



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: Finance & Administration Committee **DATE:** January 9, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Administration Department

PREPARED BY: Juli Mortensen, Human Resources Manager

PRESENTER: Juli Mortensen, Human Resources Manager

AGENDA TITLE: 2026 Ordinance 672 Salary Survey

RECOMMENDATION

Receive the annual Ordinance 672 Salary Survey. Approval to bring forward the recommended salary adjustments to the full City Council at the next available City Council meeting to be implemented retroactively to January 6, 2026.

BACKGROUND

Ordinance 672 establishes minimum standards of compensation, benefits, and salaries for members of the Police Department of the City of Fort Bragg. The purpose of the ordinance is to ensure the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the City of Fort Bragg by retaining competent, qualified, trained, and experienced law enforcement employees. To reach this goal, Ordinance 672 helps maintain compensation, salaries, and benefits that are competitive with those of other law enforcement agencies in the County of Mendocino, State of California, by requiring an annual salary survey.

Specifically, Ordinance 672 requires the City of Fort Bragg to conduct a salary survey on an annual basis to determine the existing monthly salaries of each classification of like or comparable agencies or ranks (including experience, education, and training) of the Police Departments of the City of Willits, the City of Ukiah, and the Mendocino County Sheriff's Department. It states that the average of the salaries for each of the comparable grades or ranks of the members of the respective comparable agencies (City of Willits, City of Ukiah, and Mendocino County Sheriff) shall be the minimum salaries of the City of Fort Bragg Police Department for the respective comparable grades or ranks that is effective each January 1st.

The Fort Bragg City Council approves all salary schedules, including classification titles and compensation rates, which comply with the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CALPERS) code requirement for a publicly adopted and posted salary schedule. To allow the Fort Bragg City Council to make an informed decision, this agenda summary report (staff

report) provides a summary of the process used for the salary survey. The methodology used for this year's survey follows that used for the 2025 Ordinance 672 Annual Salary Study.

Human Resources reached out to the City of Ukiah, the City of Willits, and the Mendocino County Sheriff to obtain their respective salary schedules, longevity pay, POST (Peace Officer Safety and Training), Education Incentive, and Uniform Allowance special pays.

Before discussing challenges, defining the terms used in the survey and historical information is helpful. PEPRA is a California Law that significantly altered how CalPERS calculates and applies retirement benefits for public employees hired on or after January 1, 2013. The change resulted in lower pension benefits for new CalPERS members due to changes in the calculation formula. The City's Police Department personnel are predominantly CalPERS Local Safety PEPRA (PEPRA stands for Public Employees' Pension Act) rather than CalPERS Local Safety Classic. The Employer Paid Member Contribution (EMPC) does not apply to Local Safety PEPRA employees. Since most of the City's law enforcement personnel are PEPRA, the contribution rates shown in the survey reflect PEPRA rates.

The Mendocino County Sheriff employees participate in the Mendocino County Employees Retirement Association (MCERA), while the City of Fort Bragg employees are enrolled in CalPERS. To effectively compare each agency's employer and employee contribution rates, it is important to match the appropriate MCERA categories with the corresponding CalPERS categories:

- MCERA Safety Three PEPRA: This category is equivalent to the CalPERS Local Safety PEPRA category.
- MCERA General Tier 4: This category aligns with the CalPERS Miscellaneous PEPRA category.

By comparing these equivalent categories, you can better understand and analyze the contribution rates for each agency's retirement programs.

There were challenges encountered during the information-gathering process. One challenge was obtaining the "Normal Cost + EMPC" for the Mendocino County Sheriff. CalPERS establishes an employer rate that a given agency must pay for each participating employee. The normal cost is an estimated percentage of salary based on the employee pool (age, salary, investment returns, etc.) and is determined by periodic actuarial valuations under state law. In the context of CalPERS and the MCERA valuations, "EMPC" stands for "Employer Paid Member Contribution." This refers to the portion of an employee's CalPERS/MCERA pension contribution paid by their employer, in addition to the standard employee contribution rate.

Human Resources contacted Mendocino County to obtain the MCERA employer and employee contributions and the Normal Cost + EMPC, as defined above. When doing so, the County provided the following contribution rates.

- 2023 Safety 3 PEPRA Employee contribution is 13.69%.
- 2023 Safety 3 PEPRA Employer contribution is 70.70%.
- 2023 General Tier 4 PEPRA Employee Contribution is 9.13%.
- 2023 General Tier 4 PEPRA Employer contribution is 32.98%.

