



DATE: June 21, 2022

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Adopt Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Establish a Communications Operator Lateral & Entry Level (COLE) Hiring Bonus Program in the Amount of \$10,000 per Qualified Candidate and Authorizing the Establishment of a Hiring Incentive Referral Program (HIRP) in the Amount of \$2,000 to Be Paid to Qualifying City of Hayward Employees Who Successfully Refer Communications Operator Candidates

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council adopts a resolution (Attachment II) authorizing the City Manager to establish a Communications Operator Lateral & Entry Level (COLE) Hiring Bonus Program and a resolution (Attachment III) authorizing the City Manager to establish a Communications Operator Hiring Incentive Referral Program (HIRP). The COLE Hiring Bonus Program will offer bonuses in the amount of \$10,000 per Qualified Candidate hired. The HIRP will offer current City of Hayward employees a \$2,000 incentive for referring qualified candidates who achieve full-time, permanent positions as Communications Operators.

SUMMARY

The City of Hayward Communications Operation Center has experienced a significantly diminished pool of well-qualified Communications Operator applicants. This is partially due to the competitive market, factors related to COVID, increasing flexibility to work remotely, and the heightened demands and expectations of those who work in public safety. To attract more qualified applicants, and to keep pace with industry standards, staff recommends the permanent establishment of the Communications Operator Lateral & Entry Level (COLE) Hiring Bonus Program in the amount of \$10,000 per qualified candidate. The bonus awards for the COLE Hiring Bonus Program would be distributed over a three to four-year period based on the candidate being hired as a Lateral or Entry-level Communications Operator. To further increase the recruitment of qualified candidates, staff also recommends that a Hiring Referral Incentive Program (HIRP) in the amount of \$2,000 be extended to City of Hayward Employees who successfully refer Communication Operator Candidates that achieve full-time employment.

BACKGROUND

The Hayward Police Department, like many other municipalities, is experiencing a diminished pool of well-qualified applicants. On March 22, 2022, City Council approved the establishment of hiring bonuses and HIRP programs for the position of Police Officer. The approval of the programs met industry standards and aims to attract more qualified candidates for the position. This is the same goal intended with the COLE Hiring Bonus for Communications Operators. From past practice, hiring bonuses have effectively increased applicant interest and resulted in hiring better-qualified candidates. With the COVID pandemic and other issues facing Public Safety recruitment, it is more imperative than ever that our Communications Center gains a competitive edge and establishes the COLE Hiring Bonus and the HIRP employee referral program. These programs are best practices and are consistent with recruitment strategies within the region.

Many agencies have incorporated incentive programs to assist in increasing their pool of eligible candidates for jobs by utilizing one or more recruiting strategies. Hiring bonuses are now industry standard and are strategically used by departments to engage and attract the best talent. Our recruitment research has shown that utilizing two types of hiring bonus programs can aid in attracting top candidates to our agency by offering monetary bonuses to entry-level and lateral Communications Operators. The COLE Hiring Bonus program will target both groups of candidates, providing monetary incentives that other agencies do not offer.

DISCUSSION

COLE PROGRAM:

Regionally, very few agencies utilize a Hiring Bonus program for Entry-Level candidates. Table 1 below shows regional jurisdictions where entry-level classification positions qualify for a signing bonus. Currently, there are no local agencies that utilize a Hiring Bonus Program for entry-level Communications Operators. Offering the COLE hiring bonus to entry-level candidates, would provide our Communications Center with a distinct advantage over nearby competitors.

**TABLE 1: JURISDICTIONS OFFERING SIGNING BONUSES FOR ENTRY LEVEL/POST GRADUATES
BONUSES VERIFIED AS 5/18/22**

JURISDICTION	EXAMPLE OF SIGNING BONUSES OFFERED
Placer County Sheriff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$2,500 Signing Bonus
Sonoma County Sheriff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$600 cash allowance
San Joaquin County Sheriff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$10,000 (3 installments)

Staff recommends that the City adopts the Communications Operator Entry-Level Hiring Bonus Program as outlined through COLE. Based on surveying local agencies within

California and the Western United States, staff recommends a \$10,000 hiring bonus incentive for qualifying Entry-level candidates. This amount is competitive to the cost of living in San Francisco Bay Area and provides for a substantial recruitment advantage as compared to other agencies recruiting in the region.

