




INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: 2/27/26

To: Town Counsel of Cottage City

From: Chief of Police David C. Martini 

Re: Implementation of a Strategic PayScale and Base Salary Adjustment

To maintain the Cottage City Police Department's (CCPD) competitive standing and ensure the long-term retention of qualified personnel, I am proposing a restructured compensation model. The primary goal is to shift CCPD from a "training ground" for other agencies into a department where officers can build a sustainable, 20-year career. We want the best qualified and retention. This structure creates a powerful "reason to stay." Because the 3% merit steps are compounded, the actual dollar amount of the step increases every year. This rewards tenure and ensures that our most experienced officers, those who have the most institutional knowledge, are the most incentivized to remain with Cottage City.

1. Competitive Base Salary Adjustment. I am requesting a 10% increase to the starting officer salary, moving from the 2024 base of \$54,000 to \$59,400.

- Market Positioning. Based on the attached salary comparison, this adjustment moves CCPD into the "middle range" of regional agencies.
- Recruitment Edge. This increase allows us to remain enticing to high-quality recruits who would otherwise bypass Cottage City for neighboring departments with higher entry-level pay.

2. The 20-Year Step Progression Model. The proposed PayScale introduces a structured 3% annual compound increase, providing a predictable and transparent growth path for all personnel.

- Years 1–10 Annual Steps. Officers progress to the next step every year on their anniversary. This front-loaded growth is critical for retaining officers during the first decade of their career, which is the highest risk period for turnover.
- Years 11–20 Biennial Steps. After the 10th year, progression occurs every two years. This rewards long-term loyalty while managing the department's long-term budget sustainability.

3. Defined Rank Hierarchy and Promotion Incentives. To ensure organizational continuity, I have established set percentage increases between ranks to reflect the increase in responsibility.

- Officer to Private: 6% increase.
- Private to Corporal: 6% increase.
- Corporal to Sergeant: 10% increase.

The 10% jump to Sergeant reflects the significant increase in duty. The Sergeant serves as the primary supervisor for all lower ranks and functions as the Acting Chief in the Chief's absence. This higher percentage justifies the "second-in-command" responsibilities. Because the Chief of Police is an appointed, negotiated position, I have excluded a fixed percentage jump from Sergeant to Chief. This allows the Town Manager and Commission maximum flexibility during future contract negotiations.

Cottage City Police Pay Scale

Rank	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10	Step 11	Step 12	Step 13	Step 14	Step 15
Clerk	\$52,000	\$53,560	\$55,167	\$56,822	\$58,526	\$60,282	\$62,091	\$63,953	\$65,872	\$67,848	\$69,884	\$71,980	\$74,140	\$76,364	\$78,655
Officer	\$59,400	\$61,182	\$63,017	\$64,908	\$66,855	\$68,861	\$70,927	\$73,055	\$75,246	\$77,504	\$79,829	\$82,223	\$84,690	\$87,231	\$89,848
Private	\$62,964	\$64,853	\$66,799	\$68,802	\$70,867	\$72,993	\$75,182	\$77,438	\$79,761	\$82,154	\$84,618	\$87,157	\$89,772	\$92,465	\$95,239
Corporal	\$66,742	\$68,744	\$70,807	\$72,931	\$75,119	\$77,372	\$79,693	\$82,084	\$84,547	\$87,083	\$89,696	\$92,387	\$95,158	\$98,013	\$100,953
Sergeant	\$73,416	\$75,618	\$77,887	\$80,224	\$82,630	\$85,109	\$87,663	\$90,292	\$93,001	\$95,791	\$98,665	\$101,625	\$104,674	\$107,814	\$111,048
Chief	\$96,600	\$99,498	\$102,483	\$105,557	\$108,724	\$111,986	\$115,345	\$118,806	\$122,370	\$126,041	\$129,822	\$133,717	\$137,729	\$141,860	\$146,116

Police Department Starting Salaries

Agency	Officer	PFC	Corporal	Sergeant	Captain	Deputy Chief	Chief
Prince George's PD	\$70,257	\$70,976	\$76,032	\$85,535	\$106,311		
University Park PD	\$65,102	\$67,946	\$79,822	\$88,366	\$125,656		\$157,075
Laurel City PD	\$65,064	\$68,967	\$77,492	\$85,241			
Cheverly PD	\$64,788	\$67,380	\$71,422	\$77,136		\$95,032	
Bowie PD	\$62,018						
Greenbelt PD	\$61,568	\$66,435	\$71,656	\$83,408	\$128,043	\$139,113	\$146,751
Mount Rainer PD	\$61,453	\$65,142	\$69,701				
Cottage City PD	\$59,400	\$62,964	\$66,742	\$73,416			\$96,600
Upper Marlboro PD	\$58,411	\$61,687	\$63,870	\$67,582	\$87,344		\$96,460
Colmar Manor PD	\$55,000	\$58,750		\$75,000			
Edmonston PD	\$51,127	\$54,775	\$60,235	\$61,152			

	May 14, 2024	July 1, 2026	%	Difference	10%
Officer	\$54,000	\$59,400	10%	\$5400	
PFC	\$58,000	\$62,964	8.5%	\$4964	
Corporal	\$62,000	\$66,742	7.6%	\$4742	
Sergeant	\$66,000	\$73,416	11.2%	\$7416	
Chief	\$92,000	\$96,600	5%	\$4600	
Total	\$36,000			\$27,122	\$33,200

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