



Department of Human Resources

Date: FEBRUARY 21, 2017
To: James J. "Luigi" Schmitt, Personnel Committee Chairman
FROM: Rick Ceschin, Director of Talent Acquisition and HR Operations *RJC*
SUBJECT: Informational Report on Recruiting Incentives

Background

In December 2016, the County Board adopted an amended resolution (File No. 16-676) authorizing the Department of Human Resources to implement, for the first time, incentives designed to help recruit and retain employees in difficult-to-fill positions. Specifically, the Board authorized the use of increased shift differentials, seasonal bonuses and sign-on bonuses for Correctional Officers and Highway Maintenance Workers.

Implementation

Human Resources staff worked with leadership from the Department of Transportation, the House of Correction, and the Sheriff's Office on which incentives would be most effective in terms of recruiting and retention, and related costs. Based on those conversations, the following incentives have been implemented:

Highway Maintenance Workers (DOT)

The Department of Transportation was able to fill almost all Highway Maintenance Worker (HMW) positions prior to adoption of the amended resolution in late December 2016. With staff in place, the focus moved to incentives to retain HMW's through the winter season. Based on HR's recommendations, DOT agreed to implement a seasonal bonus of \$200 per full month worked during the December 1 – March 31 season. Additionally, DOT agreed to increase the shift differential to \$.70 for the balance of the season. DOT is also working with the Compensation Division to review available compensation strategies to properly align existing staff within their authorized grades.

Human Resources has created guidelines for the seasonal bonus program and has shared the requirements with all eligible employees.

Correctional Officers (MCSO and HOC)

Leadership from the House of Correction and the Sheriff's Office agreed to implement a sign-on bonus to assist in recruiting for Correctional Officer 1 positions (COs). Effective for new hires beginning February 13, 2017, new COs will be eligible for a total bonus of \$750, with half awarded after approximately six months of service, and the other half awarded following approximately one year of service. Again, HR has established guidelines on the bonus program and provides that information to employees at hire.

Additionally, consistent with authorizing resolution, both the Sheriff's Office and the House of Correction have increased the shift differential to \$.50 per hour for all CO 1 positions. The increase will be in place for up to 180 days and may be renewed with Board authorization.

Summary

Although the incentives are relatively recent, there have been positive results that may be sustainable. The incentives authorized in December 2016 helped to supplement the hiring of 40 new Correctional Officers in February 2017. Combined with other recruiting efforts, the incentives are helping to address this perennial staffing issue for both the House and the Sheriff's Office. For the Highway Maintenance workers, the success of the retention incentives and accompanying compensation review of those positions will be more evident over time.

In an increasingly competitive job marketplace, Milwaukee County needs flexibility to be able to match the market with incentives to recruit and retain a skilled workforce. HR will continue to monitor positions that may benefit from recruitment and retention incentives, such as skilled positions in IT and Emergency Management, and will also monitor industry trends on other incentive programs (e.g., employee referral bonus programs).

This report is submitted for informational purposes only.