

February 17, 2026

Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to adopt a Resolution approving a Letter of Agreement to the 2025-2028 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Police Officers Association (POA) for City of Long Beach, Police Department Recruitment and Retention Incentives for a term of January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026, with the option to extend for two one-year periods, at the discretion of the City Manager. (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

The City of Long Beach (City) entered into an agreement with the POA to implement targeted recruitment and retention incentives aimed at stabilizing the workforce. These incentives include hiring bonuses, housing and childcare assistance, referral bonuses, and enhanced compensation for critical assignments.

Since initiating these incentives in 2023, these measures have proven effective, with a marked increase in recruit applications and the onboarding of more lateral officers during this period than in the previous decade combined.

To maintain this progress, staff recommends approving a new Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the POA from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026. The following incentives are included in the LOA and will be effective as of January 1, 2026:

A. Hiring Incentives

- **Police Recruits and Non-Lateral Academy Graduates:** Eligible for a non-pensionable hiring incentive of \$15,000, paid in multiple installments during the first years of employment.
- **Lateral Police Officers:** Eligible for a non-pensionable hiring incentive of \$30,000, paid in three equal installments over the first two years of employment.

B. Police Referral Bonus

- **Lateral Officer Referrals:** The non-pensionable bonus increases to \$5,000, distributed in two parts following milestones of the referred candidate's service.
- **Recruit Referrals:** The non-pensionable bonus increases to \$3,500, distributed in two parts based on the recruit's academy graduation and probation completion.

C. New Employee Housing Subsidy

- **Rental Subsidy:** Eligible recruits and probationary officers who maintain primary residency in Long Beach may receive a monthly \$1,000 housing subsidy for up to 24 months.
- **Homebuyer Assistance:** Employees may instead opt for a one-time, non-pensionable grant of up to \$24,000 toward the purchase of a primary residence in Long Beach. This option requires a commitment to reside in the home and remain employed with the department for a minimum of two years.

D. New Employee Childcare Subsidy

- **Childcare Subsidy:** Eligible recruits and probationary officers with dependent children under age 12 in childcare may receive a monthly \$1,000 childcare subsidy for up to two years.

F. Retention Incentive: Healthcare Premium Subsidy

- **Eligibility:** Retirement-eligible officers (age 50 with 25 years of service) who defer retirement and commit to one additional year of service.
- **Benefit Option I:** In exchange for extending service, the City will cover retiree healthcare premiums for 12 months per year of service.
- **Benefit Option II:** Eligible officers may instead opt for a one-time, non-pensionable contribution to their Retirement Health Savings account, with credits tied to unused sick leave balances.

This Letter of Agreement shall not change any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provisions other than as outlined above.

The modification of recruitment and retention incentives to the LBPOA MOU is intended to address the current staffing crisis and is not intended to confer ongoing rights of these incentives past the agreed upon revised operational period of January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, with the option to renew for two one-year periods at the discretion of the City Manager, if recruitment needs persist and Police Department salary savings are available.

This matter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Gary J. Anderson and by Budget Manager Rebecca Bernstorff on February 9, 2026.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on February 17, 2026, to ensure timely implementation of the requested changes on the applicable effective date of January 1, 2026.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recruitment and retention incentives are projected to be valued at approximately \$1,877,477, however, costs will depend on actual recruitment, eligibility for the different incentives and successful completion of the police academy and probation. The costs associated with the incentives are expected to impact multiple fiscal years, as the timing of when incentives are

Honorable Mayor and City Council

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earned and when they are ultimately paid will not align within Fiscal Year 2026. Sufficient salary savings are anticipated in the Police Department to offset these incentives. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryce M. Tyler
Director of Human Resources

APPROVED:



THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER

ATTACHMENT:

- POA LOA – REVISED RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION INCENTIVES

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RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH APPROVING A LETTER OF AGREEMENT TO THE 2025-2028 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH THE POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (POA)

