source: Police Personnel Unit. Values of less than 10 are listed as N/A for privacy purposes

The following is the ethnic breakdown for the Department’s sworn members: 13% Asian, 22% Hispanic or Latino, 35% White, 3% African American, and 27% other or not specified.

The Department strives to have its officers represent the varied ethnicities and diverse backgrounds of the community they are entrusted to serve. The Asian population is the largest of all ethnic groups in the City of San José. The Recruiting Unit is focused on reaching out to Asian community organizations in an effort to increase interest in law enforcement.

This chart shows the ethnic makeup of the last 3 academies combined by percentage:

Ethnicity	Recruit Percentage
Asian	27%
Black or African American	.5%
Hispanic or Latino	44%
White	28%
Other/Multiple	.5%

In previous academies, many candidates checked the “Not Specified” box, which made their demographics difficult to compare against current City demographic data. Beginning with SJ42, the Recruiting Unit created a new survey and now gives a presentation to the recruits about the importance of completing the survey with accuracy. As you can see from the chart above, no one in the last three academies checked the “Not Specified” box.

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 11

Gender diversity, in addition to ethnic diversity, remains a high priority for the Department. According to the July 2022 United States Census, the City of San José is comprised of 49.1% female and 50.0% male. The following chart provides the breakdown of the self-reported genders of the Department as a whole, as well as within each rank of the Department:

	Officer	Sergeant	Lieutenant and above
FEMALE	113	11	N/A
MALE	680	161	52
TOTALS	792	172	58

Source: Police Personnel Unit. Values of less than 10 are listed as N/A for privacy purposes

As of May 5, 2023, the San José Police Department was 87.3% male and 12.7% female.

In 2019, the Federal Bureau of Investigations Uniform Crime Reporting Report stated the national average of female sworn members at departments across the nation was 12.8%. The San José Police Department came in just under average at 12.7%. The percentage of female recruits in the past three academies varied significantly: SJ45 had 11% female recruits; SJ46 had 5% female recruits; and SJ47, which started on June 26, 2023, has 15% female recruits.

Resignations and Retirements

During this reporting period, 139 officers separated from the City, which is a 5% increase over Fiscal Year 2021-2022. The San José Police Personnel Unit anticipates 101 Sworn retirements for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, but that does not include resignations, terminations, or movement to other positions within the City. As stated earlier, that number cannot be predicted.

During the exit interview process, officers have the option to voluntarily note in their Notice of Separation form their reason(s) for resigning from the Department (shown below).

FISCAL YEAR 2022 - 2023 SWORN SEPARATIONS													Grand Total
Separation Type	2022 Jul	2022 Aug	2022 Sep	2022 Oct	2022 Nov	2022 Dec	2023 Jan	2023 Feb	2023 Mar	2023 Apr	2023 May	2023 Jun	
Resignation													
In lieu		5	2	1		1	1			1	2		13
Transfer			1			1			2	2			6
Other Agency	4	1	2	2	1		2		1	2	1		16
Personal	2	2	1	3			1		1		1		11
Other	1	4		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	2	22
Retirement													
Disability									1	1	1		3
Service	2	5	6	4	5	11	17		2	1	2	3	58
Termination	2	3	1					1	1		1		9
Deceased	1												1
Grand Total	12	20	13	11	8	16	22	3	11	8	10	5	139

Source: Police Personnel Unit

Diversity in Recruiting Practices

The Department strives to seek highly qualified candidates and focuses its efforts within California and neighboring states. The Recruiting Unit has attended 12 career fairs at military bases throughout the nation. We are in the process of partnering with the United States Army Partnership for Your Success program. This program links United States Army soldiers who are transitioning out of the military with companies and agencies who are looking to hire veterans.

The San José Police Department strives to attend and recruit at diverse community events. Fiscal Year 2022-2023 gave the Recruiting Unit the opportunity to attend many in-person events and to provide presentations to several colleges. The following is a list of colleges and universities with a diverse student population, at which the Recruiting Unit gave presentations:

- California State University Bakersfield
- California State University Chico
- California State University East Bay
- California State University Fresno
- California State University Monterey Bay
- California State University Stanislaus
- De Anza College
- Evergreen Valley College
- Foothill College
- University of California Merced
- San Diego State University
- University of California San Francisco
- San José City College
- San José State University
- University of Nevada Las Vegas
- University of Nevada Reno

To increase the number of applicants of Asian descent, the Recruiting Unit during Fiscal Year 2022-2023 attended the Vietnamese in San José Annual Barbeque, Moon Festival, Tet Festival, Black April Commemoration, Vietnamese Language School graduation, the Vietnamese American Organization Community event and several Vietnamese community events at Grand Century Mall. In August of 2023, the Recruiting Unit traveled to San Diego to attend the National Asian Peace Officers Association Conference. Additionally, the Recruiting Unit has trained several officers of Asian and Vietnamese descent to be satellite recruiters.