The Safety 3 PEPRA category applies to all sworn peace officers. The General Tier 4 PEPRA category covers non-sworn personnel, including Community Services Officers and Police Recruits.

One factor contributing to the higher Mendocino County Employees Retirement Association (MCERA) employer contribution rate may be the inclusion of the County's unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) in its payment. UAAL represents the remaining amount needed to fund retirement benefits that employees have already earned through past service. This includes benefits for current retirees, active employees, and those entitled to deferred benefits as of the valuation date.

Human Resources reviewed MCERA valuation reports to ensure accuracy and consistency. The 2023 valuation reports were used because they are the most recent year in which all agencies completed their valuations. While some 2024 valuation reports were available on the CalPERS website at the time this report was prepared, they were not yet published for all agencies.

City Resolution 4953-2025, Section 1.3, states that the salary provisions of Initiative Measure D, Ordinance 672, adopted by voters in November 1986, recognize that Ordinance 672 is the policy document governing the salaries of the Police Chief and the Police Chief Executive POST classifications within Resolution 4953-2025. Mid-Management Resolution 4939-2025, Section 1.1, stipulates that Police Mid-Management Classifications' cost-of-living adjustments are governed by Ordinance 672, adopted by voters in November 1986. As a result, cost-of-living adjustments for the Police Chief, Police Chief – Executive POST, Police Captain, and Police Commander classifications are determined by the results of the annual Ordinance 672 salary survey and are to be effective January 1, 2026.

At this point, it is helpful to define statistical terms, the median (average), and the median. The average is calculated by adding all values together and dividing by the number of values. The median is the middle value when all values are listed in order from lowest to highest. If there is an even number of values, such as here, the median is the average of the two middle values.

Use of Average vs. Median in Salary Surveys

When conducting a salary survey with only four agencies, one could argue that the median is a better measure than the average (mean). The median is less influenced by outliers, so if one agency pays significantly more than the others, the average can be skewed. In

contrast, the median provides a more accurate reflection of a “typical” salary by minimizing the impact of extremes.

Using the average can make sense when agencies are similar in size, structure, and pay ranges. However, in this case, the City of Ukiah and the Mendocino County Sheriff’s Office are substantially larger agencies and generally have greater resources to pay higher salaries than smaller agencies such as the City of Willits and the City of Fort Bragg. This difference supports the argument for using the median rather than the average.

That said, Ordinance 672, Section 2, explicitly requires that the average salary be used for the survey. Therefore, while the median will be discussed for context, the average will govern any cost-of-living adjustments resulting from this salary survey.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The following assumptions were made while conducting the survey:

- Salary is based on 2080 hours in a year.
- The base classification is used so the appropriate premium pay, such as POST, can be applied.
- POST pay is based on Advanced POST.
- Education Incentive Pay is based on a master’s degree.
- Longevity is based on 20 years.
- PERS is based on PEPRA.
- Medical, dental, and vision are based on the most expensive plan at each agency at the Family Tier and reflect what each agency contributes towards the respective premium.

In addition to the above assumptions, a few points should be noted.

- The City of Ukiah’s Longevity Pay is a bit different than the other agencies as it is a one-time lump sum each year.
- The City of Ukiah’s Police Association contract expired on September 18, 2025. At the time of this survey, the City of Ukiah website did not have an updated memorandum of understanding posted.
- The medical, dental, and vision plans for the cities of Willits and Ukiah are REMIF plans.
- The City of Willits, as of December 2025, has not posted an updated Willits Police Association (WPOA) nor an updated compensation schedule reflecting FY 2025-2026 compensation due to delayed negotiations.
- The City of Fort Bragg, compensation schedule effective July 13, 2025, was used for the survey.
- The Police Commander classification is a new classification that was established in September 2025.

The following page shows the results for each classification included in the survey: Community Service Officer, Police Captain, Police Commander, Police Chief, Police Chief – Executive POST, Police Officer, Police Sergeant, and Special Investigator.

