

Bristol County Sheriff's Office rolls out new recruitment and retention incentives

Some college graduates and experienced first-responders are in line for a pay bump in new recruitment and retention efforts rolled out this week by the Bristol County Sheriff's Office.

Experienced first responders completing the Bristol County corrections officer academy will be hired at a higher salary level, Sheriff Paul Heroux announced this week. Additionally, current BCSO corrections officers hired in the last two years will receive a pay increase if they have a specific college degree or previous first-responder experience.

"We need to take steps to improve recruitment and retention," Sheriff Heroux said. "This is the first step on the path to improve morale and decrease forced overtime through increased hiring."

The BCSO's Recruitment and Retention team – a mix of administration, officers and civilian staff – developed the new incentives after getting feedback and ideas from people across the Bristol County Sheriff's Office.

"This is definitely going to be a morale booster for the staff," said Caitlin DeMelo, the BCSO's assistant deputy superintendent of human resources. "We're all focused on eliminating the forced overtime by recruiting more corrections officers, but we also have to care for our staff through retention efforts. This is a great step to accomplish both."

Details of the BCSO's new recruitment and retention incentives are:

- Increasing the sign-on bonus for CO recruits to \$5,000.
- Changing the structure of the \$1,500 recruitment bonus for current employees who recruit a new corrections officer.
- Corrections Officer recruits who have three years of prior experience in the military, corrections, police, fire or as an EMT/paramedic will be hired one salary step higher. Recruits with four years of experience will be hired two steps higher.
- Current COs hired since Jan. 1, 2021 will have their salary steps increased by one or two if they previously had three or four years of experience as a first responder.
- Current COs hired since Jan. 1, 2021 who have an Associate's or Bachelor's degree in criminal justice, criminology, psychology, sociology or social work will also see salary step increases.

The next corrections officer academy is scheduled for the spring. Starting pay is \$55,000 with bonuses and state benefits such as pension and health insurance. Applications can be found online at <http://www.bcs0-ma.us/employment.htm>. Contact the Bristol County Sheriff's Office via email at recruitment@bcs0-ma.org with any questions.