Hiring more women remains a priority for the Department and the Recruiting Unit has employed multiple strategies to do so. Once a week, the Recruiting Unit organizes a fitness event designed to assist female applicants in successfully completing the physical agility test. In November of 2022, a female officer was assigned to the Recruiting Unit. During several recruiting events, potential female applicants expressed their appreciation of having the opportunity to speak with a female recruiting officer. The Department has produced and posted several videos and social media ads highlighting female officers. In August of 2023, The Recruiting Unit hosted a Women

in Law Enforcement event. This event allowed applicants and potential applicants to meet the Department's female personnel of all ranks and in all divisions, learn about the testing process, practice the physical agility test, participate in a panel, and have any questions they may have answered.

The Department continues to seek new and innovative ways to enhance recruiting efforts and expand the hiring of qualified candidates. Every event is analyzed for its success, efficiency, level of outreach, and potential areas in need of improvement. By measuring responses from these efforts, the Department can determine which events will generate large numbers of qualified applicants. Other ongoing recruiting efforts include:

- Recruiting at non-affiliated police academies throughout California
- Hosting a physical fitness program
- Providing free workshops to aid potential applicants through the testing process:
 - Physical agility workshop
 - Written test workshop
 - Oral board interview workshop
- Providing free testing opportunities:
 - Physical agility test
 - Written test
 - Oral board interview
- Providing "all-in-one" testing weekends for out-of-state applicants
- Providing one-on-one candidate mentoring
- Continuing to seek new activities, venues, and methods to reach qualified applicants
- Continuing to partner with the community, education institutions, and leaders in the law enforcement field

Recruiting Non-sworn Personnel

Communications Division

The Communications Division consists of Police Communications Specialists (call takers), who are the first interface when residents call 9-1-1 or police non-emergency lines, and Police Radio Dispatchers (dispatchers), who dispatch officers and communicate with them in the field. Recruitment and retention for call takers and dispatchers is an issue in San José, as well as throughout the State of California. The Communications Division currently has 22.5 call taker and dispatcher vacancies, which is down from vacancy levels reported last year when there was a total of 29.5 vacancies. The .5 in these numbers represents an allotted part-time position.

Communications Vacancies (as of July 1, 2023)

Police Radio Dispatcher FT	Police Communication Spec FT
81.00	59.50
(19.50)	(3.00)

Source: Police Personnel Unit

When hired, all Communications personnel attend the Basic Communications Academy to become call takers. At the conclusion of the Academy, they enter the Communications Training Program, a field training program where they receive hands-on training answering 9-1-1 and police non-emergency calls. At the conclusion of this training program, based on the position for which they applied, the candidates either remain call takers or enter the Radio Academy to become dispatchers. Once the Radio Academy is completed, the candidate completes another Dispatch Training Program before being released as a full-duty dispatcher. The process, from the start of the Basic Communications Academy to the conclusion of calltaker training, takes approximately six months. The process, from the start of the Basic Communications Academy to the conclusion of dispatcher training, takes approximately 13 months.

The Communications Division hosts five academies per year, alternating between the Basic Communications Academy and Radio Academy. Currently, seven employees are in training; four are in the Police Communications Training Program and three are in the Radio Dispatcher Training Program. These numbers were reported on July 1, 2023. The most recent Basic Communications Academy for incoming personnel was July 10, 2023, and there are five candidates scheduled to attend. The next Radio Academy will begin in January of 2024 with an unknown number of candidates.

