



Steve Agan

Tucson Police Department military members Officer Eddie Valenzuela, Officer Alexandra Rambaran, Detective Chris Goins, Officer Mendall Edwards, Crime Analyst Sean Rambaran, Bicycle Officer Brian Harwood, Officer Nicolo Solarino and Officer Jason Hollander.

## TOP POLICE JOBS

Agencies on 2017 list give perks, preferences to vets, reservists

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We all know from TV and movies what the police do — tell bad guys they have the right to remain silent, pull you over if you drive too fast, analyze data and make maps.

Wait, maps?

“There’s a very stereotypical perspective that people have” about law enforcement work, said Officer Alexandra Rambaran of the Tucson Police Department in Arizona. But “there are so many jobs within a law enforcement agency that you could be doing.”

Rambaran, who is also an Air Force Reserve staff sergeant, started on patrol. But now she works for the department’s research and analysis division, mapping crime hotspots, finding stats and coordinating with other agencies.

“I actually really enjoy it. It coincides with a lot of the stuff I do in the military,” Rambaran said.

Capt. JT Turner said Tucson officers do everything from research to flying

the department’s helicopters to working with dogs as part of K9 units to in-depth investigative work to, yes, the sort of patrol and community policing that you’ll see portrayed on television.

“It really runs the full spectrum,” Turner said, adding that the department can often match its veteran and reservist officers up with police department jobs directly related to their military occupations.

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“There’s really a job that fits most, if not all, of those.”

Turner’s department was among the top finishers in Military Times’ Best for Vets: Law Enforcement 2017 rankings. Others include the Cincinnati Police Department, Denver Police Department, Harris



San Diego Police Department

A training officer is pictured with new recruits at the San Diego Police Department’s paramilitary police academy.

County Sheriff’s Office in Texas, Henrico County Police Division in Virginia and Orange County Sheriff’s Office in Florida.

Service members and veterans accounted for nearly one in five sworn officers at agencies and departments responding to our survey. Nearly every agency reported having a current or former service member or military spouse as a senior leader.

On average, for every \$10 departments spent on recruiting, nearly \$1 was dedicated to military and veteran candidates. More than 70 percent of responding agencies reported attending military-specific job fairs in the past year, with an average of about 11 per agency.

Roughly half of the agencies have a veteran hiring preference, through extra

points on entry exams or other means.

About six in 10 responding agencies have signed on with the Defense Department’s Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, and a similar number have instituted training to teach their departments about military career paths, culture and other issues. Vets can count their time serving in the military toward their police retirement at nearly two-thirds of agencies, but they must purchase this credit at almost every agency that offers the option.

All but one agency that made the Best for Vets: Law Enforcement 2017 list told us they are hiring right now, and the other one told us it expects to start hiring soon.

There are many similarities between police work and military service. Both have tightly regimented structures, can involve high-pressure situations and are focused on serving the public.

“It was just another uniform that I could put on, and it wasn’t a complete lifestyle change from being in the military,” said Samuel Edwards, a recruit with the Henrico County Police Division.

Edwards, a Virginia Army National Guard second lieutenant, added that the first couple of months he’s spent at the police academy so far haven’t represented a big transition.

“I would say that my military training certainly has prepared me for it.”

Henrico Sgt. Edward Ross said the division’s military and veteran recruits are typically “ahead of the curve” and immediately take on leadership roles.

“They take what they’ve learned [in the military] and do it on a local level,” Ross said. “Their deployment is whatever shift they’re working each day, and they’re home each night.”

Joanne Stanley, a Navy veteran and current recruit with the Orange County Sheriff’s Office, said joining the force gave her back something she lost when she medically retired in 2015: “I just like feeling like I’m a part of something.”

Stanley agreed that the military was excellent preparation for joining the police, particularly with regard to the paramilitary structure, but she also warned fellow vets not to go to police academy

thinking they'll just waltz through.

"It's not as easy as I thought it was going to be," Stanley said, highlighting the agency's rigorous physical training, or PT, standards. "I was in the Navy. I never went into combat, so PT wasn't a big thing for me."

### IN THE SPOTLIGHT

A recent rash of high-profile incidents, in which officers shot unarmed suspects, has put the spotlight on police departments throughout the country. Todd Gardiner, captain over the Orange County Sheriff's Office Training Section, said in an email that "preventing a lethal force response is a high priority for our agency. ... Some of the principles we prioritize are valuing the sanctity of human life, de-escalation and development of policies that go beyond the national standard in regard to use of force."

### DUAL SERVICE

For the many officers who remain

members of the National Guard and reserves during their police careers, the challenges go well beyond PT.

Maj. Denise Demps of the Orange County Sheriff's Office has juggled both responsibilities for well over two decades, joining the Army Reserve in 1988 and the sheriff's office in 1991.

"I've had a dual career this entire time," Demps said. "There are times when you have competing interests, and at some point you have to decide which one is priority."

In order to pull this off, you'll need to work for an agency that is willing to be flexible when it comes to the demands of reserve duty.

"I've been to two wars and three peace-keeping missions, and the organization has always been supportive," Demps said.

Perhaps as important as flexibility for reservists who have to leave an agency to fulfill military obligations is a reintegration program.



Harris County Sheriff's Office  
Harris County, Texas, Deputy Ruth Recio receives care packages in Afghanistan.

This training refreshes officers on the agency's policies and rules when they return from reserve duty.

When such troops deploy to combat zones with very different rules of engagement, this is crucial, said Tucson's Turner, commanding officer of his department's human resources operations.

The department's academy helps refresh returning troops on procedures, while the behavioral science unit tackles psychological aspects.



