



**POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**



# ***SWORN RECRUITMENT PLAN***

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**2023 - 2025**

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## Introduction

Across the United States, law enforcement agencies are facing unprecedented staffing shortages and challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified employees. Many factors have contributed to these challenges, including:

- Increases in retirements, resignations, and attrition
- Fewer applicants
- Negative attitudes, perceptions, and portrayals toward police
- Lengthy hiring processes
- Low entry-level salaries
- Increased competition between police agencies

This plan is designed to guide recruitment efforts for sworn positions within the Burbank Police Department (Department) over the next two years. It will provide an overview of current staffing levels, identify factors affecting recruitment and retention of sworn employees, and serve to establish goals, objectives, initiatives, and strategies for the future. Recruitment efforts guided by this plan will focus on maintaining a staffing level at or above 90% with a goal of being fully staffed (100%) by the end of 2024.

## Department Staffing Overview

As of January 1, 2023, the Burbank Police Department has **146** of the **160** budgeted sworn positions filled (91% staffed).

**Figure 1:** Sworn staffing breakdown by position, as of January 1, 2023

Position	Vacant	Filled	Budgeted
Police Chief	0	1	1
Police Captain	1	3	4
Police Lieutenant	0	9	9
Police Sergeant	0	22	22
Police Officer – Detective Assignment	4	25	29
Police Officer	9	86	95

**Figure 2:** Sworn staffing five-year historical data

Year	Hired	Separated	Net	# of Sworn*
2018	7	11	- 4	153
2019	6	17	- 11	149
2020	23	10	+ 13	138
2021	15	12	+ 3	151
2022	9**	17	- 8	154
<b>5 Year Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>- 7</b>	<b>Avg. 149</b>

\* As of January 1; \*\* Includes one reinstatement

**Figure 3: Sworn staffing breakdown by gender, as of January 1, 2023**

Gender	# of Sworn	% of Sworn
Male	129	88%
Female	17	12%

**Figure 4: Sworn staffing breakdown by race, as of January 1, 2023**

Race	# of Sworn	% of Sworn	City Population <sup>1</sup>
African American	11	8%	3%
Armenian	7	5%	N/A
Asian	8	5%	11%
Caucasian	81	55%	59%
Hispanic	39	27%	26%

## Internal Factors Affecting Recruitment & Retention

### Anticipated Retirements

Figure 5 shows that of the remaining classic PERS employees (3% at 50 retirement formula), 13 are currently eligible for retirement with an additional 20 employees eligible for retirement in the next three to five years. This equates to roughly **23%** of the current workforce that could potentially retire from the organization by the year 2028.

**Figure 5: Sworn staffing breakdown by age, as of January 1, 2023**

Age	# of Sworn	% of Sworn
Over 50	13	9%
<b>50 in 3-5 Years</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14%</b>
45 - 49	22	15%
40 – 44	18	12%
35 – 39	27	18%
30 - 34	36	25%
25 - 29	23	16%
21 - 24	7	5%

### Internal Recruitment Efforts

Studies have shown that many current law enforcement officers were drawn to the profession by friends or family within law enforcement. Although a dedicated outreach and recruitment team has been established, every member of the Department is a potential recruiter and should be supportive of recruitment efforts.

<sup>1</sup> Data provided by the City of Burbank Community Development Department based on 2023 *Claritas* demographic data and an estimated population of 105,357.

## Recruitment Budget

Every effort is made to capitalize on no-cost recruitment advertising options. However, budget constraints can limit expenditures when it comes to recruitment. The Department remains selective in appropriating funds to recruitment efforts that will yield the best results.

## Testing and Hiring Process

Research has shown that lengthy testing and hiring processes have deterred potential candidates from applying or caused them to accept positions with other agencies whose hiring processes are more expeditious. The Department conducts monthly testing year-round. Candidates must pass the written exam through the National Testing Network (NTN), the physical agility course at the police firing range, and a panel interview before moving into the background phase. Monthly testing has allowed the Department to maintain an efficient and constant flow of applicants in the hiring process.

## External Factors Affecting Recruitment & Retention

### Salary and Compensation

During contract negotiations, the Burbank Police Officers' Association (BPOA) meets with the City of Burbank and agrees upon a 10-city salary comparison survey to show how Burbank Police salaries compare to those of surrounding agencies. Historically, the Department has fallen somewhere in the middle of this survey.

Low salaries are one of the most oft-cited reasons for not entering careers in law enforcement. Competition between law enforcement agencies in hiring qualified candidates becomes even more challenging when there is a significant and less-than favorable discrepancy in salary.

As competition between police agencies intensifies, many organizations are now offering hiring incentives and bonuses to not only attract new applicants, but also to entice current police officers to leave their respective agency for higher pay and better benefits. Common incentives include signing bonuses, relocation reimbursements, salary increases for further education, shift differential pay, housing assistance, tuition reimbursement, and multilingual pay.

