



**City of Seattle**  
Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

**CIVIL EMERGENCY ORDER**

**CITY OF SEATTLE**

**IMMEDIATE HIRING INCENTIVES FOR PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

AN EMERGENCY ORDER relating to staffing shortages in the Community Safety Communications Center and the Seattle Police Department; implementing an incentive program for hiring 911 dispatchers, and police officers.

WHEREAS, in my capacity as Mayor, I proclaimed a civil emergency exists in the City of Seattle in the Mayoral Proclamation of Civil Emergency dated March 3, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the civil emergency necessitates the utilization of emergency powers granted to the Mayor pursuant to: the Charter of the City of Seattle, Article V, Section 2; Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 10.02; and chapter 38.52 RCW;

WHEREAS, SMC 10.02.020.A.15 authorizes the Mayor to make and proclaim an order that she believes is imminently necessary for the protection of life and property;

WHEREAS, pursuant to SMC 10.02.025, this order is based on the facts described below; the Mayor believes it is in the best interest of public safety, rescue and recovery efforts, and the protection of property that the exercise of certain rights be temporarily limited; and the conditions of this order are designed to provide the least necessary restriction on those rights; and

WHEREAS, the facts stated in that proclamation continue to exist, as well as the following additional facts:

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle strives to maintain a highly qualified, diverse, and engaged first responders for public safety emergency services to meet the complex demands of the Seattle communities; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic that began in March of 2020 has had widespread impacts on the operations of public safety departments for the City and contributed to each aforementioned department experiencing staffing shortages during the first half of 2021; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for timely emergency responses for the City; and

WHEREAS, the executive, in acknowledging emergent staffing shortages, had previously transmitted legislation to the City Council on July 29, 2021, regarding hiring incentives for the Seattle Police Department, however Council declined to consider the legislation, and took no action to address the public safety crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City's public safety departments have been unable to keep pace with the record-setting attrition in 2020 and the first half of 2021, and were faced with significant staffing shortages in the aforementioned departments predating the COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate for City Employees:

- a. Seattle Police Department had 310 vacancies as of July 2021. SPD has only hired 62 officers thus far in 2021, which combined with a loss of 141 officers in the same timeframe exacerbating the staffing shortage that began in 2020.
- b. The Community Safety Communications Center had 21 vacancies as of July 2021 and has only been able to hire 17 in 2021.

WHEREAS, the aforementioned staffing shortages threaten public safety by increasing response times and threaten the safety and wellness of existing public safety and first responder employees; and

WHEREAS, Seattle is experiencing a year-to-date 35 percent increase compared to 2020 in shots fired incidents and a 76 percent increase year-to-date in shots fired compared to 2019, and also a 29 percent increase in non-fatal shootings year-to-date compared to 2020; and due to the cumulative impact of the Seattle Police Department's pre-existing staffing shortages and the additional vaccine mandate staffing losses SPD is currently at its lowest level of deployable officers, 1015, which has resulted in priority 1 response times increasing by almost one minute on average and priority 2 calls increasing by almost 13 minutes.

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle 911 call volumes have remained steady, however due to the cumulative impact of the pre-existing staffing shortages and the additional losses due to the vaccine mandate, the CSCC has redirected all of its resources to maintain acceptable 911 call answering performance times, spending 40% more in overtime than the year prior; and as of October 28, 2021, CSCCS informed the executive's office of the need to significantly scale back on staffing the SPD administrative line.

WHEREAS, the potential staffing losses resulting from the COVID-19 vaccine mandate going into effect on October 18, 2021, and while losses appear likely to be relatively small overall and additional officers continue to be vaccinated, they likely will nonetheless impact pre-existing staffing shortages in the aforementioned departments; the cumulative effect being an impact on public safety services to the city as outlined above.

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle recognizes the need to hire additional 911 dispatchers and police officers responsibly and quickly to meet community expectations; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned departments have seen an increase in competition for qualified applicants for the aforementioned positions due, in part, to regional and national shortages coupled with regional and national hiring incentives at other 911 dispatch and law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has identified an immediate need to fund incentives to increase hiring at the Community Safety Communications Center and the Seattle Police Department to address emergent public safety concerns and does not believe the City can or should wait until 2022 to implement these measures and previous attempts to get Council to consider an ordinance to operationalize these measures has failed; NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:**

I, JENNY A. DURKAN, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, ACTING UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SEATTLE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTIONS 10.02.020 AND 10.02.025, AND MY MAYORAL PROCLAMATION OF CIVIL EMERGENCY, DATED MARCH 3, 2020, HEREBY ORDER:

**SECTION 1:**

- A. The Seattle Community Safety and Communication Center may offer dispatch candidates a hiring incentive of up to \$25,000, depending on experience level, to be paid after beginning employment with The City of Seattle.
- i. Incentives provided to lateral dispatch hires shall not exceed \$25,000 per hire.
  - ii. Incentives provided to new recruit hires shall be provided one time and shall not exceed \$10,000 per hire.
  - iii. If an employee who has received this incentive leaves the department, that person may not receive an incentive to return.
  - iv. Half of the hiring incentive will be paid in the first paycheck and the second half upon completion of any probationary period established by law.

**SECTION 2:**

All mayoral proclamations and orders presently in effect shall remain in full force and effect except that, insofar as any provision of any such prior proclamation is inconsistent with any provision of this proclamation, then the provision of this proclamation shall control.

**SECTION 3:**

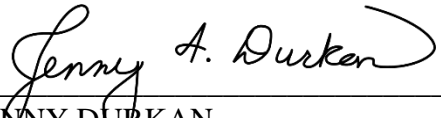
A copy of this Civil Emergency Order shall be delivered to the Governor of the State of Washington and to the County Executive of King County. To the extent practicable, a copy of this Civil Emergency Order shall be made available to all news media within the City and to the general public. In order to give the widest dissemination of this Civil Emergency Order to the

public, as many other available means as may be practical shall be used, including but not limited to posting on public facilities and public address systems. SMC 10.02.100.

**SECTION 4:**

This Civil Emergency Order shall immediately, or as soon as practical, be filed with the City Clerk for presentation to the City Council for ratification and confirmation, modification or rejection, and if rejected this Civil Emergency Order shall be void; however, any such rejection or modification shall not affect any actions previously taken. The City Council may, by resolution, ratify, modify or reject the order. If the City Council modifies or rejects this Civil Emergency Order, said modification or rejection shall be prospective only, and shall not affect any actions taken prior to the modification or rejection of this Civil Emergency Order. The Council shall endeavor to act on any order within 48 hours of its being presented to the Council by the Mayor.

DATED at Seattle, Washington, this 29<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021, at 6:03 o'clock p.m.,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JENNY DURKAN  
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE