

City of Miami Gardens' Police Hiring Incentive Package Highlights

As the City of Miami Gardens embarks on its transition from a County contract police force to creating a new City police department, we are offering a full package of incentives designed to provide an employment experience second to none in law enforcement for those officers who would join us on this great endeavor.

The transition period runs from September 2006 through November 2008 and all sworn personnel and recruits hired during this period are eligible to participate as appropriate in these incentives.

\$12,000 Signing Bonus

The City of Miami Gardens offers a one-time signing bonus for officers and new recruits hired during the transition period. The bonus will be paid as follows: \$2,000 upon start of employment and the balance upon successful completion of a one-year probationary period. Officers must agree to remain with the City for 3 years or repay the bonus on a pro rated basis.

Detective Bonus

The City is particularly interested in hiring seasoned detectives for its General Investigations Unit. To this end, the City is offering an additional signing bonus of \$2,000 to detectives with at least 3 years experience hired into this unit. The bonus will be paid in two parts: One-half upon starting



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work and one-half after completion of the one year probation period.

\$7,000 Moving Allowance

All police officers currently living outside of Miami-Dade, Broward or Palm Beach County who move their residence into any of these counties for the purpose of employment with the City is eligible for reimbursement of moving expenses in an amount up to \$7,000. Officers who live within these three counties and chose to move into the City limits of Miami Gardens, will also be eligible for the reimbursement allowance. [Some restrictions apply].

the City. [Yearly certification required].

\$5,000 Housing Down Payment Bonus

Any police officer that purchases their primary residence within the City of Miami Gardens between September 2006 and November 30, 2008, is eligible for a \$5,000 bonus from the City. This can be used towards a down payment or towards closing costs on the loan.

Lateral Rank Entry

The City offers lateral rank transfer (depending on slot availability) for officers transferring from other jurisdictions.



\$2,000/Yr. City Residence Incentive Pay

Any police officer who chooses to live within the corporate boundaries of the City of Miami Gardens will receive a \$2,000 per year bonus as long as they maintain their legal residence within

Bonus One Week Leave Credit Upon Hiring

As an additional signing incentive, the City will credit all new police officers

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with 40 hours of personal leave upon starting employment.

In-service, Progressive, Education-Based Pay Scale

The City of Miami Gardens considers the formal education of its work force to be an important community asset. To that end, the City will pay 100% of the tuition for any employee seeking a formal college degree. [Some restrictions apply].

Furthermore, in addition to the traditional rank structure, the City has adopted a progressive education-based pay plan. Under this plan, each rank (Officer, Sergeant, and Captain) is further divided into 3 levels. Officers with a high school diploma are classified as a Police Officer I; Those officers with an Associate's Degree from an accredited college or university are classified as Police Officer II; and those Officers with a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university are classified as Police Officer III.

As an officer earns a degree, they will receive an 8% pay increase (16% for a bachelor's if no associate's is received). For those officers who are hired with or earn a Master's Degree, the City provides a one-time \$1,000 bonus, including those officers starting during the transition period with a Masters degree.

Starting Pay

The educational pay system described above will also be used to determine

starting pay for new officers. The City's initial offer to a new employee will be determined by the candidate's earned education and time in grade. While only the Human Resources Department can make an actual determination of starting pay after a formal review and documentation of a candidate's services and educational attainment, we have provided a spreadsheet that can be used to estimate your starting pay offer. [[Click here](#)].

Non-contributory Pension

Miami Gardens is a member of the State of Florida Retirement System (FRS). Employees do not have to pay into the system to receive a pension; the City picks up the entire cost. The system offers new members two choices for a pension: the first is the traditional defined benefit system. The second option is a 401-type portable pension called the "Investment Plan." Vesting in the traditional system is 6 years while under the Investment Plan system, vesting is immediate. The City will pay the 'special risk' rate into the plan of your choice.

Police officers with prior service in the Florida System receive full credit for prior time in the FRS system. This applies to officers who are currently under the Florida Retirement System and for those officers who may have had past service within the Florida System. [Some restrictions apply].

For officers who have retired under the Florida Retirement and are no longer eligible for the 'public safety'

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retirement, they will be paid as a regular employee and the difference between the regular contribution rate and the public safety rate will be contributed to the employees 457 account.

457 Supplemental Pension Plan

Beginning in October 2007, the City of Miami Gardens will have available to all employees, a voluntary 457 pension plan. The City will match employee contributions up to 3% of employees' salary.

Take-Home Car

Each police officer will be provided with a take home vehicle if they live within Miami-Dade, Broward or Palm Beach Counties.