**Figure 6:** 10-city survey showing sworn staffing comparison and hiring incentives, as of January 1, 2023

Agency	Current Sworn	Budgeted Sworn	Vacancies	Percent of Fully Staffed	Hiring Incentive
Anaheim	397	408	11	97.30%	Yes - \$15k
Garden Grove	176	182	6	96.70%	No
Glendale	232	247	15	93.93%	No
Santa Ana	375	400	25	93.75%	Yes - \$10k
Huntington Beach	218	237	19	91.98%	No
<b>Burbank</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>91.25%</b>	<b>No</b>
Pasadena	211	240	29	87.92%	Yes - \$8k for Laterals
Santa Monica	200	230	30	86.96%	Yes - \$15k
Inglewood	172	199	27	86.43%	Yes - \$40k for Laterals \$30k for New Hire \$15k with Bachelor's \$10k for Military Vets
Long Beach	696	824	128	84.47%	Yes – "Up to" \$6k
Torrance	180	220	40	81.82%	Yes - \$10k for Laterals

## **Attitudes, Perceptions, and Portrayals Toward Police**

Controversial incidents involving law enforcement across the United States have led to scrutiny, distrust, demand for accountability, and movements to reform modern-day policing. Negative attitudes, perceptions, and portrayals toward law enforcement has made it difficult for police agencies to attract new applicants and retain current police officers.

The Burbank Police Department is not unlike other agencies and has had to reexamine and change established policies and procedures to align with new laws and changes to the policing profession. Additionally, new legislation has been enacted that is focused on strengthening policing responsibility and accountability guidelines, raising eligibility standards, and banning harmful techniques. Increased scrutiny has led to lower morale, an increase in early retirements and resignations, and a steep decline in the number of applicants pursuing a career in law enforcement.

## **Pension Reform**

The California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) has led to a decline in police applicants, as those hired on or after January 1, 2013 must work longer for less compensation at retirement age. In addition, many agencies, Burbank included, has classic PERS members paying into their own pension, which has led to earlier retirements.

# Recruitment Goals

## Goal 1: Recruit and Hire a Diverse Workforce

### Objective 1: Recruit Female Police Officers

**Initiative:** The Burbank Police Department seeks to hire more female police officers. Historically, statistics show that female applicants have failed out of the process because they were unable to successfully complete the physical agility exam.

**Strategies:**

- 1.1.1 Attract female applicants by spotlighting current female Burbank Police Officers in advertising and social media campaigns.
- 1.1.2 Attend events focused specifically on female recruitment and career development.
- 1.1.3 Consider joining the **“30x30”** initiative – a pledge to increase the participation of women in law enforcement to 30% by the year 2030.
- 1.1.4 Provide practice sessions for the physical agility course to help female candidates develop the techniques necessary to be successful.
- 1.1.5 Establish and maintain a recruitment team that includes female police officers.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Review quarterly reports from human resources and NTN showing the number of female applicants, pass/fail rate, and when applicable, where in the hiring process female candidates failed.

### Objective 2: Recruit Applicants who Represent the City’s Demographic Population

**Initiative:** The Burbank Police Department is committed to hiring a culturally diverse workforce which represents the demographics of the community our police officers serve.

**Strategies:**

- 1.2.1 Focus recruitment efforts and campaigns on diverse communities outside of Burbank.
- 1.2.2 Attend job and career fairs in diverse communities outside of Burbank.
- 1.2.3 Liaison with high schools and colleges known for diversity to identify potential candidates who are interested in a career in law enforcement.
- 1.2.4 Partner with local and county community groups, athletic programs, and recruitment services to identify potential candidates who are interested in a career in law enforcement.
- 1.2.5 Liaison with private security firms to identify potential candidates who are interested in a career in law enforcement.
- 1.2.6 Establish and maintain a diverse recruitment team.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Review quarterly reports from human resources and NTN showing the demographic breakdown of applicants by race. Continue to compare current sworn demographics to the City of Burbank demographic population.

### Objective 3: Recruit Current and Former Military Personnel

**Initiative:** The Burbank Police Department should seek to recruit candidates who have fulfilled their military obligations and are interested in a law enforcement career.

**Strategies:**

- 1.3.1 Utilize current police officers who are former military to contact military colleagues and identify potential applicants.
- 1.3.2 Establish relationships with military recruiters in the area.
- 1.3.3 Attend job fairs specifically geared towards the military.
- 1.3.4 Visit military bases and provide recruitment material and personalized recruitment services.
- 1.3.5 Consider offering incentives specific to military applicants.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Keep statistics on military applicants and maintain data on new hires and current sworn personnel who are former military.



