



RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Community First | Service Above Self | Integrity Driven | One Interaction at a Time

Don Hedrick, Chief of Police

Mayor Allender and City Council
300 6th St.
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear City Leaders,

Over the past decade, law enforcement agencies have seen a decrease in qualified applicants, changing generational preferences, increased competition, expanded skill requirements, uncompetitive benefits, and a change in the law enforcement image, causing an expanding and leaking employee bucket when it comes to recruitment and retention. Unfortunately, the RCPD is not unique in this problem, and we are working to prevent the hole in our bucket from widening.

Since 2020, the Rapid City Police Department has hired 53 police officers; however, we have nearly doubled our attrition rate and lost 55 sworn officers to resignation, early retirement, retirement, and termination. It should be noted that when examining the attrition rate between 2017 and 2022, we found that between 2017 and 2019, most of our attrition came from one to five-year employees and those who retired after meeting their retirement rule. In 2020, the attrition trend changed from younger officers to senior officers and early retirements. One of the most concerning trends since 2020 is the early resignation of sergeants (3), the resignation of senior officers (7), and early retirements (6). While the retention of sworn officers is crucial, the retention of non-sworn employees is equally important. Since 2020, the Rapid City Police Department has seen a high attrition rate in evidence personnel, including forensic chemists and specialists. In addition, our records staff consists of eleven positions, two of which were recent new hires due to attrition.

Hiring and retention are issues most organizations and businesses are facing today. As a result, government and private companies have been required to reduce hours of operation or services throughout our nation. Reducing services or hours of operation is not viable with our current workload, community expectations, and public safety needs. At the same time, our recent attrition and hiring rate will not allow us to continue to operate in a fashion our community expects or is accustomed to.

Through research, visiting with other executive law enforcement officers throughout the nation, department surveys, visiting with RCPD employees, and attending classes on the topic of recruitment and retention, we have identified several critical areas - Pay and Benefits, Employees Development and Growth, and Employee Wellness. Based on these pillars of employee retention, I am proposing recommendations focusing on recruitment, retention, self-care, resilience, and the development of police department employees.

Based on the estimated cost of the recommendations, and the cost of the investment into our employees vs the cost of attrition, we can't afford not to implement these benefits.

Respectfully,

Don Hedrick
Chief of Police

IMMEDIATE PROPOSALS

- Accrual Increase
- Fitness/Wellness Reimbursement
- Quarterly Wellness Days
- Sabbatical Program
- Student Loan Reimbursement
- Longevity/Experience Pay
- Zero Co-Pay Therapy

PROGRAM COSTS

Program	Cost per Employee	Cost per Month	Cost per Year
Fitness Reimbursement	\$75.00	\$8,250	\$99,000
Quarterly Wellness Day	\$57.00	\$2,185	\$26,220
Longevity/Experience	\$2,281 (Average)	\$28,333	\$340,000
Student Loan	\$250.00	\$13,750 (55 employees)	\$165,000
Therapy Co-Pay	\$30.00	\$600.00 (20 employees)	\$7,200
Total		\$53,119	\$637,420

LONG-TERM PROPOSALS

- Increase Community Service Officer numbers – six conditional offers have been delivered and backgrounds are underway
- Hire Mental Health Clinician – job description written
- Increase Online Reporting options for the public – work in progress
- City Security – Study completed; meeting with Directors on February 1st
- City-wide Video Management System – ongoing meetings with Department Directors

RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL ORDER 2023-01

MEMO TO: All Personnel
FROM: Chief Don Hedrick
DATE: January 31, 2023
SUBJECT: Initial Leave Bank and Increase in Leave Accruals

PURPOSE: This special order creates a vacation and sick leave bank for new hire officers and reduces accrual years for current employees. Our wellness survey results showed our employees value more time off, and our brand new employees typically need to utilize employee vacation donations when unforeseen circumstances arise in their personal lives.

1. Upon hire, the PD timekeeper will add 40 hours of vacation and 3 Sick days to ensure time off is available when needs arise.
2. Reduce years of employment requirements for accrual rate increase so employees are able to acquire more time off sooner in their careers, at the following:

Length of Employment (Years)	Accrual Rate/Pay Period (Hours)	Previous Length of Employment (Years)
0 – 3	3.08	0-4
3 – 7	4.62	4-13
7+	6.15	13+

3. This will also require a change in Maximum Carryover hours in the following:

Length of Employment (Years)	Maximum Carryover (Hours)	Previous Length of Employment (Years)
0 – 3	120	0-4
3 – 7	160	4-13
7+	200	13+

4. New hire 40-hour vacation block is not eligible for pay-out should the new employee leave the RCPD before utilizing these hours.