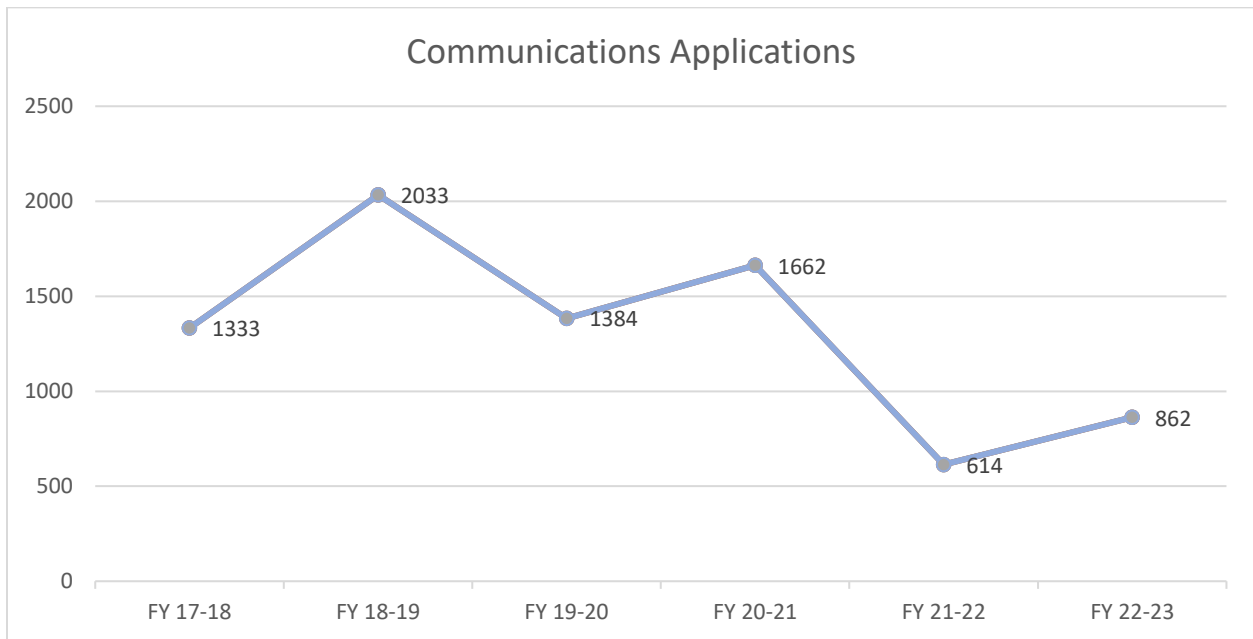
During Fiscal Year 2022-2023, efforts by the Department’s Recruiting Unit helped the Communications Division hire 16 employees to fill vacant positions. However, the Communications Division lost 10 employees due to resignations, terminations, and service retirements. This brought the number of vacancies, as of July 1, 2023, to three in the Police Communications Specialist rank and 19.5 in the Police Radio Dispatcher rank.

The Police Communications Specialists rank is authorized for 59.5 positions, 56.5 of which are filled, leaving three vacancies. Of the 56.5 Police Communications Specialists, seven are in training. Due to temporary duty assignments and leaves of absence, 44.5 Police Communications Specialists, or approximately 79%, are control-room ready.

The Police Radio Dispatcher rank is authorized for 81 positions. Currently, 61.5 of these positions are filled and there are 19.5 vacancies. Of the 61.5 Police Radio Dispatchers, three are in training. Due to temporary duty assignments and leaves of absence, 55.5, or approximately 90%, are control-room-ready.

Recruitment efforts in the Communications Division are critical and remain a high priority for the Department. With the renewal of the Civilian, Inc., our advertising vendor, Communications was added to its platform, which now shares time between sworn application cycles and

Communications' application cycles. Job openings are also posted on the websites for the California National Emergency Number Association and State of California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. This is in addition to the City of San José jobs website and the Department's recruiting website (www.SJPDyou). Fiscal Year 2022-2023 was a more successful year for Communications recruitment when compared to the previous fiscal year. During Fiscal Year 2022-2023, Communications received 862 applications, compared to 614 applications in Fiscal Year 2021-2022. That is an increase of approximately 40%.



Source: Police Personnel Unit

It should be noted that the number of applications fluctuates based on the number of Basic Communications Academies held each year. In the years with three Basic Communications Academies, the number of applications has been significantly higher than in the years with two Basic Communications Academies. This is because the application process is opened and closed for each academy. As a pilot program, the Recruiting Unit changed to an open enrollment application accepting strategy, which allowed Communications applicants to apply year-round. However, this extended the entire process to more than a year for most applicants, which is too long to keep applicants interested and engaged. Many applicants get hired by other agencies with a quicker hiring process. Moving forward, the Recruiting Unit will continue to open and close applications for each cycle.