## Goal 1: Recruit and Hire a Diverse Workforce (continued)

### Objective 4: Consideration to Hire As-needed, Part-time Police Officers

**Initiative:** Research the feasibility of increasing deployable field force by hiring police officers from other agencies as needed, on a temporary and/or part-time basis.

**Strategies:**

- 1.4.1 Explore the viability of implementing a hiring process for recruiting sworn police officers on a part-time basis, as needed.
- 1.4.2 Research best practices and similar programs being run by outside agencies.
- 1.4.3 Consult with California P.O.S.T. regarding requirements and certifications.
- 1.4.4 Review the fiscal impact of such a program.
- 1.4.5 Identify liability issues and/or concerns regarding Department training, equipment, policies, and procedures.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Generate a staff report to the Chief of Police outlining the strategy, benefits, limitations, and drawbacks of recruiting and hiring part-time, sworn police officers.

## Goal 2: Optimize Technology in Recruitment Efforts

### Objective 1: Create and Launch a Recruitment Website

**Initiative:** The Burbank Police Department’s current website is outdated, overly verbose, and not mobile friendly. A more contemporary website focused solely on recruitment would align with other agency’s current recruitment efforts.

**Strategies:**

- 2.1.1 Develop a contemporary and mobile friendly “one-stop shop” website for potential candidates that outlines the hiring process, provides detailed information on salary, benefits, and career opportunities, provides direct links to apply, and allows candidates to communicate directly with recruiters and Department staff.
- 2.1.2 Use the recruitment website address on all social media, marketing, and recruitment materials.
- 2.1.3 Add the recruitment website to current staff business cards.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Review the number of visits to the website, the number of direct inquiries received from potential candidates, and query applicants on how helpful the website was in the process.

### Objective 2: Contemporize and Expedite the Hiring Process

**Initiative:** Expedite the hiring process using online testing and cloud-based personal history questionnaires.

**Strategies:**

- 2.2.1 Evaluate the current partnership with NTN and research additional vendors that provide online police exams.
- 2.2.2 Maintain monthly, year-round testing with support from City of Burbank Human Resources.
- 2.2.3 Assure the validity of, and periodically audit all testing instruments.
- 2.2.4 Continue partnership with Guardian Alliance, a cloud-based platform that allows applicants to complete personal history questionnaires (PHQs) and submit all necessary documentation electronically to the Department. The platform also tracks progress and allows investigators to move through background checks in an efficient and expeditious manner.
- 2.2.5 Keep background investigations “in-house” by assigning all sworn background investigations to Burbank Police detectives.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Compare the length of Burbank’s hiring process to other agencies especially for applicants who are in the process with more than one police department.

### Objective 3: Create a Recruitment Video

**Initiative:** Develop a contemporary recruitment video that will attract new police applicants.

**Strategies:**

- 2.3.1 Create a recruitment video that personalizes the law enforcement profession and represents the strong sense of community in Burbank.
- 2.3.2 Avoid a militarized and/or tactical theme.
- 2.3.3 Liaison with the City PIO office to produce, film, and edit the project.
- 2.3.4 Consider making multiple short vignettes spotlighting different employees of the Department.
- 2.3.5 Create a video that represents the diversity of the Department.
- 2.3.6 Launch video on all social media platforms, including YouTube and City accounts.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Analyze the number of views the video receives and query applicants on how much of an effect the video had on their decision to apply with Burbank.

## Goal 2: Optimize Technology in Recruitment Efforts (continued)

### Objective 4: Create Engaging Social Media Recruitment Campaigns

**Initiative:** Exploit Department social media pages for recruitment campaigns.

**Strategies:**

- 2.4.1 Post regular recruitment ads on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and any other accessible platform.
- 2.4.2 Create unique social media content that personalizes the profession and spotlights current Burbank police officers.
- 2.4.3 Create social media content that demonstrates the diversity of the Burbank Police Department.
- 2.4.4 Create social media content that promotes community policing efforts.
- 2.4.5 Post content on sites that offer free job postings such as California P.O.S.T. and LinkedIn.
- 2.4.6 Continue posting recruit and lateral job postings on GovernmentJobs.com through City of Burbank HR accounts.
- 2.4.7 Appropriate funds from the recruitment budget on a quarterly basis to “boost” and promote social media recruitment campaigns through paid advertising.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Track the engagement of social media posts and increases in followers. Query applicants on how much of a role social media played in their decision to apply with Burbank.

## Goal 3: Personalize the Recruitment Process

### Objective 1: Provide Concierge Service to Prospective and Current Applicants

**Initiative:** The recruitment staff should personally engage with each potential applicant interested in a career with Burbank prior to and throughout the hiring process.

