



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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To: Ms. April Kees, Director
Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee

Ms. Anne Oman, Staff Director
House Appropriations Committee

Mr. Michael Maul, Director
Virginia Department of Planning & Budget

In accordance with Chapter 725 of the 2025 Acts of Assembly (House Bill 1600), please find enclosed the *Virginia State Police Sworn Pay Plan: Analysis of FY24 and FY25 Turnover and Vacancy Savings* report.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Hanley", written over the word "Superintendent".

Superintendent

Enclosure

Virginia State Police Sworn Pay Plan: Analysis of FY24 and FY25 Turnover and Vacancy Savings

In accordance with Chapter 725 of the 2025 Acts of Assembly (House Bill 1600), the Department of State Police submits this report to the Director of the Department of Planning and Budget and to the staff directors of the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee. The report presents an accounting of turnover and vacancy savings realized in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025.

Executive Summary

Turnover savings occur when departing sworn officers at higher pay steps on the Virginia State Police (VSP) Sworn Pay Plan are replaced by sworn employees at a lower pay step. Vacancy savings represent the budgetary savings accrued during the period between an employee's departure from the Department and the appointment of their successor.

The Department of State Police realized approximately \$1,521,244 in turnover savings and \$4,971,018 in vacancy savings for fiscal year 2024 and approximately \$1,515,382 in turnover savings and \$5,665,361 in vacancy savings for Fiscal Year 2025. These results reflect the aggregate fiscal impact of sworn officer separations and subsequent replacements under the VSP Sworn Pay Plan.

While the reported savings suggest that turnover savings provide a sustainable offset to the cost of the VSP Sworn Pay Plan¹, vacancy savings are projected to decrease as vacancies decrease².

Methodology

VSP calculated turnover savings and vacancy savings for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 utilizing a consistent methodology to ensure accuracy, avoid duplication of savings, and provide comparable results across both fiscal years.

Data Scope

The analysis encompassed position-level, employee-level, and headcount data for a comprehensive and comparable assessment of Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025.

- Average salary data was analyzed at the position level to establish average position values and assess the reduction in salary costs for turnover savings. Monthly average salary provided the basis for measuring ongoing cost changes and vacancy-related cost savings.

¹ The average cost of implementing the annual 1.4% step increase is an estimated \$3.2 million, excluding statewide pay increases and other salary adjustments

² Pursuant to Virginia Code section §52-6.1, sworn vacancies are generally required to be filled through internal promotions. During periods of high vacancies, this can exacerbate patrol trooper vacancies. The Department mitigates this by limiting the number of positions opened for promotion at any given time. This typically results in extending the period of vacancy by two to six weeks. VSP anticipates that as vacancies decrease, the average time to fill vacant positions will decrease from an average of 3.3 months to approximately two months.

- Employee-level data was utilized to identify the timing of separations and replacements and to calculate the average time-to-fill. Time-to-fill was measured as the number of full months between the effective separation date and the effective replacement date. The resulting average was then applied to evaluate vacancy savings in a consistent manner across both fiscal years.
- Headcount data was reviewed monthly to ensure calculated savings aligned with documented changes in filled positions. This verification confirmed that savings estimates reflected actual staffing levels rather than static assumptions. Since separations and replacements occurred at different points during the fiscal year, headcount data was used to apply savings beginning in the appropriate month and to adjust for subsequent changes in staffing levels as needed.

Turnover Savings

Turnover savings, as referenced in the Appropriation Act, represent the fiscal effect resulting when positions vacated by separating employees are filled with replacements compensated at a lower level. As salaries increase incrementally with each step of the pay plan, the replacement of a longer-tenured sworn employee with a lower-tenured sworn employee results in a recurring reduction in personnel costs.

Turnover savings were calculated by comparing the monthly average salary of separating sworn employees with the monthly salary of their replacements and applying the difference to the affected headcount. The resulting amount was carried forward for the remainder of the fiscal year and prorated to reflect the number of months the replacement occupied the position. Adjustments and exclusions applied to these calculations are described in the *Data Validity* section.

Vacancy Savings

Vacancy savings represents the personnel costs not incurred during the period between a sworn employee's separation and the promotion of a replacement.