Hold Harmless on Accrued Sick Leave from Previous Employer

For new hires starting during the transition period, the City will credit to all transferring officers', sick leave in an amount equivalent to the unpaid sick leave they lost from their prior position, if any, 2,080 hours. While this credited leave cannot be routinely used for leave, it will be fully payable upon separation. [In extreme cases of illness and with the approval of the City Manager, it may be available for use but only after all current leave is exhausted].

Holidays

The City observes 14 paid holidays per year, one of which is a floating holiday to be used at the employee's discretion. [Some restrictions may apply].

Administrative Leave

For those employee classifications citywide which are not subject to overtime, the City provides 12 days of paid administrative leave per year. [Some restrictions apply].

Annual Leave [Personal Leave]

The City of Miami Gardens does not have separate sick and vacation leave; instead, the City offers its employees "Personal Leave." Personal leave can be used for any reason and any unused leave accrues at year end. Employees can accrue up to 2,080 hours of leave during their career which is paid upon separation [including any unpaid leave transferred in from a previous employer].



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Personal Leave accrues at the following rates:

0-5 Years	22 days	176 hrs
5-10 years	27 days	216 hrs
10>	32 days	256 hrs

During the transition period, active officers transferring from other police departments will accrue leave at the rate appropriate with their prior continuous sworn service.

Retention on Promotion List from Previous Employer

For those employees currently on a promotional list at their respective departments, they will initially be placed on the City's promotional list for the same rank or the City's rank equivalent. They will remain on the list for a period of two years from commencement of employment. [Proof required].

The City uses the rule of five for promotions.



4x10 Work Week

The City's police department will be operating on a four-ten work week for most sworn employees, providing officers with maximum time for family and other outside interests. The City also pays a shift differential.

Healthcare Benefits

Miami Gardens pays the full cost of employee's healthcare, including major medical, prescription, dental and vision coverage (Subject to co-pays).

Family coverage is also available and is partially paid for by the City. For Employees at the rank of Officer and Sergeant, the City pays 50% of dependent insurance cost. For Captains and Majors, the City pays 75% of the cost. [Some restrictions apply].

Employees who are covered under a spouse's medical insurance and who waive City coverage, receive a \$2,400 per year allowance in lieu of insurance.

The City also provides life insurance coverage for all employees at one times their salary. Additional coverage is available at a reasonable cost.

Cost of Living Allowance

Each year, the City Manager budgets for a cost-of-living allowance (COLA) for its employees, subject to City Council approval. This allowance is an across-the-board raise for all City employees. It is usually effective on

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October 1 each year. The COLA for the FY 06-07 year was 2.5%.

Referral Bonus

Any City employee who refers an applicant to the City for consideration as a sworn officer, and that candidate is subsequently hired, will receive a one-time \$250 bonus [Some restrictions apply].

Merit Pay

The City of Miami Gardens believes that merit pay is an essential component of the employee compensation package. It provides a significant financial incentive to employees who distinguish themselves during the performance of their duties through exceptional effort and customer service.

Merit pay ranges from 1% to 5% per year, which is added to the employee's base salary. Employees who are at the top of their pay grade are still eligible for merit pay except that it is paid as a one-time bonus rather than becoming a part of their base pay.

Academy Costs

For those individuals that have paid their own tuition and have graduated as a certified officer from a Florida Certified Police Academy but have not yet begun work as a police officer, upon hiring, the City will reimburse those costs with appropriate receipts. In addition, the newly certified officer will be eligible for all other incentives as appropriate.

Pre-qualified applicants may be hired by the City prior to commencing the academy with a signed, 3 year commitment to City employment. Cadets will be paid an annual salary rate of \$44,200.

Retirees Medical Benefit

The City offers all of its retirees, an important benefit to help cover those years between retirement and Medicare eligibility. For an officer hired during the transition period, and who has:

- a minimum of 6 years service with Miami Gardens; and
- who subsequently qualifies for a pension under the Florida Retirement System; and
- has a total of 25 years of law enforcement experience at any agency(ies) or department (s); then

he/she will receive up to \$400 per month health stipend until that employee reaches Medicare eligibility. A reduced stipend is also provided for officers retiring with less than the 25 years total service:

- 25 or > years total Service = \$400/mo
- >15 but <25 years total Service = \$300/mo
- >6 but <15 years total service = \$200/mo

The approval of these benefits/incentives do not create a continuing obligation on the City to continue said benefits, and do not prohibit the City from changing said benefits as deemed necessary and appropriate.