Community Services Officer



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Community Service Officer
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Survey Agency	Comparable Classification	Effective Date	Top Step Monthly Salary	Uniform Allowance	POST Pay	Educational Incentive Pay	Longevity	Total Normal Cost + EPIC		EE Contribution		Wages + Pension	Health	Dental	Vision	Deferred Compensation	Total Benefits	Total Comp	Rank
								(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)								
City of Ukiah	CSO (3056)	9/25/2025	\$6,000	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$292	16.20%	\$1,033	8.00%	-\$510	\$6,898	\$2,850	\$122	\$29	\$15	\$3,016	\$9,914	1
City of Willits	CSO I (49H)	7/1/2024	\$5,927	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$250	15.71%	\$984	7.75%	-\$485	\$6,759	\$2,682	\$143	\$18	\$0	\$2,844	\$9,603	3
Mendocino County	CSOc (7065)	11/9/2025	\$5,162	\$100	N/A	\$0	\$310	32.98%	\$1,838	9.13%	-\$509	\$6,900	\$2,806	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$2,806	\$9,706	2
City of Fort Bragg	CSO	7/13/2025	\$5,511	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$165	16.52%	\$952	8.25%	-\$475	\$6,236	\$2,682	\$115	\$18	\$0	\$2,815	\$9,052	4
	Median		\$5,927									\$6,898						\$9,706	
	Variance from Median		-7.55%									-10.61%						-7.23%	
	Average		\$5,696									\$6,852						\$9,741	
	Variance From Average		-3.36%									-9.88%						-7.62%	

Police Captain



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Police Captain
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Survey Agency	Comparable Classification	Effective Date	Top Step Monthly Salary	Uniform Allowance	POST Pay	Education Incentive Pay	Longevity	Total Normal Cost +		EE Contribution		Wages + Pension	Health	Dental	Vision	Deferred Compensation	Total Benefits	Total Comp	Rank
								(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)								
City of Ukiah	Police Captain (3079)	9/28/2025	\$15,437	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$292	14.72%	\$2,327	14.50%	-\$2,293	\$15,846	\$2,850	\$122	\$29	\$0	\$3,000	\$18,847	2
City of Willits	Police Captain	7/1/2024	N/A	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4
Mendocino County	Sheriff's Captain (7050)	11/9/2025	\$14,357	\$83	N/A	\$2,010	\$1,077	70.70%	\$12,392	13.69%	-\$2,399	\$27,520	\$2,806	N/A	N/A	-\$431	\$2,375	\$29,895	1
City of Fort Bragg	Police Captain	7/13/2025	\$14,999	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$0	27.74%	\$4,184	13.75%	-\$2,074	\$17,193	\$2,682	\$115	\$18	\$0	\$2,815	\$20,008	3
	Median		\$14,897									\$21,683						\$24,371	
	Variance from Median		0.69%									-26.12%						-21.81%	
	Average		\$14,897									\$21,683						\$24,371	
	Variance From Average		0.69%									-26.12%						-21.81%	

Police Commander



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Police Commander
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Survey Agency	Comparable Classification	Effective Date	Top Step Monthly Salary	Uniform Allowance	POST Pay	Education Incentive Pay	Longevity	Total Normal Cost +		EE Contribution		Wages + Pension	Health	Dental	Vision	Deferred Compensation	Total Benefits	Total Comp	Rank
								(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)								
City of Ukiah	Police Lieutenant (3078)	9/28/2025	\$13,037	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$292	14.72%	\$1,974	14.50%	-\$1,945	\$13,441	\$2,850	\$122	\$29	\$0	\$3,000	\$16,441	2
City of Willits	Police Captain	7/1/2024	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4
Mendocino County	Sheriff's Lieutenant (7051)	11/9/2025	\$12,482	\$83	N/A	\$1,747	\$936	70.70%	\$10,781	13.69%	-\$2,088	\$23,942	\$2,806	N/A	N/A	\$374	\$3,180	\$27,122	1
City of Fort Bragg	Police Captain	7/13/2025	\$12,702	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$0	27.74%	\$3,547	13.75%	-\$1,758	\$14,574	\$2,682	\$115	\$18	\$0	\$2,815	\$17,389	3
	Median		\$12,759									\$18,691						\$21,782	
	Variance from Median		-0.45%									-28.25%						-25.26%	
	Average		\$12,759									\$18,691						\$21,782	
	Variance From Average		-0.45%									-28.25%						-25.26%	

Police Chief



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Police Chief
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Survey Agency	Comparable Classification	Effective Date	Top Step Monthly Salary	Uniform Allowance	POST Pay	Educational Incentive Pay	Longevity	Total Normal Cost + EE Contribution				Wages + Pension	Health	Dental	Vision	Deferred Compensation	Total Benefits	Total Comp	Rank
								(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)								
City of Ukiah	Police Chief (3570)	9/28/2025	\$18,772	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$292	14.72%	\$2,818	14.50%	-\$2,776	\$19,189	\$2,850	\$122	\$29	\$0	\$3,000	\$22,190	3
City of Willits	Police Chief (89E)	7/1/2024	\$14,896	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$250	27.29%	\$4,157	13.75%	-\$2,094	\$17,294	\$2,682	\$3,465	\$143	\$18	\$6,309	\$23,603	2
Mendocino County	Sheriff Coroner (7052)	11/9/2025	\$17,779	N/A	N/A	\$125	\$1,778	70.70%	\$13,915	13.69%	-\$2,694	\$30,903	\$2,806	N/A	N/A	\$711	\$3,517	\$34,420	1
City of Fort Bragg	Police Chief	7/13/2025	\$16,825	\$108	N/A	\$0	\$0	27.74%	\$4,697	13.75%	-\$2,328	\$19,303	\$2,682	\$115	\$18	\$0	\$2,815	\$22,118	4
Median			\$17,779									\$19,189						\$23,603	
Variance from Median			-5.67%									0.59%						-6.71%	
Average			\$17,150									\$22,462						\$26,737	
Variance From Average			-1.93%									-16.37%						-20.89%	

Police Chief – Executive POST



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Police Chief - Executive POST
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

The comparable agencies do not have this classification.
The current compensation places a 5% increase over the Police Chief classification.
Recommendation is to use the Police Chief classification and add 5% to the compensation.

Police Officer



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Police Officer
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Survey Agency	Comparable Classification	Effective Date	Top Step Monthly Salary	Uniform Allowance	POST Pay	Educational Incentive Pay	Longevity	Total Normal Cost + EPMC				EE Contribution	Wages + Pension	Health	Dental	Vision	Deferred Compensation	Total Benefits	Total Comp	Rank
								(%)	(\$)	(%)	(\$)									
City of Ukiah	Police Officer (3273)	9/28/2025	\$9,943	\$83	\$994	\$0	\$292	14.72%	\$1,665	14.50%	-\$1,640	\$11,338	\$2,850	\$122	\$29	\$0	\$3,000	\$14,338	3	
City of Willits	Police Officer (59)	7/1/2024	\$7,627	\$83	\$763	\$0	\$250	27.29%	\$2,381	13.75%	-\$1,199	\$9,905	\$2,682	\$143	\$18	\$0	\$2,844	\$12,748	4	
Mendocino County	Deputy Sheriff II (7204)	9/14/2025	\$8,795	\$100	\$879	\$440	\$528	70.70%	\$7,595	13.69%	-\$1,471	\$16,866	\$2,806	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$2,806	\$19,672	1	
City of Fort Bragg	Police Officer	7/13/2025	\$8,987	\$100	\$899	\$0	\$270	27.74%	\$2,845	13.75%	-\$1,410	\$11,690	\$2,682	\$115	\$18	\$0	\$2,815	\$14,506	2	
Median			\$8,891									\$14,278						\$17,089		
Variance from Median			-1.09%									-25.94%						-19.18%		
Average			\$8,789									\$12,703						\$15,586		
Variance From Average			2.26%									-8.66%						-7.45%		

Police Recruit



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Police Recruit
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Survey Agency	Comparable Classification	Effective Date	Top Step Monthly Salary	Uniform Allowance	POST Pay	Educational Incentive Pay	Longevity	Total Normal Cost +			Wages + Pension	EE Contribution					Total Comp	Rank	
								(%)	(\$)	(%)		(\$)	Health	Dental	Vision	Deferred Compensation			Total Benefits
City of Ukiah	Police Officer-Step 0	9/28/2025	\$6,406	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$292	16.20%	\$1,098	8.00%	-\$542	\$7,337	\$2,850	\$122	\$29	\$15	\$3,016	\$10,353	1
City of Willits	Police Recruit (6/30/2024	\$5,200	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.71%	\$817	7.75%	-\$403	\$5,614	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4
Mendocino County	Deputy Sheriff-in-Training (7167)	11/5/2025	\$5,495	\$100	N/A	\$0	\$330	70.70%	\$4,189	13.69%	-\$811	\$9,302	\$2,806	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$2,806	\$12,108	2
City of Fort Bragg	Police Recruit	7/13/2025	\$6,048	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$181	16.52%	\$1,043	8.25%	-\$521	\$6,834	\$2,682	\$115	\$18	\$0	\$2,815	\$9,650	3
			Median	\$5,495								\$7,337						\$11,230	
			Variance from Median	10.06%								-7.35%						-16.38%	
			Average	\$5,700								\$7,418						\$11,230	
			Variance From Average	6.10%								-8.53%						-16.38%	

