

What our community needs to know about the staffing challenge facing the Phoenix Police Department.

Like many other law enforcement agencies nationwide, the Phoenix Police Department has been affected by staffing shortages. Over the past year, we have tried everything possible to maintain our minimum patrol staffing numbers to meet the needs of our community. We have reached a point where it is necessary to reallocate resources to focus on our primary goal of answering the calls for service from our community.

How many police officers should the city have?

The Phoenix City Council has approved and budgeted for 3,125 sworn positions.

How many officers do we have?

The number changes every day. Currently, the department is more than 400 officers short.

How many officers will be moved over to patrol?

The Phoenix Police Department identified 108 officers and 15 sergeants to be moved over to patrol while maintaining investigative functions and all specialty programs.

Why are you reallocating officers?

The number one priority of the Phoenix Police Department is to serve, protect, and reduce crime in Phoenix while treating everyone with dignity and respect. This starts with officers on patrol, responding to 911 calls and emergencies. We have experienced a staffing shortage requiring us to reallocate officers to patrol to assure when our community needs a police response, the appropriate resources are available.

What positions did these officers hold previously?

These officers will be moved from specialty details within the department. (Ex: robbery detective may be moved over to the patrol function.) All functions and specialty programs will be maintained, some will see a reduction in personnel.

Will my neighborhood still have a Community Action Officer?

You are not losing your CAOs, they are being reduced. Each precinct will have three (3) CAO's. Additionally, those CAO's moving to patrol will still be able to maintain the relationships they have established in the community while working in their new capacity.

Are our Neighborhood Enforcement Team officers affected? If so, what does that mean for criminal activity in my neighborhood?

Each precinct currently has two NET squads. We have created one NET squad per precinct and increased the number of officers on that squad. These NET officers will continue to look for and apprehend wanted suspects, target high crime areas and assist in violent crime follow up.

What is happening with School Resource Officers?

School Resource Officers will remain in their assigned schools and will not be affected by the reallocation.

Will response times to emergency calls change?

The hope is with more officers in the patrol function there will be shorter response times to emergency calls. The top priority of the Phoenix Police Department is to provide professional police service to our community. The purpose of this reallocation is to best utilize our resources to better serve our community.

Will police officers still host and be involved in community events?

Yes! Precincts will still host community events, Coffee with a Cop, and other gatherings. Officers will also still be available to attend community and neighborhood meetings.

When will this reallocation go into effect?

Officers in the Patrol Bureau will participate in a city-wide reallocation process sometime in March-April, with movement at the end of May.

What are you doing to hire more police officers?

The city is actively engaged in a robust recruitment effort both in and out of state. The city council approved a \$7,500 hiring bonus for new recruits and already certified police officers. They also approved a \$2,500 employee referral bonus as a “finders fee.”

What are you doing to keep the officers you have?

The police department has been actively talking to those who express the possibility of retirement or resignation to better understand why they are leaving the noble profession of policing.

The city council has also approved retention incentives of \$7,500 with the commitment to remain on the department for the next 2 years. Raises were also approved.

Are there other measures being taken to address the shortage of sworn police officers?

The police department is looking at ways to civilianize certain work areas which do not require the expertise or authority of sworn officers. The city council has also approved the creation of a new civilian investigator position which can support the detective functions. The hope is that experience investigators from our retiree ranks will be interested in these jobs.

How can the community help?

The greatest thing community members can do is to support the Phoenix Police Department and its officers. The best public safety strategy begins with a strong partnership between police and the community they serve.

If you believe you know someone who would make a good police officer and fit well in our department, we ask that you refer them to our recruiting team.

Additional Questions:

Please contact the commander of the precinct in which you live. They will be happy to answer any questions you may have. <https://www.phoenix.gov/police/precincts>