Vacancy savings were calculated as the product of (i) the number of separations in the fiscal year, measured by headcount; (ii) the average annual salary, inclusive of fringe benefits, for positions that experienced vacancies in that fiscal year; and (iii) the average time-to-fill. Average time-to-fill was calculated from employee-level records as 3.3 months, expressed as 27.5% of a full year. Adjustments and exclusions applied to these calculations are described in the *Data Validity* section.

Application Across Fiscal Years

For Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, turnover savings were calculated using position-level salary data, inclusive of fringe benefits, and adjusted to remove statewide salary increases and step increases, thus isolating the effect of employee movement within the VSP Sworn Pay Plan. Vacancy savings were calculated using annual average salary values, inclusive of fringe benefits, for positions that experienced vacancies, multiplied by the number of separations

and the average time-to fill derived from employee-level data. Applied consistently, this methodology provides a uniform basis for evaluating savings across fiscal years.

Data Validity

Several validity methods were applied to identify the fiscal effects under review and to ensure the reported savings were measured consistently within the requirements of the Appropriation Act.

- Statewide salary increases and step increases during the biennium were removed from the turnover savings calculation to isolate changes resulting from employee movement within the pay plan. These increases were retained in the vacancy savings calculation to capture the full cost of a vacancy. All salary figures were adjusted to include fringe benefits.
- Trooper II, Senior Trooper, and Master Trooper positions on the career progression pathway were excluded from the average time-to-fill calculation. These career progressions result in a pay increase but do not involve any change in position. As such, they are out of scope in the analysis of turnover and vacancy savings.
- Positions experiencing no turnover during both fiscal years were excluded from the average salary calculation for vacancy savings, as they did not contribute to vacancy-related savings.
- The entry-level Trooper I position was also excluded from the turnover and vacancy savings analysis because entry into the position is determined through a hiring decision rather than internal movement within the pay plan.

Results

The results that follow present the turnover and vacancy generated from sworn officer separations and replacements for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025.

Turnover Savings

Turnover savings reflect the fiscal effect of replacing longer-tenured officers separating at higher steps of the VSP Sworn Pay Plan with less tenured officers at lower pay steps. These savings are recurring in nature, as the reduced salary level continues in each month following the replacement.

Table 1. Turnover Savings, FY24-FY25

Fiscal Year	Turnover Savings (\$)
FY24	\$1,521,244
FY25	\$1,515,382
Average:	\$1,518,313

The reported turnover savings provide a sustained offset to the VSP Sworn Pay Plan, mitigating, but not fully covering, associated plan costs.

Vacancy Savings

Vacancy savings reflect the fiscal effect of positions remaining unfilled following separation until a replacement is promoted. These savings are realized only for the duration that a position remains vacant prior to replacement. While vacancy savings provide a measurable reduction in costs during periods of vacancy, they decline as vacancies are filled more quickly.

Table 2. Vacancy Savings, FY24-FY25

Fiscal Year	Vacancy Savings (\$)
FY24	\$4,971,018
FY25	\$5,665,361
Average:	\$5,318,190

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of turnover and vacancy savings offers insight into their role in supporting the VSP Sworn Pay Plan. Turnover savings are recurring and sustainable, offering an ongoing offset that can partially support the costs associated with future pay steps.

Vacancy savings, in contrast, are of limited duration. While these savings may be sufficient to help offset costs in the near term, their long-term influence is uncertain. As the Department of State Police continues to expand recruitment initiatives and fills vacant positions more rapidly, the duration and magnitude of vacancy savings are expected to decline.

Recent hiring activity underscores this dynamic. In June 2025, VSP hired the 144th Basic Session, the largest sworn class since 2018. Additionally, the 145th Basic Session, scheduled to start in January 2026, is projected to be of similar size. Continued success in recruiting and onboarding sworn personnel reduces the level of recruitment savings realized.

It is important to note that vacancies are not intentionally maintained for budgetary purposes. VSP actively recruits to fill positions in a timely manner, and any savings observed during the vacancy arise solely from the duration before the position is filled.

Conclusion

Reported savings for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 indicate that turnover savings represent an ongoing reduction that covers a portion of the costs of the VSP Sworn Pay Plan. Vacancy savings also produced substantial offsets during this period. In combination, these savings are sufficient to cover the cost of the sworn pay plan in the near term. However, as vacancies are filled more quickly through continued hiring efforts, the level of vacancy savings is expected to decrease over time. The Department will continue to monitor turnover and vacancy savings to determine whether current trends persist.