



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0129, **Version:** 1

TO: Mayor Richard C. Irvin

FROM: Alisia Lewis, Director of Human Resources

DATE: February 22, 2021

SUBJECT:

Authorizing lateral hires in the Police Department.

PURPOSE:

To obtain authorization for an ordinance amendment to 13.5-Civil Service and to add 13.5-17-Appointment of Fully Qualified Police Officers without Examination (lateral hire).

BACKGROUND:

The City of Aurora has historically used a standard eligibility list for the hiring of new police officers as established through the Civil Service process. This process does not allow existing police officers to be given any type of preference over those applicants who have no police experience. Thus, if they do not score high on the written exam, they will end up lower on the list. This occurs on every eligibility list that is established.

In addition to a written exam, all police applicants must pass a polygraph exam, background investigation, psychological exam, physical fitness test and a medical screening. If all the aforementioned components are passed and an opening exists, the candidates are hired in order of test score after the addition of preference points for residence and military service.

The City has had a great deal of success when hiring candidates who are existing police officers with prior experience. It has been advantageous to department staffing to hire experienced police officers, as they have already completed their state mandated academy requirements and have job experience. This, at a minimum, saves the department fourteen weeks of academy training time and associated costs. Additionally, when looking at hiring and retention for 2016-2018, an average of 56% of new hires from the tradition hiring process either failed the selection process, declined/left for another department, failed to successfully complete the FTO process, or resigned during their first year of employment.

DISCUSSION:

The City will continue to utilize the current testing process and eligibility list through the Civil Service process for new Police Officers. Additionally, a lateral hire applicant pool will be developed and maintained to hire experienced officers.

Human Resources, in conjunction with the Police Department, will evaluate qualified applicants based on the applicant's experience level, job qualifications, specialized training and other pertinent

information, including residence and military experience. The applicant will also be required to pass a polygraph exam, a background investigation, a psychological exam, a physical fitness exam, and a medical screening.

Expanding the opportunity to hire experienced officers will not only get officers on the street faster, it will also reduce the overtime and training cost to the City.

The City has experienced a significant increase in retirements, loss of Police Cadet employees and new Police Officer recruits leaving the academy voluntarily. Implementing a lateral hire process will enable the City to maximize on recruiting, diversifying and hiring qualified candidates at an accelerated pace.

Attached is the revised ordinance for review.

IMPACT STATEMENT:

NA

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City authorize an amendment to Ordinance 13.5-Civil Service and add 13.5-17-Appointment of Fully Qualified Police Officers without Examination (lateral hire).

cc:



CITY OF AURORA, ILLINOIS

ORDINANCE NO. _____
DATE OF PASSAGE _____

An Ordinance amending Chapter 13.5 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Aurora, pertaining to the hiring of experienced police officers.

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora has a population of more than 25,000 persons and is, therefore, a home rule unit under subsection (a) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution of 1970; and

WHEREAS, subject to said Section, a home rule unit may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs for the protection of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Police Department and the Human Resources Department have determined that a need exists for the recruitment and employment of experienced police officers in the City; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 13.5 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Aurora, which establishes a system of

civil service within the City, does not expressly contemplate the hiring of experienced police officers except following examination by the Civil Service Commission; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that is in the best interests of the City that the Police Department be authorized to hire experienced and fully-qualified police officers, including those presently employed as peace officers in other law enforcement agencies, when circumstances require a more rapid appointment process than set forth in Chapter 13.5 or when there is a lack of applicants otherwise eligible to be hired in accordance with Chapter 13.5

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Aurora, Illinois, as follows: that Section 13.5-5 and Section 13.5-17 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Aurora, shall be and hereby are amended and created, respectively, as set forth in Exhibit A to this Ordinance;