





Howard County

Internal Memorandum

Subject: Council Testimony and Fiscal Impact Statement

To: Lonnie R. Robbins
Chief Administrative Officer

Through: Anju A. Bennett 
Human Resources Administrator

From: Stacey Simmons 
Chief, Classification and Pay

Date: August 10, 2022

The Administration is seeking Council approval for a bill amending the classification plan for class descriptions and certain educational and experience requirements for Police classifications and Fire and Rescue classifications.

With respect to Police, Howard County like all jurisdictions, is experiencing increased competition for qualified Police Officer candidates and having difficulty attracting candidates for policing.

To remain competitive with surrounding jurisdictions, a review of the sworn police classifications was completed to ensure that Howard County is being inclusive for all potentially qualified candidates, and that our requirements are on par with the majority of competing jurisdictions. To that end, we recommend approval of revised minimum requirements for the classification of Probationary Police Officer in order to expand the pool of qualified candidates while still maintaining strong preferred requirements. This revision also requires a minor change to the wording in the minimum requirements for Police Corporal and Police Sergeant.

Additionally, the following changes were made:

- Updated the General Definition and Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities sections for the Police Officer Probationary
- Updated the Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities section for the Police Officer and Police Corporal

With respect to Fire and Rescue Services positions, during a review of the requirements for professional certifications, licenses and qualifications, the Department identified challenges in having appropriately qualified candidates for its the promotional process. As a result of the review, the department is developing a promotional procedure that will incorporate greater occupational proficiencies and experience to carry out the needed duties of fire professionals.

These needed proficiencies are specifically related to the duties carried out and more valuable than increasing generic college credits. As such, the promotional process includes required classes provided by accredited organizations in Maryland specializing in Fire safety which will supplement current college credits and time in grade.

The Administration is seeking approval to amend the classification plan to maintain the required college credits and time in grade as they are currently written and foregoing the upcoming (previously planned) change for the ranks of Battalion Chief, Captain and Lieutenant. Maintaining the current education and experience requirements in conjunction with added occupational proficiencies and experience not only produces more skilled candidates, but also broadens the candidates who can be considered for promotional opportunities.

A secondary revision is also being recommended to the class description section for the Captain to ensure listed duties reflect updated programmatic duties carried out by this position.

The changes to the classification plan do not have fiscal impact.

cc: Jennifer Sager