The Entry-level employee hired would make a four-year commitment or repay the City on a prorated basis. For Laterals who are hired, the employee would make a 3-year commitment or be required to repay the bonus on a prorated basis. Staff further recommends that the COLE hiring bonus for Entry-level and Laterals be distributed over the phases as illustrated in Tables 2 and 3 below:

TABLE 2: ELIGIBILITY AND BONUS DISTRIBUTION FOR ENTRY LEVEL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATOR CANDIDATES

PHASE	QUALIFICATION	BONUS AMOUNT
1 - 25%	Successful Completion of the testing process and acceptance of a final offer of employment to be paid on first pay period	\$2,500
2 - 25%	Successful Completion of Communications Training Program (CTO)	\$2,500
3 - 25%	Successful Completion of the Communications Probationary Period	\$2,500
4 - 25%	Two years after the completion of Probationary Period	\$2,500
TOTAL BONUS (Distributed Over a 4-Year Period):		\$10,000

TABLE 3: ELIGIBILITY AND BONUS DISTRIBUTION FOR LATERAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATOR CANDIDATES

PHASE	QUALIFICATION	BONUS AMOUNT
1 - 25%	Acceptance of a final offer of employment to be paid on first pay period	\$2,500
2 - 50%	Successful Completion of Communications Training Program (CTO)	\$5,000
3 - 25%	One year after completion of the Probationary Period	\$2,500
TOTAL BONUS (Distributed Over a 3-Year Period):		\$10,000

Table 4 below describes the internal monitoring of the signing bonus implementation.

TABLE 4: INTERNAL MONITORING PROCEDURE FOR SIGNING BONUS IMPLEMENTATION

LEAD DEPARTMENT	PROCEDURE
Police Department: Personnel & Training Unit Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Determine COLE Communications Operator Applicant's eligibility to participate in the program and notify applicant. ○ Certify that the applicant has successfully accepted a Final Offer of Employment. ○ Notify Payroll of applicant's eligibility of each level of distribution of COLE Hiring Bonus Program.
Finance Department: Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Process COLE Hiring Bonus distributions as taxable income.

LATERAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATOR HIRING BONUS PROGRAM:

The Lateral hiring programs have intensified over the past 2-3 years and industry standards in Public Safety recruiting have seen many law enforcement agencies incorporating robust monetary Lateral Bonus Programs to help attract more qualified candidates. Local agencies are all competing for the same group of experienced candidates. An effectively managed Lateral Bonus Program is expected to help in expanding our agency’s pool of well-qualified Lateral Communications Operator applicants and attract them to our department.

Across the state, several agencies have initiated Lateral Bonus Programs that offer monetary incentives to qualified applicants. This recruitment tool is utilized to counter several economic factors such as housing costs, increased cost of living, and rising inflation. Table 5 illustrates jurisdictions both regionally and throughout the state that currently offer signing bonuses for Lateral Communications Operators.

TABLE 5: JURISDICTIONS OFFERING SIGNING BONUSES FOR LATERAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATOR BONUSES VERIFIED AS OF 5/18/22

JURISDICTION	EXAMPLE OF SIGNING BONUSES OFFERED
Fairfield Police Department	• \$10,000 Signing Bonus
Chico Police Department	• \$20,000 Signing Bonus
Chino Police Department	• \$5,000 Signing Bonus
Eureka Police Department	• \$10,000 Signing Bonus
Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department	• \$3,000 Signing Bonus
San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department	• \$10,000 Signing Bonus
Yuba County Sheriff's Department	• \$2,500 - \$10,000 (DOE)

To attract more qualified Lateral Communications Operators, staff recommends that the Hayward Police Department implement the COLE Hiring Bonus Program. Based on the survey of regional agencies within California, it is suggested that a \$10,000 hiring bonus incentive be established for qualifying Lateral Communications Operators. This amount is competitive and provides for a substantial recruitment advantage as compared to other local agencies in the area. As previously noted in Table 3, staff recommends that the Bonus Program for Laterals be paid incrementally over three (3) phases during the first 3-years of employment.

Monitoring of signing bonus installments for Lateral and Entry-level Communications Operators will be managed by the HPD Personnel and Training Unit. Table 6 below describes the internal monitoring of the signing bonus implementation.

TABLE 6: INTERNAL MONITORING PROCEDURE FOR COLE HIRING BONUS IMPLEMENTATION

LEAD DEPARTMENT	PROCEDURE
Police Department: Personnel & Training Unit Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Determine Lateral Communication Operator Applicant’s eligibility to participate in the program and notify applicant. ○ Classify that applicant has successfully completed the Lateral Communications Operator hiring process and accepted a Final Offer of Employment. ○ Notify Payroll of applicant’s eligibility of each level of distribution of the Lateral Communications Operator Bonus Program.
Finance Department: Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Process Lateral Communications Operator bonus distributions as taxable income.