Police Sergeant



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Police Recruit
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Survey Agency	Comparable Classification	Effective Date	Top Step Monthly Salary	Uniform Allowance	POST Pay	Educational Incentive Pay	Longevity	Total Normal Cost +			Wages + Pension	EE Contribution					Total Comp	Rank	
								(%)	(\$)	(%)		(\$)	Health	Dental	Vision	Deferred Compensation			Total Benefits
City of Ukiah	Police Officer-Step 0	9/28/2025	\$6,406	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$292	16.20%	\$1,098	8.00%	-\$542	\$7,337	\$2,850	\$122	\$29	\$15	\$3,016	\$10,353	1
City of Willits	Police Recruit (6/30/2024	\$5,200	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.71%	\$817	7.75%	-\$403	\$5,614	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4
Mendocino County	Deputy Sheriff-in-Training (7167)	11/5/2025	\$5,495	\$100	N/A	\$0	\$330	70.70%	\$4,189	13.69%	-\$811	\$9,302	\$2,806	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$2,806	\$12,108	2
City of Fort Bragg	Police Recruit	7/13/2025	\$6,048	\$83	N/A	\$0	\$181	16.52%	\$1,043	8.25%	-\$521	\$6,834	\$2,682	\$115	\$18	\$0	\$2,815	\$9,650	3
			Median	\$5,495								\$7,337						\$11,230	
			Variance from Median	10.06%								-7.35%						-16.38%	
			Average	\$5,700								\$7,418						\$11,230	
			Variance From Average	6.10%								-8.53%						-16.38%	

Special Investigator



City of Fort Bragg
Title: Special Investigator
Analysis Date: Nov. 2025

Special Investigator
There are no comparable classifications at the comparable agencies.
Past practice is to pay 5% the pay band for Police Officers.

Base Salary Comparison

Classifications Not Requiring Adjustment

The survey results show that the Police Captain, Police Officer, Police Recruit, and Police Sergeant classifications do not require adjustments. Each of these classifications will be discussed separately.

Police Captain

The Police Captain classification received a combined 14.2% salary adjustment in 2024, resulting from the Ordinance 672 salary survey and the Mid-Management group's cost-of-living adjustment. Despite these increases, the classification remained significantly below market in the fall 2024 survey and subsequently received an additional 8.46% adjustment effective January 1, 2025, bringing the total increase to slightly over 22% within two years. Currently, the classification is 0.69% above both the market median and average. While Ordinance 672 does not require an adjustment, a modest increase might help to moderate future adjustments and maintain competitiveness. This proactive approach may reduce the likelihood of significant increases following the January 2026 survey, particularly as the City of Willits and City of Ukiah are negotiating new police association agreements. Based strictly on the language of Ordinance 672, no salary adjustment is necessary.

Police Officer

In July 2025, the Police Officer classification received a 3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in accordance with the Fort Bragg Police Association 2024–2028 Memorandum of Understanding.

As of the current survey, the classification is 1.09% below the median and 2.26% above the average. Based on the requirements of Ordinance 672, no additional adjustment is recommended at this time. It is important to note that two comparable agencies are currently negotiating successor labor agreements, which may affect future market alignment.

Additionally, most other employee groups received a 6% COLA in July 2025. This difference may raise internal equity concerns that warrant monitoring.

Police Recruit

The Police Recruit position received a 13.39% increase based on last year's survey. The classification compensation is now 6.10% above the comparable agencies' average and 10% above the median. No salary adjustment is recommended at this time.

Police Sergeant

In 2025, the Police Sergeant classification received a 3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) effective July, in accordance with the FBPA 2024–2028 Memorandum of Understanding. The 2025 Ordinance 672 compensation survey did not identify a need for an additional adjustment. Therefore, no further increase is required.