**Strategies:**

- 3.1.1 Establish a professional relationship with those interested in pursuing a career with the Burbank Police Department and provide them with the necessary tools for success.
- 3.1.2 Respond immediately to prospective applicants to answer any questions and address any concerns they may have.
- 3.1.3 Provide guidance in the hiring process and ensure applicants understand requirements and application deadlines.
- 3.1.4 Offer station tours and opportunities to ride with current police officers (schedule permitting) to prospective applicants prior to them starting the hiring process.
- 3.1.5 Be accommodating to lateral police officer applicants who have scheduling conflicts with their current agency.
- 3.1.6 Host hiring workshops to provide prospective candidates with opportunities to ask questions, engage in conversation with current police officers, and participate in practical exercises such as mock oral interviews.
- 3.1.7 Expand recruitment and broaden the applicant pool by establishing relationships with local colleges and universities, especially those with criminal justice programs, and offer to provide instruction and guidance in the pursuit of a law enforcement career.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Determine the success rate of applicants who established a professional connection with a recruiter prior to testing compared to those who did not.

## Goal 4: Develop a Recruitment Brand

### Objective 1: Utilize Traditional Print Advertising

**Initiative:** Develop traditional print advertising material with contemporary branding and imagery.

**Strategies:**

- 4.1.1 Create traditional flyers with easy-to-read information outlining salary and benefits and providing QR codes with links to apply.
- 4.1.2 Outfit the patrol vehicle fleet with “Now Hiring” bumper stickers with the recruitment website address.
- 4.1.3 Develop recruitment business cards with the concept of consolidating information traditionally found on a full-page flyer into a compact format that can be easily carried and distributed by police officers.
- 4.1.4 Liaison with the City PIO office, Public Works, and Burbank Water and Power to develop posters, signage, billboards, and mailers for recruitment.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Query applicants on the impact print advertising had on their decision to apply with Burbank.

## Goal 5: Recruit from Within

### Objective 1: Leverage Police Explorer and Police Cadet Programs

**Initiative:** The Department's Police Explorer and Police Cadet programs should be used as a recruitment pipeline for current and future vacancies.

**Strategies:**

- 5.1.1 Maintain a robust Police Explorer program comprised of individuals interested in a law enforcement career with Burbank.
- 5.1.2 Market opportunities to become a police explorer in the high schools throughout the school year and during career days, job fairs, work experience courses, etc.
- 5.1.3 Offer internships in exchange for school credit (e.g., occupational programs).
- 5.1.4 Focus on succession planning and developing police explorers into cadets.
- 5.1.5 Structure the explorer and cadet programs to provide academic, physical fitness, and technical training, as well as instruction on developing team building, leadership skills, and self-discipline.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Track progress in the recruitment and achievements of police explorers and police cadets, and the success rate of each becoming a police officer.

### Objective 2: Conduct Focus Group Studies with Current Police Officers

**Initiative:** Interview current police officers on the topic of recruitment.

**Strategies:**

- 5.2.1 Speak with current Burbank police officers on what led them to apply with Burbank.
- 5.2.2 Identify what challenges current Burbank police officers see with recruitment.
- 5.2.3 Solicit input from current police officers on recruitment ideas.
- 5.2.4 Identify internal issues and concerns with morale and work culture that could have a negative impact on employee retention. Solicit input and develop strategies to remedy these issues.
- 5.2.5 Include current Burbank police officers in recruitment campaigns and efforts.
- 5.2.6 Evaluate the current Reserve Program to identify candidates who are interested in, and qualified for a full-time peace officer certification.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Document information and implement strategies derived from focus groups.

## Goal 6: Provide Recruitment Incentives

### Objective 1: Implement Financial Incentives to Entice Applicants

**Initiative:** Consider implementing financial incentives for recruit and lateral police officers as well as a bonus for current personnel who recruit new police officers.

**Strategies:**

- 6.1.1 Offer a hiring bonus of an agreed upon amount to new recruits, to be paid in increments.
- 6.1.2 Offer a hiring bonus of an agreed upon amount to lateral police officers, to be paid in increments.
- 6.1.3 Offer a hiring bonus of an agreed upon amount to military personnel, to be paid in increments.
- 6.1.4 Offer benefit incentives such as increased vacation and/or sick time for lateral police officers.
- 6.1.5 Offer a bonus for current Department employees who recruit new police officers.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Compare the number of applicants and candidates hired following the implementation of hiring incentives compared to statistics prior to offering incentives.

## Conclusion

The recruitment goals contained in this plan are critical to the success and future of the Burbank Police Department. Each goal, objective, initiative, and strategy will be reviewed to ensure its effectiveness in the Department’s mission to hire a diverse workforce of police officers to better serve the Burbank community. The Sworn Recruitment Plan is a living document and will be updated as necessary, based on the needs of the organization.

The Community Outreach and Personnel Services Bureau (COPS) lieutenant will oversee the implementation of this Sworn Recruitment Plan and track its progress. The COPS Bureau lieutenant will also be responsible for providing regular updates to the Chief of Police and command staff.