POLICY STATEMENT: This will be distributed to the RCPD via a special order and will take effect immediately. This program will be evaluated quarterly between implementation and December 31, 2024, to determine if revision is necessary and is achieving the desired program goals for recruitment and retention.

RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL ORDER 2023-02

MEMO TO: All Personnel
FROM: Chief Don Hedrick
DATE: January 31, 2023
SUBJECT: Fitness and Wellness Reimbursement

PURPOSE: This special order creates a fitness and wellness reimbursement program that is intended to provide for the fitness and wellness needs of employees. To carry out the mission of the Department, it is critical each employee maintain their overall physical, mental, and emotional wellness. The RCPD will contract with local fitness and exercise providers to cover the costs of these activities.

1. The RCPD has established a six-month trial partnership with Monument Health Sports Performance by Exos to support our Police Department employees in their overall wellness. Their facility has various group fitness classes, nutrition consultations, strategy sessions with performance teams, and a state of the art gym. For six months, we will provide memberships to police employees which will be paid for by the Rapid City Police Department.
2. Police employees may choose their own option for exercise or fitness membership at a local commercial gym, martial arts studio, yoga studio, CrossFit, etc. Police employees who elect an option outside of Monument Health Sports Performance will submit quarterly reimbursement requests through the Wellness Coordinator if they desire reimbursement. Police employees will be reimbursed up to seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per month if electing their own program, which is equivalent to the Monument Health single membership cost. Police employees will notify the Wellness Coordinator of any changes to their membership status at their selected provider. These reimbursements are not considered taxable income by the IRS.

POLICY STATEMENT: This will be distributed to the RCPD via a special order and will take effect immediately. This program will be evaluated at the end of the six month trial to determine actual costs, if revision is necessary and if this program is achieving the desired program goals for recruitment and retention. Should this program succeed, the City will go through the Request for Proposal process to determine the best contract.

RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL ORDER 2023-03

MEMO TO: All Personnel
FROM: Chief Don Hedrick
DATE: January 31, 2023
SUBJECT: Longevity Pay

PURPOSE: This special order creates a longevity pay structure according to years of employment. Every December, each police employee who has been employed for the previous 12 months will be included in the longevity/experience pay.

YEARS OF SERVICE	AMOUNT
1-4 (12 – 48 months)	\$1,000 paid each December
5-9 (49 – 108 months)	\$2,000 paid each December
10-14 (109 – 168 months)	\$3,000 paid each December
15-19 (169 – 228 months)	\$4,000 paid each December
20+ (229 months +)	\$5,000 paid each December

1. Every December 1, each police employee who has been employed for at least 12 months will be included in the longevity/experience pay.
2. PD Admin will coordinate with City Human Resources to add the above amounts to the first paycheck received in December.
3. Police employees who have not completed 12 months will not be eligible for this payment.
4. This program will be implemented on a trial basis and run through December 31, 2024.
5. The IRS considers this payment as taxable income, and City HR will deduct taxes as required by law.

POLICY STATEMENT: This will be distributed to the RCPD via a special order and will take effect immediately. This program will be evaluated quarterly between implementation and December 31, 2024, to determine if revision is necessary and is achieving the desired program goals for recruitment and retention.

RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL ORDER 2023-04

MEMO TO: All Personnel
FROM: Chief Don Hedrick
DATE: January 31, 2023
SUBJECT: Quarterly Wellness Days

PURPOSE: The wellness day program is intended to address the wellness needs of officers in the Police Department and to provide a re-occurring day focused on rest and recovery. The wellness day will replace a regularly scheduled work day on their schedule.

1. Officers will work with their supervisors to schedule one wellness day per quarter at least thirty (30) days prior to that date. Quarters are Jan – Mar, Apr – June, July – Sept, and Oct – Dec. Employees will receive 4 wellness days per year.
2. If an employee does not schedule their wellness day during each quarter, the day cannot be banked for use during a later quarter.
3. On the scheduled wellness day, the officer will meet with the Wellness Coordinator and participate in one of the approved activities below:
 - a. Cryo Therapy
 - b. Deep Float Therapy
 - c. Acupuncture
 - d. Hot/Cold Therapy
 - e. Red Light Therapy
 - f. Massage Therapy
 - g. Vibroacoustic Therapy
 - h. PEMF (Pulsed Electro Magnetic Field Therapy)
 - i. Department Psychologist meeting and check-in
 - j. Any other wellness activity or treatment approved by the Wellness Coordinator before the wellness date.
4. The RCPD Wellness Coordinator and Finance Office will establish group membership vendor agreements with local wellness providers for employees, and the Department will cover the cost of the Wellness activity.
5. The RCPD Wellness Coordinator will compile and distribute a list of all pre-approved activities and vendors. Officers who choose an approved activity or vendor that does not have a direct bill agreement with the City will be responsible for any costs associated with the wellness activity.

