



**SAN RAFAEL**  
THE CITY WITH A MISSION

# Sworn-Recruitment Plan 2024-2026



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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 San Rafael Police 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 2026.

## Department Staffing Overview

As of February 1, 2024, the San Rafael Police Department has **57** of the **68** budgeted sworn

**Figure 1:** Sworn staffing breakdown by position, as of February 1, 2024

<b>Position</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	<b>Filled</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>
<i>Police Chief</i>	0	1	1
<i>Police Captain</i>	0	2	2
<i>Police Lieutenant</i>	0	4	4
<i>Police Sergeant</i>	0	9	9
<i>Police Corporal</i>	5	4	9
<i>Police Officer</i>	6	37	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>68</b>

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

Year	Hired	Separated	Net
2018	4	9	- 5
2019	7	10	- 3
2020	10	4	+ 6
2021	3	5	-2
2022	8	6	+2
2023	9	17	-8
<b>6 Year Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>- 10</b>

**Figure 3: Marin County Staffing as of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024**

Agency	Number of sworn officers budgeted	Number of openings	Number off work or on light duty due to injury	Number at Academy	Number on FTO	Total number not currently working at solo officer status
MCSO	197	5 (2.5% of FTE)	13	8	11	37 (18.8% of FTE)
San Rafael	68	10 (14.7% of FTE)	5	5	5	25 (36.7% of FTE)
Novato	60	2 (3.3% of FTE)	3	2	1	8 (13.3% of FTE)
Central Marin	42	8 (19.0% of FTE)	0	1	0	9 (21.4% of FTE)
Mill Valley	22	2 (9.1% of FTE)	2	1	1	6 (27.3% of FTE)
Sausalito	18 (+2 frozen)	3 (16.6% of FTE)	0	1	1	8 (27.7% of FTE)
Tiburon	14	0 (0.0% of FTE)	0	1	0	1 (7.1% of FTE)
Fairfax	11 (+1 frozen)	2 (18.2% of FTE)	0	0	0	2 (18.2% of FTE)
Ross	8	1 (12.5% of FTE)	1	0	0	2 (25.0% of FTE)
Belvedere	7	1 (14.3% of FTE)	1	0	0	2 (28.6% of FTE)

\*As of February 1, 2024

**Figure 4:** Sworn staffing breakdown by gender, as of February 1, 2024

Gender	% of Sworn 2014	# of Sworn 2/1/24	% of Sworn 2/1/24	Difference (2024 vs 2014)
Male	85%	46	80%	-5%
Female	15%	12	20%	+5%

**Figure 5:** Sworn staffing breakdown by race, as of February 1, 2024

Race	% of Sworn 2014	# of Sworn 2/1/24	% of Sworn 2/1/24	Difference (2024 vs 2014)	City Population <sup>1</sup>
African American	1.7%	1	1.7%	0%	1.6%
Asian	6.3%	2	3.4%	-2.9%	6.3%
Caucasian	85.7%	40	68.9%	-16.8%	55.8%
Hispanic	7.9%	15	25.4%	17.5%	32.5%

<sup>1</sup> Data provided by the United States Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sanrafaelcitycalifornia#>

## Internal Factors Affecting Recruitment & Retention

### Anticipated Retirements

**Figure 6** shows that of the remaining classic PERS employees (3% at 55 retirement formula), 3 are currently eligible for retirement this year with an additional 9 employees eligible for retirement in the next three to five years. This equates to roughly **20%** of the current workforce that could potentially retire from the organization by the year 2029.

**Figure 5:** Sworn staffing breakdown by age, as of February 1, 2024

Age	# of Sworn	% of Sworn
<b>55 in 1-2 Years</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
55 in 3-5 years	<b>9</b>	<b>12%</b>
Total (over 50)	<b>12</b>	<b>20.7%</b>

### 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.

### 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 numerous testing on a monthly basis. Candidates must pass the written exam through the Post Entry Level Law Enforcement Test Battery (PELLET-B), the physical agility course, and a panel interview before

moving into the background phase. The regular testing has allowed the Department to maintain a semi constant flow of applicants in the hiring process.

