



INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: 2/27/26

To: Town Counsel of Cottage City

From: Chief of Police David C. Martini *DCM*

Re: Signing Bonus for New Police Hire

I am seeking the implementation of a Signing Bonus program designed to entice new officers to join the Cottage City Police Department. I believe that the fact that I have structured the bonus that will also assist with reducing turnover, preserving institutional knowledge, and decreasing the significant financial burden associated with recruiting and training new officers. Many Police Departments in the DMV are offering Signing Bonuses in a range of \$5000 to upwards of \$20,000. We need to stay competitive. This will create an immediate marketing hook that grabs the attention of qualified lateral transfers and new recruits. It closes the "initial income gap," making it financially viable for a recruit who might otherwise choose a higher-paying department.

I want to implement a signing bonus of \$5000.
It is to be spread out over 3 years.

- Discourages "job hopping" by incentivizing the officer to stay until the final payout.
- Ensures the department recovers its training and outfitting costs before the full bonus is paid.
- Prevents a massive one-time hit to the budget.
- Allows the department to ensure the officer is a "cultural fit" and meets standards before all the bonus is paid.

For a small department, a signing bonus is a tactical investment. It's cheaper to pay a one-time bonus than to raise the entire department's base salary by 5% to stay competitive. A bonus does not affect overtime, holiday pay, etc. Please see the attached cost to hire a new officer.

Year 1

Actual Salary - \$59,400
Bonus rolled into salary - \$2000
Total Salary - \$61,400

Year 2

Actual Salary - \$61,182
Bonus rolled into salary - \$2000
Total Salary - \$63,182

Year 3

Actual Salary - \$63,017
Bonus rolled into salary - \$1000
Total Salary - \$64,017

Costs to Hire a New Officer

- Recruiting Advertising & Marketing. Job boards, social media campaigns, and career fairs.
- Psychological Evaluation
- Medical Exams
- Drug Screening
- Polygraph or Voice Stress Testing
- Background Investigations

- Academy Tuition
- Salaries While Training
- Field Training (FTO) During this time, you are essentially paying two people to do one job.

- Equipment
Uniforms & Apparel Duty boots, multiple sets of uniforms, and cold-weather gear.
Duty Belt & Tools Handcuffs, flashlight, radio, and body-worn cameras.
Ballistic Vest Body armor
Firearms & Ammunition

- Benefits Healthcare, dental, vision, and life insurance.
- Pension & Retirement

- Unemployment
- Grievances/Lawsuits