POLICY STATEMENT: This will be distributed to the RCPD via a special order and will take effect immediately. This program will be evaluated quarterly between implementation and December 31, 2024, to determine if revision is necessary and is achieving the desired program goals for recruitment and retention.

RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL ORDER 2023-05

MEMO TO: All Personnel
FROM: Chief Don Hedrick
DATE: January 31, 2023
SUBJECT: Sabbatical Leave

PURPOSE: This special order creates a sabbatical leave program. The sabbatical leave program is intended to address the needs of officers in the Police Department as they progress through their careers at predetermined career milestones.

1. Once a sworn employee reaches these milestone years, 80 hours of sabbatical leave shall be deposited to their sabbatical bank:
 - a. 3 years of employment – 80 hours of sabbatical leave
 - b. 7 years of employment – 80 hours of sabbatical leave
 - c. 11 years of employment – 80 hours of sabbatical leave
 - d. 15 years of employment – 80 hours of sabbatical leave
 - e. 19 years of employment – 80 hours of sabbatical leave
 - f. 23 years of employment – 80 hours of sabbatical leave
2. Sabbatical leave will not come from the officers' accrued leave balances. During the sabbatical time, the employee will continue to accrue leave and receive all benefits they normally accrue. The sabbatical leave must be taken within 12 months of the milestone sabbatical leave being deposited and shall be taken in one block of time.
3. Sabbatical leave requests will be submitted to the officer's direct supervisor through a memo that will include the desired dates of the leave; attempts will be made to accommodate the desired dates. One Division Commander will be responsible for scheduling all sabbatical leave for the entire Department.

POLICY STATEMENT: This will be distributed to the RCPD via a special order and will take effect immediately. This program will be evaluated quarterly between implementation and December 31, 2024, to determine if revision is necessary and is achieving the desired program goals for recruitment and retention.

RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT SPECIAL ORDER 2023-06

MEMO TO: All Personnel
FROM: Chief Don Hedrick
DATE: January 31, 2023
SUBJECT: Student Loan Reimbursement

PURPOSE: This special order creates a student loan reimbursement program. The SLRP authorizes the repayment of outstanding federally-insured student loan obligations incurred by a current employee.

1. The RCPD will offer a student loan reimbursement payment of up to two hundred and fifty dollars per month (\$250) to any department employee who meets the following criteria:
 - a. The employee is not delinquent on their student loans in any way, including any actions for collection, garnishment of wages, or liens on personal property.
 - b. The employee has completed all requirements for their degree program.
 - c. The employee is not in a deferred status for their student loan and is paying for a student loan.
 - d. The student loans were obtained by the employee for a degree that is a requirement for their position or required for promotion in the Department.
2. To receive this assistance, the employee must notify their immediate supervisor of their interest in the program and attach their student loan statement(s).
3. On a yearly basis thereafter, the employee will submit their student loan statement(s) to Police Administration for verification.
4. The employee will notify their supervisor and Police Administration of any change to their loan status immediately.
5. The IRS threshold for taxing this type of payment is currently \$5,250 annually. This yearly total being offered to employees will only be \$3,000 so these payments will not be taxed as income by City HR.

QUALIFYING STUDENT DEBT

1. Qualifying Student Debt is defined as follows:
 - a. Any loan issued or serviced through the U.S. Department of Education or its debt servicing affiliates, including federal direct subsidized or unsubsidized loans, and other financial products designed specifically for the purpose of financing higher education from an accredited university.
 - b. Any loan issued by a private lender that is specifically designed to finance the cost of higher education from an accredited university.

POLICY STATEMENT: This will be distributed to the RCPD via a special order and will take effect immediately. This program will be evaluated quarterly between implementation and December 31, 2024, to determine if revision is necessary and is achieving the desired program goals for recruitment and retention.

RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL ORDER 2023-07

MEMO TO: All Personnel
FROM: Chief Don Hedrick
DATE: January 31, 2023
SUBJECT: Therapy/Counseling Co-Pay

PURPOSE: This special order creates a therapy/counseling co-pay coverage program. The RCPD encourages mental health service utilization for police employees and will provide a zero co-pay for professional mental health therapy and counseling.

1. PD Admin and City HR will establish a group of counseling offices who will agree to bill the employee's health insurance and the Police Department will pay the co-pay costs.
2. If a police employee seeks counseling outside of the established contracted providers, the employee will be responsible to submit the co-pay receipt to HR or PD Administration for reimbursement. These reimbursements are not considered taxable income by the IRS.

POLICY STATEMENT: This will be distributed to the RCPD via a special order and will take effect immediately. This program will be evaluated quarterly between implementation and December 31, 2024, to determine if revision is necessary and is achieving the desired program goals for recruitment and retention.