WHEREAS, the City of Long Beach (COLB) intends to amend the 2025-2028 POA MOU to implement targeted recruitment and retention incentives aimed at stabilizing the workforce including hiring, housing and childcare assistance, referral bonuses, and enhanced compensation for critical assignments; and

WHEREAS, since adoption of this agreement in 2023, these measures have proven effective, with a marked increase in recruit applications and the onboarding of more lateral officers during this period than in the previous decade combined; and

WHEREAS, City Council approval is requested to formally approve the Letter of Agreement amending the 2025-2028 Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the POA;

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach resolves as follows:

Section 1. The Letter of Agreement amending the 2025-2028 Memorandum of Understanding with Police Officers Association, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" is hereby authorized and approved.

Section 2. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption by the City Council, and the City Clerk shall certify the vote adopting this resolution.

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EXHIBIT "A"

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OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
DAWN MCINTOSH, City Attorney
411 W. Ocean Boulevard, 9th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

2026 LETTER OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE CITY OF LONG BEACH AND
THE LONG BEACH POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

RE: 2026 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION INCENTIVES

This Letter of Agreement is entered between the City of Long Beach (“City”) and the Long Beach Police Officers Association (LBPOA”), (collectively “the Parties”).

WHEREAS, the Parties have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) covering the period of October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2028,

WHEREAS, the Parties recognize the unprecedented recruitment and retention challenges facing law enforcement agencies nationally, both agree with the need to bolster recruitment incentives to attract new and lateral officers, as well as to create retention incentives to maintain staffing levels until new police officers can be onboarded and trained. Incentive payments approved herein are subject to all applicable deductions.

WHEREAS, the Parties have met and discussed the modification of recruitment and retention incentives which will be added to the LBPOA MOU as Appendix G, and agree to the following effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, unless otherwise mutually agreed to in writing, all other terms and conditions of the LBPOA MOU remain in full force and effect:

Hiring Incentives

- Police Recruits and non-lateral Academy Graduates will receive a non-pensionable hiring incentive of up to \$15,000.
 - Hiring incentives for Police Recruits will be paid in three installments.
 - The first payment of \$5,000 will be made upon hire.
 - The second payment of \$5,000 will be made upon graduation of the Long Beach Police Department (LBPD) or sponsored Police Academy.
 - The third payment of \$5,000 will be made upon passing of probation.
 - The payment schedule for individuals hired as Academy graduates (from any POST Accredited Academy) will be paid in two equal installments of \$7,500. The first payment upon hire and the second upon successful completion of probation.
 - Police Cadets, Interns, existing City employees (including non-careers), and candidates hired by the Police Department with a conditional police recruit offer, will be exempted from the 2-year limit on previous City employment established by the City’s Incentive Policy.
 - Employees shall be eligible to receive each phase of this hiring incentive only once during their employment with the LBPD. Specifically, employees may

receive payments associated with hire, academy graduation, and successful completion of probation only once during their employment with LBPB. Employees who separate from the City and are subsequently rehired by LBPB are not eligible to receive any portion of the hiring incentive they have previously received, regardless of length of separation or classification at the time of rehire.

- If an employee has received a portion of the \$15,000 LBPB new hire incentive and subsequently transfers or is appointed to a different City position that includes a hiring incentive under the Citywide Incentive Policy, they will be eligible to receive only the remaining unpaid portion of the Citywide incentive, if any remains. The remaining balance shall be distributed according to the payout schedule associated with the new position.
- Lateral Police Officers hired after January 1, 2026, will receive a non-pensionable hiring bonus of \$30,000 paid out in three equal installments of \$10,000 as follows:
 - The first payment will be made upon hire,
 - The second payment will be made upon passing of probation, and
 - The third payment will be made 24 months after their date of hire.
- Former POA members who are rehired as a lateral Police Officers, or are reinstated as a POST-certified Peace Officers after more than two (2) years of separation from the City of Long Beach, shall be eligible for the lateral incentive. This provision supports the Department's efforts to attract personnel who require minimal acclimation training and can be deployed for immediate field operations.