Currently, this classification is 1.45% below the median and 2.13% above average. Negotiations for successor Police Association agreements in the City of Willits and City of

Ukiah may impact future comparisons. To address internal equity and reduce the likelihood of a larger adjustment in a future survey, the City may consider a 3% COLA, consistent with the approach discussed for the Police Officer classification. However, based on the language of Ordinance 672, no adjustment is required.

Special Investigator

The Special Investigator classification is compensated at a 5% premium above the Police Officer classification. None of the comparable agencies included in the survey maintains a classification that is directly comparable. Accordingly, the City has historically applied the same salary adjustments approved for the Police Officer classification to the Special Investigator classification to preserve the established pay differential.

Classifications Requiring Adjustment

The Community Services Officer, Police Chief, Police Commander, and the Police Chief – Executive POST classifications require adjustment. Each classification will be discussed below.

Community Services Officer

The Community Services Officer (CSO) is a non-sworn position that supports succession planning for sworn law enforcement roles. The classification is currently 3.36% below the average and 7.55% below the median. Based on these findings, the staff recommends a minimum salary adjustment of 3.36% to align with the average.

Historically, the Community Services Officer (CSO) position has served as a pathway to sworn roles, with several incumbents advancing to the police academy and becoming peace officers. While Ordinance 672 requires adjustments based solely on base salary alignment, considering a larger increase may help address internal equity concerns. These concerns stem from recent cost-of-living adjustments, including the 3% increase provided under the 2024–2028 Fort Bragg Police Association Memorandum of Understanding and the 6% adjustments granted to most non-Police Department classifications.

The table summarizing required adjustments reflects compliance with Ordinance 672 but does not address potential internal equity issues. These factors may warrant further review to ensure competitive compensation and maintain workforce stability.

Police Commander

The Police Commander classification was established in September 2025 to allow the Police Captain to focus primarily on the Care Response Unit and Emergency Operations. This structure enables the Police Commander to provide enhanced oversight of the Patrol Division and manage other operational and administrative responsibilities within the Police Department.

The City of Willits does not have a comparable position. Based on the current survey, the Police Commander classification is 0.45% below both the median and average salaries. To maintain alignment with market data and Ordinance 672 requirements, a 0.45% salary increase is recommended for this classification.

Police Chief

The City maintains two classifications for the Police Chief position: Police Chief and Police Chief – Executive POST, with the latter including a 5% premium in the base salary. Only one Police Chief position is budgeted and filled at any given time. The previous Police Chief held an Executive POST certification issued by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), whereas the current Police Chief does not.

Based on the current survey, the Police Chief classification is 1.93% below the average and 5.67% below the median. In accordance with Ordinance 672, a 1.93% salary adjustment is appropriate. However, to maintain internal equity within the Executive Management group, consideration could be given to a 6% adjustment for both classifications. This approach would preserve the established 5% differential between the two classifications.

As noted elsewhere, Ordinance 672 specifies that base salary is used to determine salary adjustments. Therefore, the recommended adjustment for the Police Chief classification is 1.93%.

Special Pays and Pension Comparison

Ordinance 672 does not require inclusion of premium pay (Uniform Allowance, POST, Education Incentive, Longevity) or pensions in the annual compensation surveys. Historically, surveys have used only base salary. However, evaluating special pay and pension benefits provides a more accurate assessment of the City's competitiveness and informs recruitment and retention strategies. Including premium pay and pension benefits, all surveyed classifications remain below average, with variances ranging from 7.01% below average (Police Recruit) to 28.25% below average (Police Commander).

To improve competitiveness, the City may consider adjustments to premium pay and retirement-related benefits. Changes to CalPERS formulas are limited and would significantly increase OPEB liabilities. As an alternative, Human Resources is evaluating a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) to assist employees with medical expenses in retirement, subject to plan design, administrative complexity, and fiscal impact.

Total Compensation Including Health & Deferred Compensation Benefits Comparison

The compensation survey included health, dental, vision, and deferred compensation benefits to provide a comprehensive analysis of total compensation. Historically, the City has not compared these benefits across agencies; however, they can significantly influence recruitment and retention. While this analysis is not required to determine salary adjustments, it offers valuable context.

Total Compensation Key Findings

- All the classifications surveyed are below the market average.
- Community Services Officer: 7.62% below average.
- Police Captain: 21.81% below average.