The Recruiting Unit and the Communications Division are continually working on new display and social media advertisements featuring Communications opportunities. The Department's video unit is working with Communications to create features on the control room and opportunities within the Communications Division. Additionally, our renewed contract with Civilian, Inc., includes digital platforms specific to Communications recruitment.

Recruiters representing the Communications Division recruiters will resume previously utilized recruiting strategies and attend Police Department recruitment events. They will visit local high

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 16

schools and community colleges, post recruitment flyers, meet with students, and coordinate with instructors to speak during class periods. Staff from Communications will recruit at the Department's "Coffee with a Cop" events and attend community events with Crime Prevention staff. The Recruiting Unit provides Communications Division flyers to interested applicants at all recruiting events. These flyers give information about the Communications Specialist and Radio Dispatcher positions, including job duties, minimum requirements, salary and benefits, how to apply, and frequently asked questions. Communications recruiters will also participate in the Women in Law Enforcement event in August, highlighting the jobs within the Communications Division.

One of the biggest challenges for Communications personnel candidates is the Critical test, a requirement to be hired by Communications. The Recruiting Unit worked with Communications Training Unit staff to host workshops to help familiarize candidates with the Critical test, so they can successfully complete it. The Critical Workshop was created three years ago and has been very successful. The feedback from applicants has been entirely positive. For Fiscal Year 2022-2023, the Recruiting Unit hosted:

- Communications Critical Information Sessions (10)
- Communications Critical Workshops (18)
- Communications Critical Exams (15)
- Communications Oral Board Preparation Workshop (10)
- Communications Oral Boards (5)

The Recruiting Unit is working to increase recruiting and on-going testing for future dispatchers. The Recruiting Unit staff and Communications Division staff have reviewed the Civil Grand Jury's 2018-2019 report entitled, *Improving San José Police Department's 9-1-1/3-1-1 Call Answering Time: When Seconds Count*⁵ as well as the February 2019 *Audit of 9-1-1 and 3-1-1: Changes to Call Handling and Increased Hiring Efforts Could Improve Call Answering Times*.⁶ These reports continue to direct Communications Division marketing and recruiting strategies. For example, Recommendation #6 from the *Audit of 911 and 311* proposed that the Police Department use an external marketing firm to bolster marketing efforts to recruit Communications staff. As noted above, the contract with Civilian, Inc. was expanded to include the Communications Division.

Community Service Officers

The Community Service Officer Program is currently authorized for 68 positions. There are currently 63 Community Service Officers working, which includes 5 Senior (supervisor) Community Service Officers. The Community Service Officer program was established in 2014 and rarely has vacancies, so there is no urgent need to concentrate recruiting efforts for these positions. However, the Recruiting Unit retains information about the Community Service Officer Program and shares it at all recruiting events. There are generally few openings in the

⁵ <http://www.scsccourt.org/documents/CGJ%20SJD%20Final%20Report%20-%2006.18.19.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.sanJoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=38067>

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 17

Community Service Officer Program, as the positions are usually filled by other City employees. For example, when police recruits separate or resign from the Police Academy, the Department strives to redeploy them to the Community Service Officer program, based on their City employment and their skill set obtained in the Police Academy. Additionally, other City employees represent most of the other applications to become Community Service Officers. The reasons for this vary between the desire to be more active in the Community, higher salary, or they use it as a stepping-stone to become a police officer. The next academy is scheduled for December 2023 with 3-5 anticipated hires.

Conclusion

In the coming year, the Department and Recruiting Unit will continue our efforts to increase the recruitment of qualified candidates. The Recruiting Unit will diligently strive to engage applicants, sharing insights into the Department's operations and the significant value of careers as police officers, call takers, dispatchers, and community service officers. The Recruiting Unit will also emphasize the personal fulfillment that comes from serving the public and our city's residents. To further these endeavors, the Department secured an advertising contract, will investigate other forms of advertising, and will expand the satellite recruiting program to extend its reach to a wider pool of potential applicants.

PUBLIC SAFETY, FINANCE & STRATEGIC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

August 2, 2023

Subject: Police Department Recruitment and Hiring Activity Annual Report

Page 18

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, Human Resources Department, Office of Employee Relations, and the City Manager's Budget Office.



ANTHONY MATA
Chief of Police

For questions, please contact Recruiting Unit Lieutenant Mike Bui at (408) 277-4951.