Police Referral Bonus

- The Referral Incentive Bonus for Lateral Police Officers will be paid as follows:
 - The non-pensionable referral bonus of \$5,000 for Lateral Police Officers will be paid in two equal parts:
 - Once an applicant successfully completes 6-months of service as a City of Long Beach Police Officer, the referring POA Member shall be eligible to receive the first referral bonus.
 - Once the applicant has successfully completed the established probationary period, the referring POA Member shall be eligible to receive the second and final referral bonus.
 - POA Members will have until the Chief's selection of the candidate to submit their request for the referral bonus.
 - Candidates identified during recruitment-related activities do not qualify for the referral bonus.
- The Referral Incentive Bonus for Police Recruits will be revised as follows:
 - A non-pensionable referral bonus for Police Recruits of \$3,500 will be paid in two equal parts.
 - Once an applicant successfully completes the Police Academy the referring POA Member shall be eligible to receive the first referral bonus.
 - Once the applicant has successfully completed the established

probationary period, the referring POA Member shall be eligible to receive the second and final referral bonus.

- For applicants hired as Police Officer Academy Graduate, the referring POA Member shall be eligible to receive the one-time referral bonus upon the successful completion of the established probationary period.
- POA Members will have until the Chief's selection of the candidate to submit their request for the referral bonus.
- Candidates identified during recruitment-related activities do not qualify for the referral bonus.

New Employee Housing Subsidy

- It is agreed that living in the City of Long Beach during the early part of their career will enhance the connection between LBPD officers and the communities they serve.
- Police Recruits (not including Police Recruit non-careers) and lateral officers, who maintain a primary residence in the City of Long Beach, will be eligible to receive a non-pensionable monthly \$1,000 subsidy during their first 24 months of employment.
 - Eligible employees must submit a request and documentation for the rental subsidy within 3 months of hire.
 - The subsidy shall be prorated, prospectively, if eligible employee establishes primary residency in Long Beach anytime during the eligible period.
 - The housing subsidy will be paid as part of the employees' regular paycheck, in the second check of the month.
 - The employee will receive the first housing subsidy beginning the month after submission and verification of proof of primary residence in Long Beach.
 - It is the responsibility of the employee to provide the documentation of eligibility and confirm receipt of verification with the Police Department Payroll Office.
 - Proof of residence may be in a rental or ownership status and proof of status shall be provided in the form of a current rental agreement, mortgage statement (last month statement), or proof of municipal utility (last month statement).
 - Employee's name (or that of spouse/ domestic partner) must be listed on the verifying document to be eligible for the subsidy. Affidavits of residence will not be accepted.
- Eligible employees may opt to waive the monthly \$1,000 in housing subsidies for a one-time, non-pensionable, homebuyer assistance grant of up to \$24,000 for the purchase of a primary residence in the City of Long Beach.
 - Eligible employees must make an initial selection of either the rental subsidy, homebuyer assistance grant or no subsidy within 3 months of hire.
 - Eligible employees have the option to move from rental subsidy or homebuyer assistance option once; the amount of the homebuyer assistance

subsidy will be reduced by the amount of monthly housing subsidy already paid to the employee, with the combined total not to exceed \$24,000.

- Eligible uses for the homebuyer assistance funds include down payment, non-recurring closing costs such as loan, title or escrow; and loan points or fees to buy down mortgage interest rates.
- To receive the funds, eligible employees must sign an agreement acknowledging receipt of the funds and agreeing to occupy the home as their primary residence for a minimum of two consecutive years and continue employment with the Long Beach Police Department for the aforementioned duration.
- Employees who receive the homebuyer assistance funds and voluntarily resign before the commitment of two years of continuous employment are completed, agree to repay a prorated amount based on the outstanding employment commitment.
- The City will coordinate with the employees' lenders to disburse funds directly to escrow.
- Former POA members who are rehired after more than two years of separated time will be considered new employees for the purposes of this incentive.