## External Factors Affecting Recruitment & Retention

### Salary and Compensation

During contract negotiations, the San Rafael Police Association (SRPA) meets with the City of San Rafael and agrees upon a 10-city salary comparison survey to show how San Rafael 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 off-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 compensation and hiring incentives based on Officer Salary, as of February 1, 2024

Agency	Officer Monthly Salary	Budgeted Sworn	Hiring Incentive
Alameda PD	\$11,515	88	Yes - \$75k for Lateral Officer
Fairfield PD	\$9,974	126	No
Hayward PD	\$11,438	197	Yes- \$10,000 for trainees
Napa PD	\$11,514	76	Yes - \$15k for Lateral Officer
Novato PD	\$8,923	60	Yes- \$20,000 for Lateral Officer
<b>San Rafael PD</b>	<b>\$10,301</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>Yes- \$25,000 for Lateral</b>
Santa Rosa PD	\$10,131	190	Yes- \$25,000 for Lateral Officer
South San Francisco PD	\$11,818	83	Yes - \$5,000 for Lateral Officer
Vallejo PD	\$9,813	132	No
Marin Sheriff	\$10,826	202	Yes- \$10,000 for Lateral Officer

## 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 San Rafael 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, San Rafael 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 Applicants who Represent the City’s Demographic Population
<p><b>Initiative:</b> The San Rafael Police Department is committed to hiring a culturally diverse workforce which represents the demographics of the community our police officers serve.</p>
<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.2.1 Focus recruitment efforts and campaigns on diverse communities inside and outside of San Rafael.</li> <li>1.2.2 Attend job and career fairs in diverse communities inside and outside of San Rafael.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>1.2.5 Liaison with private security firms to identify potential candidates who are interested in a career in law enforcement.</li> <li>1.2.6 Establish and maintain a diverse recruitment team.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluation Criteria:</b> Review quarterly reports from human resources and testing showing the demographic breakdown of applicants by race. Continue to compare current sworn demographics to the City of San Rafael demographic population.</p>

Objective 2: Recruit Female Police Officers
<p><b>Initiative:</b> The San Rafael 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.</p>
<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1.1 Attract female applicants by spotlighting current female San Rafael Police Officers in advertising and social media campaigns.</li> <li>1.1.2 Attend events focused specifically on female recruitment and career development.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>1.1.4 Provide practice sessions for the physical agility course to help female candidates develop the techniques necessary to be successful.</li> </ul>

1.1.5 Establish and maintain a recruitment team that includes female police officers.

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

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

**Initiative:** The San Rafael 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 2: Optimize Technology in Recruitment Efforts

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

**Initiative:** The San Rafael Police Department's current recruitment website is outdated. 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 cloud-based personal history questionnaires.

**Strategies:**

- 2.2.1 Evaluate and research additional vendors that provide online police exams.
- 2.2.2 Maintain monthly, year-round testing with support from City of San Rafael Human Resources.
- 2.2.3 Assure the validity of, and periodically audit all testing instruments.
- 2.2.4 Look into a partnership with online companies that allows applicants to complete personal history questionnaires (PHQs) and submit all necessary documentation electronically to the Department. A platform that also tracks progress and allows investigators to move through background checks in an efficiently
- 2.2.5 Continue to keep the majority of background investigations contracted with outside investigators.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Compare the length of San Rafael'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 San Rafael.
- 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 San Rafael.

### 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 San Rafael police officers.
- 2.4.3 Create social media content that demonstrates the diversity of the San Rafael 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 and CalOpps through City of San Rafael 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 social media played in their decision to apply with San Rafael.

## 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 San Rafael prior to and throughout the hiring process.

**Strategies:**

- 3.1.1 Establish a professional relationship with those interested in pursuing a career with the San Rafael 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/PELLETB exams 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
<p><b>Initiative:</b> Develop traditional print advertising material with contemporary branding and imagery.</p>
<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1.1 Create traditional flyers with easy-to-read information outlining salary and benefits and providing QR codes with links to apply.</li> <li>4.1.2 Outfit the patrol vehicle fleet with “Now Hiring” bumper stickers with the recruitment website address.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluation Criteria:</b> Query applicants on the impact print advertising had on their decision to apply with San Rafael.</p>

## Goal 5: Recruit from Within

Objective 1: Leverage Police Cadet Programs
<p><b>Initiative:</b> The Department’s Police Cadet programs should be used as a recruitment pipeline for current and future vacancies.</p>
<p><b>Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1.1 Maintain a robust Police Cadet program comprised of individuals interested in a law enforcement career with San Rafael.</li> <li>5.1.2 Market opportunities to become a police Cadet in the Colleges and high schools throughout the school year and during career days, job fairs, work experience courses, etc.</li> <li>5.1.3 Focus on succession planning and developing police cadets into Officers.</li> <li>5.1.4 Structure the cadet programs to provide academic, physical fitness, and technical training, as well as instruction on developing team building, leadership skills, and self-discipline.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluation Criteria:</b> Track progress in the recruitment and achievements of police cadets, and the success rate of each becoming a police officer.</p>

**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 San Rafael police officers on what led them to apply with San Rafael.
- 5.2.2 Identify what challenges current San Rafael 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 San Rafael 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 San Rafael 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 San Rafael 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 Professional Services Unit (PSU) Lieutenant will oversee the implementation of this Sworn Recruitment Plan and track its progress. The Lieutenant will also be responsible for providing regular updates to the Chief of Police and command staff.