

I hope you're all having a great summer! It's a busy time for all of us, but I wanted to take a moment to say thanks for everything you do. Your commitment to keeping Fresno County safe is truly appreciated and really does make a difference every day. When I'm out in the community and people say 'thank you for your service', I always feel gratitude for the job we get to do in this community. Although there are so many different dynamics and stresses associated with police work, the job is incredibly rewarding and provides a great service to the community. For the most part, we are supported by the people who live here and quite a few communities in California cannot say they are welcomed by residents. So - as we endure a long hot summer, focusing on gratitude is a great way to renew your motivation and remind you of the meaningfulness of this career.

This month I wanted to address an article in our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that focuses on something that countless members have asked about over the past two years- retention pay.

ARTICLE 52- 5 YEAR RETENTION PAY

Effective July 11, 2022, employees within the Deputy Sheriff classification series shall be eligible to receive a 5% retention premium pay differential upon completion of at least 26 pay periods at step five and the completion of five years of continuous satisfactory service in that position, as defined in Salary Resolution Sections 410.1 and 410.2 and upon recommendation of the employee's Department Head.

The heading or title is sometimes confusing as it speaks to five-year pay and then 26 pay periods after five years to receive an additional 5% in pay.

The original article drafted for the MOU included a five-year retention pay, which required deputies to complete an additional year before receiving the pay increase. Essentially, this meant that the increase would be received in the sixth year, which did not fully align with the intent of awarding the 5% increase at the five-year mark.

To address this issue, the FDSA met with labor representatives in the spring of 2022. The agreed-upon solution was to create a sixth step in the pay scale. This change allows deputies to reach the sixth-step in the pay scale at the five-year mark or even slightly before in some cases, effectively resolving the timing issue of the five-year retention pay.

However, this adjustment, along with the step conversion, caused some confusion among our deputies. For example, those who were at step four in the previous nine-step system found themselves at step three in the new five-step system. For those of you who were here during the step conversion, you will recall the adjustment from the original nine-step process to the current five-step process. Those of you who were here when we did the step conversation, remember there was an adjustment to get you to the five-step process from the original nine step. All the adjustments were positive, meaning they included percentage increases that benefited our employees. Moving

forward, each step increase will be more substantial compared to the previous 3.125% per step under the old nine-step system.

Once a deputy reaches the fifth step, completing an additional year will qualify them for the final sixth step and the 5% compensation increase. Although the conversion from nine steps to five caused some confusion, it is important to note that we have restored the 5% step increase for deputy sheriffs.

Deputies hired after January 2022 will not experience the changes, as they will only know the new system. Those who had already reached the top step were automatically moved to the sixth step on the effective date. Deputies who were still progressing through the steps were accelerated to the 5% step and are now benefiting from this increase.

I appreciate everyone's patience during the initial implementation of the MOU.

Successor MOU Update

As many of you know the MOU is expiring January 5th 2025. To date, we have not been contacted by County Human Resources to start any type of negotiation for a successor MOU. There is no question that our economy has become flat, or maybe even dipped slightly. This is evident through countless factors including the Federal Interest Rate, mortgage rates, inflation, and the stock market. Not to mention this is a Presidential election year.

The board will start to put something together in August – so all member will be receiving a Survey Monkey soliciting your opinion. We would like you to rank the priorities you want the FDSA Board bargaining for on your behalf. This is important because the information gathered will give us the road map on what this organization cares about and wants as part of their wages, benefits and working conditions.

Thank you all for your ongoing dedication and service. If you have not attended an FDSA meeting in a while, you are always welcome to join us the first Wednesday of each month at 6pm at FDSA headquarters. We welcome your presence and value your input.

Stay safe and take care!

In service,

Eric