HIRING INCENTIVE REFERRAL PROGRAM (HIRP) PROGRAM:

A recruitment strategy that utilizes an agency’s current employees to provide word-of-mouth recruiting can be an effective tool to engage and recruit new employees. Employee incentive plans have been around for years and often highlight new employees who have an interaction with a current departmental employee. This engagement can provide some of the best candidates to fill vacancies within the Communications Center. To help supplement this word-of-mouth type of recruiting, staff recommends establishing a Hiring Incentive Referral Program (HIRP) to help achieve recruitment and hiring goals for the Communications Center.

The HIRP will pay a total of \$2,000 to current City of Hayward employees who refer non-City employees to the City of Hayward Police Department for employment into a full-time, permanently budgeted position. The new employee must have no prior work history with the City and notification of the referral must be provided to the Personnel and Training Unit via written notification.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES:

- a. The Referrer must be a current employee of the City of Hayward.
- b. The new employee must be hired into a vacant full-time, permanently budgeted position.
- c. The new employee must pass probation to obtain full benefits of the HIRP.
- d. The new employee must have no prior work history with the City of Hayward.
- e. Written notification regarding the employee referral must be provided to the Personnel and Training Unit from the referring employee prior to any formal offer of employment.
- f. Only one (1) incentive award can be granted per new employee referral.

INELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES:

- a. A referring employee cannot be at the Executive level or above.
- b. Employees assigned to the HPD Personnel and Training Unit and COH Human Resources Department are not eligible for this program.
- c. HPD employees assigned to the Recruitment Team are ineligible for referrals made during any department-sponsored recruiting event.

TABLE 7: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MONITORING PROCEDURE FOR HIRP

EMPLOYEE/LEAD DEPARTMENT	PROCEDURE
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Refers potential candidates to apply for open positions with the City of Hayward Communications Operator.
Police Department: Personnel & Training Unit Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Offers referral information from the new hire’s job application. ○ Notifies the referring employee if they are eligible to participate in the program. ○ Confirms new employee provided a formal offer of employment. If all eligibility requirements are met, notification to Payroll to process payment for HIRP incentive award. ○ Any disputes or interpretations of the program will be handled through Special Operations Division Commander.
Finance Department: Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Process HIRP incentive award payment in two installments as taxable income.

Payment/Award options for the HIRP are illustrated in Table 8:

TABLE 8: PAYMENT INSTALLMENTS

OPTION	PROCEDURE
Cash/Monetary Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referring Employee receives a \$2,000 total cash incentive phased as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Referring employee receives \$1,000 of award after formal offer of employment has been accepted by the new employee. ▪ Referring employee receives the remaining \$1,000 of the award upon completion of probationary period by the new employee.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Communications Operator Lateral and Entry Level (COLE) Hiring Bonus Program will cost up to \$10,000 per hire, which will be paid through installments over 3-4 years following the applicant’s hire date and position of hire. Based on current vacancies, the Police Department anticipates hiring a minimum of 5-7 Communications Operators eligible for the COLE bonus per year. The estimated cost anticipated for the COLE Hiring Bonus Program if a minimum of five operators are hired in a single year is up to \$50,000 (*cost spread over three to four years.*) It is anticipated that the cost of this program will be funded using salary savings from vacancies in currently budgeted positions, therefore no additional General Fund impact is anticipated.

The Hiring Incentive Referral Program (HIRP) will cost up to \$2,000 per referral leading to a hire and will be paid over two years according to the payment schedule discussed above. Based on the hiring trends of the department, it is anticipated that a minimum of 5 Communications Operators will be hired per year. The annual costs of the HIRP, assuming 5 employees are hired through the program per year, is \$5,000 - \$10,000. This is likely to be offset by salary savings and should not require additional appropriations.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

This agenda item is a routine operational item and does not relate to one of the Council's Strategic Initiatives.

NEXT STEPS

If the Council authorizes this action, staff will appropriate the funding into the Police Department's budget to fund the Communications Operator Lateral and Entry Level (COLE) Hiring Bonus Program, and the Communications Operator Hiring Incentive Referral Program (HIRP).

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Recommended by: Toney Chaplin, Chief of Police

Approved by:



Kelly McAadoo, City Manager