

**Sideletter of Agreement between County of Mendocino
And Mendocino County Deputy Sheriffs' Association**

December 2025

This letter confirms the intent of the County of Mendocino (County) and Mendocino County Deputy Sheriffs' Association (DSA) to continue with a hiring bonus for Deputy Sheriff-Coroner and Sheriff's Sergeant classifications.

Background

Mendocino County is experiencing ongoing challenges with the recruitment and retention of Deputy Sheriff-Coroner and Sheriff's Sergeant classifications. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the temporary shutdown of the Police Academy, which reduced the hiring pool. At the same time, due to shifts in public perception towards law enforcement as a profession, there has been an increase in early retirements and a nationwide decline in the number of individuals seeking law enforcement jobs.

Both state-wide and locally, other agencies offer entry-level and lateral transfers a one-time hiring bonus. To allow the County to remain competitive, decrease incumbent burnout, and attract qualified applicants the Sheriff sought approval for a one-time, hiring bonus. During the April 5, 2022, Board of Supervisors meeting, the Board approved a one-time hiring bonus as a pilot program, and the parties came to agreement on the pilot program. In June 2024, the agreement was extended through December 31, 2025, and added the option for an initial vacation accrual.

The parties agree that, effective upon Board ratification through December 31, 2026, the County will continue the use of a one-time, hiring bonus payable upon successful completion of the probationary period as a Deputy Sheriff-Coroner or Sheriff's Sergeant. In the case of lateral transfers, an initial vacation bank of up to 120 hours, in accordance with the following criteria is available as an option in lieu of a hiring bonus.

The amount of the incentives shall be as follows:

1. Police Academy graduates whose attendance was not sponsored by the Sheriff's Office shall receive \$7,000; or,
 2. Lateral transfers who have attained at minimum a CA POST Basic Certificate from another agency shall receive \$20,000; or,
 3. Lateral transfers who have completed Sheriff's training may opt for an initial vacation accrual in lieu of a monetary bonus as follows:
 - CA POST Basic Certificate attained – 80 hours vacation
 - CA POST Intermediate Certificate attained – 120 hours vacation
- Accrual to be used in accordance with DSA MOU Article 20, Section 4.

Lateral transfers must meet the eligibility requirements:

- Currently employed by another law enforcement agency on good terms, or left employment with their most recent law enforcement agency on good terms.
- When previously employed by the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, have a minimum of five (5) years since the end of their employment, and left Mendocino County Sheriff's Office employment on good terms.

The Sheriff retains discretion in determining eligibility for the incentives, designated and disclosed to the applicant prior to the start of employment.

The incentive will be paid in an off-cycle check separate from the normal/regular paycheck, and taxed at the fixed "Bonus Pay" rate for the relevant year.

Darwin Antle
County of Mendocino

Date: 12.2.25

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