

**Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act Funds
Towards VSP Sworn Bonuses**

**A Report to the Governor of Virginia and Virginia General
Assembly**



August 2022

**Colonel Gary T. Settle
Superintendent**

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Superintendent

(804) 674-2000



Lt. Colonel Tracy S. Russillo
Deputy Superintendent

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

P. O. Box 27472, Richmond, VA 23261-7472

August 17, 2022

TO: The Honorable Glenn A. Youngkin, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia
The Honorable Janet D. Howell, Chair, Senate Finance & Appropriations
Committee
The Honorable Barry Knight Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Robert Bob Mosier, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland
Security
Mr. Michael Maul, Director, Department of Planning and Budget

I am respectfully submitting herewith a report concerning the Department's progress on the status of allocating an appropriation from the federal distribution of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to provide one-time bonuses to our sworn, law enforcement as provided in the compensation plan required in paragraph 5.k.5(b) of Item 479.20.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary T. Settle".

Superintendent

GTS/KCH

Enclosure

Preface

In accordance to the Acts of the General Assembly (2021, Special Session II), the Virginia State Police (the Department) was provided \$20,000,000 for bonuses and relocation reimbursement for sworn employees from the federal distribution of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), pursuant to Item 479.20 as follows:

10) a) \$20,000,000 to the Department of State Police (156) to provide one-time bonuses to sworn, law enforcement personnel. The department is authorized to pay bonuses to its sworn, law enforcement officers of: \$5,000 to all sworn, law enforcement officers, compression bonuses within a range equivalent to two and eight percent of salary as appropriate to qualifying officers, sign-on/recruitment bonuses to newly hired troopers of \$5,000, and retention bonuses as needed. In addition, these funds may be used to reimburse up to \$2,000 of relocation expenses for each newly hired trooper and any law enforcement personnel who is being relocated by the department.

b) The department shall report its plan for allocating these funds to the permitted uses stated above in the compensation plan required in paragraph 5.k.5)b) of this item. In addition, no later than September 1, 2022, the department shall report the actual bonuses and expenses paid in fiscal year 2022.

ARPA Fund Allocation

As such, the Department issued \$18,725,047.77 bonuses to all sworn employees in two rounds. The first round of bonuses totaling \$10,171,270.25 was paid on November 15, 2021, with all Department sworn employees receiving \$5,000. The second round of bonuses totaling \$8,553,777.52 was paid on April 29, 2022 to address pay compression and employee retention for compressed Department sworn employees below the rank of Major. Another part the Acts of the General Assembly allowed the Department to offer new troopers up to \$2,000 of relocation expenses to offset the moving costs for newly hired troopers assigned to locations away from their place of residence prior to joining the department. In SFY22, 12 troopers were reimbursed for their moving expenses in the total amount of \$12,745.44.

The remaining balance of \$1,262,206.79 is to be carried into SFY23 to provide recruitment bonuses for new troopers graduating from the VSP Training Academy as well as reimbursement for relocation expenses for newly hired troopers that will be assigned by the Department. The first recruitment bonuses will be paid in November 2022 when members of the 136th Basic Session complete their field training, in accordance with the policies the Department adopted to implement these recruitment bonuses in a manner consistent with Department of Human Resource Management policy. The Department did not consider members of the 135th Basic Session eligible for these recruitment

bonuses because these applicants were already in the hiring process at the time the budget passed.

The recruitment bonuses, standing alone, did not seem to result in significant increases in the number of trooper applicants; however, most large agencies are now offering similar bonuses. As a result, it is likely that this funding kept the Department from falling farther behind. While it is too early to tell, initial indications are that these bonuses, combined with the permanent pay increases that the General Assembly provided in the 2022 Session, are positively impacting recruiting. The Department will continue to maximize the opportunities these financial incentives create and monitor their impact.

The Department is appreciative of the General Assembly's efforts to strengthen public safety in the Commonwealth by incentivizing the recruitment and retention of state troopers.