- Police Commander: 25.26% below average.
- Police Chief: 20.89% below average.
- Non-exempt classifications: Community Services Officer (7.62% below), Police Officer (7.45% below), Police Recruit (16.38% below), Police Sergeant (9.50% below), average 10.23% below the average.
- Sworn management classifications as a whole average 22.65% below the average.
- Total compensation for Police Captain and Police Commander differential is 3.45%.
- The City ranks anywhere from second to fourth in the survey overall.
 - ✓ The Police Officer and Police Recruit classifications rank second.
 - ✓ The Police Captain, Police Commander, and Police Recruit classifications rank third.
 - ✓ The City ranks fourth among comparable agencies in three classifications (Community Services Officer and Police Chief).
- These results indicate the City may need to evaluate strategies to improve compensation and benefits for senior law enforcement positions to remain competitive.

Analysis Summary

Overall, based solely on the survey results, the pay adjustment recommendations are listed in the table below, effective January 1, 2026.

Classification	Pay Adjustment Recommendation
Community Service Officer (CSO)	3.36%
Police Recruit	0%
Police Officer	0%
Police Sergeant	0%
Police Captain	0%
Police Commander	0.45%
Police Chief	1.93%
Police Chief – Executive POST	1.93%**
Special Investigator	0%*

* The Special Investigator classification does not exist at the comparator agencies. This classification would receive five (5) percent above the Police Officer classification.

** The Police Chief – Executive POST classification is five (5%) over the Police Chief classification.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- Receive the Annual Ordinance 672 Salary Survey to be effective retroactive to January 1, 2026.
- Approve the above recommendations at the next available City Council meeting.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

- Provide directions on other recommendations.
- Not authorizing the above recommendations to go to the full City Council would result in the City not complying with Ordinance 672.

FISCAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE

When the City hires a Police Recruit, the classification typically applies only during Police Academy attendance, which is approximately six months. In contrast, Police Captain and Police Chief positions are year-round. For this fiscal analysis, the calculation includes the Police Chief classification, as the position is currently filled. The Police Chief – Executive POST classification is not included, as both classifications would not be held simultaneously.

Salary adjustment recommendations are proposed to be retroactive to January 1, 2026. Therefore, only the period from January 1 through June 30 of FY 2025/26 is considered. Based on these assumptions, the recommended base salary adjustments would increase the current fiscal year budget by **\$44,479.83**, funded from **Account 110-4200-0101 (Salaries & Wages, Regular)**.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

With respect to the applicability of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) (“CEQA”). It is determined that the approval of the above recommendations does not have the potential for creating a significant effect on the environment and is therefore exempt from further review under CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) because it is not a project as defined by the CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. Adoption of the above recommendations does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

STRATEGIC PLAN/COUNCIL PRIORITIES/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

This is in alignment with Strategic Goal 6A, which specifically states, “Conduct an external compensation review every three years to benchmark the City’s performance against other comparable organizations to remain competitive.” The salary survey also complies with City Ordinance 672.

ALTERNATIVES

- Provide direction to staff regarding the Committee’s recommendations.
- If the recommended actions are not authorized for the next City Council meeting, implementation of salary adjustments—retroactive to January 1, 2026—would be delayed. Given the monthly schedule of Finance and Administration Committee meetings, such a delay could place the City at risk of noncompliance with Ordinance 672.

It may also create potential conflict with Article 5.1 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Fort Bragg and the Fort Bragg Police Association (effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028). Article 5.1 states:

“The salary adjustments, if any, shall be implemented as soon as possible after January 1 of each year, and before January 31 unless there is a discrepancy between the City and the FBPA relative to the survey results. In these instances, the discrepancy shall be resolved, and the salary adjustments shall be implemented no later than February 28.”

Although the classifications addressed in this report are not part of the FBPA, the City has historically adhered to this timeline for consistency and best practice.

ATTACHMENTS

- Ordinance 672
- FBPOA Comp Survey Nov2024 – Top Step Combined.pdf
- Fort Bragg Police Association MOU Article 5.1

NOTIFICATION

Padraic PJ Ferris, Fort Bragg Police Association President
Rory Beak, Fort Bragg Police Association Vice President
Anthony Welter, Fort Bragg Police Association Treasurer
Shaun A. Du Fosee, Mastagni Holsted
Lesley Bryant, Administrative Analyst, Police
Eric Swift, Police Chief
Jonathan McLaughlin, Police Commander
Thomas O’Neal, Police Captain