New Employee – Childcare Subsidy

- It is understood that the demands of a career in law enforcement create significant barriers in the recruitment of candidates with children. Childcare provision is a powerful recruiting and retention tool, and will enable officers to work varied watches, overtime shifts, and allow them to work during school closures.
- Police Recruits (not including Police Recruit non-careers), and lateral Police Officers will be eligible to receive a non-pensionable monthly \$1,000 in childcare subsidy for up to their first 24 months of employment.
 - If proof of dependent child(ren) under the age of 12 is not established upon hire, the subsidy will begin the second pay period of the month following submission and verification of documentation by the Police Department Payroll Office.
 - It is the responsibility of the employee to provide the verification upon eligibility and confirm receipt of verification with the Police Department Payroll Office.
 - Proof of dependent child(ren) will be verified through enrollment in benefits or subsequent submittal of copies of a birth certificate / adoption paper.
 - Employees must submit a signed attestation form to the Police Department Payroll Office, declaring the need for and use of childcare services during the period of eligibility.
 - Eligible childcare providers include in-school childcare, licensed childcare provider, and childcare provided by family members during work hours.
 - Childcare subsidy will be a maximum of \$1,000 a month per sworn personnel with a qualifying dependent in the household (dependent age 12 or less).

- Former POA members who are reinstated/hired after two years of separated time will be considered new employees for the purpose of this incentive.

Retention Incentive: Healthcare Premium Subsidy

- Retirement eligible POA members who are at least 50 years old and have completed 25 years of service are eligible for a Retention Health Care Subsidy, per extended year of qualifying service subject to the following conditions:
 - The eligible employee must defer retirement and commit to continue working for a one (1) year period.
 - January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026
 - Individuals will have until March 20, 2026 to elect retirement deferral and commit to working the additional one (1) year period, January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026.
 - After the successful completion of the commitment year, the City will pay the costs of the retiree medical premium upon that employee's retirement in the following increments:
 - Completion of one (1) year, the employee will receive 12 months of the retiree's medical premium
 - The City will pay the applicable retiree medical premium(s) in effect during the year (s) directly after the employee retires.
 - Medical premiums may include eligible family members, if the family members were covered by the City in the prior to retirement.
 - To earn credit this commitment year, employees must work a minimum of 1700 regularly scheduled hours from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026
 - POA Members who do not meet the 1700-hour threshold for a commitment year will forfeit the benefit for that year.
 - Overtime, transitional duty assignment work hours, paid leave hours and 4850 hours do not count towards the 1700 regularly scheduled hour requirement.
 - Once the subsidy credit ends, the employees unused sick leave (USL) bank can be used to fund health care premiums, per City practice.
 - Eligible employees may opt to waive the Health Care Premium Subsidy in lieu of a one-time non-pensionable contribution to their Retirement Health Savings (RHS) Account.
 - Eligibility, commitment timeframe and provisions for the RHS contribution payment would be the same as for the health care premium subsidy.
 - The additional year of service worked under the RHS contribution incentive, the equivalent cash value of 300 hours of Unused Sick Leave (USL) will be added to the employee's bank and made available for transfer to RHS under the provisions of the LBPD POA MOU.

NOW THEREFORE, the Parties agree to the following:

- A. The modification of recruitment and retention incentives to the POA MOU is intended to address the current staffing crisis and is not intended to confer ongoing rights of these incentives past the agreed upon revised operational period of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026, with the option to renew for two one-year periods at the discretion of the City Manager, if recruitment needs persist and Police Department salary savings are available.
- B. This Letter of Agreement shall not change any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provisions other than as outlined above.

THE PARTIES AGREE TO THE ABOVE:

FOR THE LONG BEACH POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION:

2/9/2026
Date


Rich Chambers, President, LBPOA

FOR THE CITY OF LONG BEACH:

2/9/2026
Date


Thomas B. Modica, City Manager