Master Deputy Curtis Barnest

Orange County Sheriff's Office veteran recruiter Rick DeMarco explains the hiring process to soldiers and sailors in Orlando, Fla.

"When they come back from deployment, we kind of re-acclimate them to civilian policing," Turner said.

### PRIORITY RECRUITS

Turner added that attracting and retaining service members is a high priority for the department. "We've just found that military people really come to the table with the mindset and the skill set to be really highly successful in roles in law enforcement," he said.

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# BEST FOR VETS: LAW ENFORCEMENT 2017



Military Times surveyed law enforcement agencies across the U.S. about their policies relating to veterans and reservists on the force.

## METHODOLOGY

We invited law enforcement agencies across the country to participate in our detailed, roughly 100-question survey. Agencies were evaluated on their military recruiting, service member-related policies, rules for reservists, and departmental culture. They are listed alphabetically in the chart, with those that described the most accommodating practices and environments designated with a diamond by their names. Not everything listed in the chart was

considered when evaluating agencies, and many items not listed were considered. Hiring indicates whether departments told us they are hiring now; they plan to hire within the next 12 months; they are unsure if they'll hire within 12 months; or they have no plans to hire.

Veteran hiring preference shows whether a department gives veterans a leg up in the hiring process. Those with numbers in this column offer extra exam points. For example, a department that awards veterans 10

Department	Jurisdiction	Officers or agents		Recent officer hires		Percentage of recruiting budget for veterans	Hiring	Veteran hiring preference	Union	Military experience instead of certification	Retirement credit for military service
		Total	Military	Total	Military						
Airway Heights Police Department	Airway Heights, Wash., city limits	16	7	2	No data	1%	Now	10% <sup>1</sup>	AHPSG		
Brevard County Sheriff's Office	Brevard County, Fla., excluding municipal areas	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	Now	✓	CFPBA	✓	✓
Chesterfield County Police Department	Chesterfield County, Va.	485	81	38	7	No data	Now				✓
◆ Cincinnati Police Department	Cincinnati city limits	No data	277	No data	31	No data	Now	5/100	FOP		✓
Culpeper County Sheriff's Office	Culpeper County, Va.	105	21	17	3	No data	Now				
◆ Denver Police Department	City and County of Denver	1,490	No data	No data	No data	10%	Now	10/100	DPPA		✓
Goochland Sheriff's Office	Goochland County, Va.	42	19	6	5	0%	Now				✓
◆ Harris County Sheriff's Office	Harris County, Texas	2,237	650	No data	No data	40%	Now	✓	HCDO	✓	✓
◆ Henrico County Police Division	Henrico County, Va.	647	149	35	No data	20%	Now				✓
Miami-Dade Police Department	Miami-Dade County, Fla.	2,657	No data	65	No data	No data	Now	✓	DCPBA		✓
Mukilteo Police Department	Mukilteo, Wash., city limits	28	10	1	0	0%	Now	10/100	Teamsters		✓
Newport News Sheriff's Office	Newport News, Va., city limits	191	58	20	2	15%	Now	✓			✓
Oakland County Sheriff's Office	Oakland County, Mich.	769	164	61	13	0%	Now	✓	OCSCO, OCSD	✓	✓
Oklahoma City Police Department	Oklahoma City, Okla., city limits	1,105	No data	104	No data	No data	Now	✓	FOP		
◆ Orange County Sheriff's Office	Orange County, Fla.	1,446	303	130	33	35%	Now	✓	FOP	✓	
Pima County Sheriff's Department	Pima County, Ariz., excluding municipal areas	522	37	55	No data	No data	Plan to	5/15	FOP, PCDSA		
San Diego Police Department	San Diego city limits	No data	No data	No data	No data	5%	Now	✓	SDPOA		
The University of Arizona Police Department	University of Arizona campuses and locations	64	23	No data	No data	0%	Now				✓
◆ Tucson Police Department	Tucson, Ariz., city limits	883	375	100	12	No data	Now	5/100	TPOA		✓
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Police	Washington state	133	29	10	4	No data	Now	✓	FWOG	✓	

<sup>1</sup>10% bonus based on test taker's score, not based on total possible points in test <sup>2</sup>Multiple ESGR awards

extra points on a 100-point exam would be designated as 10/100. Agencies with checkmarks either have a veteran preference not related to exam points or did not provide enough information about their exam points for us to detail them.

Union shows whether a department is unionized, and if so, with what union or unions.

AHPSG: Airway Heights Public Safety Guild

CFPBA: Coastal Florida Police Benevolent Association

DCPBA: Dade County Police Benevolent Association

DPPA: Denver Police Protective Association

FOP: Fraternal Order of Police

FWOG: Fish and Wildlife Officers Guild

HCDO: Harris County Deputy's Organization

OCSCO: Oakland County Sheriff's Command Officers

OCSD: Oakland County Sheriff's Deputies

PCDSA: Pima County Deputy Sheriff's Association

SDPOA: San Diego Police Officers' Association

TPOA: Tucson Police Officers Association

Veteran onboarding rates the process departments use to acclimate new veteran employees to working for the agency, including orientation, training and mentorship programs. Best rating is 4 stars.

Departmental training about military rates the frequency and extent of training that agency employees receive about military culture, career paths and other issues, as well as how widespread such training is within the agency.

Military spouse policies rates the efforts a department makes to recruit and accommodate employees who are military spouses.

ESGR award shows the highest award the agency has received from the Defense Department's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve national committee. From most to least selective, those awards are: Freedom, Extraordinary Employer Support, Pro Patria, Above and Beyond, Seven Seals and Patriot.

Veteran onboarding	Departmental training about military	Military spouse policies	ESGR award	Benefits for activated reservists						Reservist pay
				Medical insurance	Life insurance	Pay raises	Retirement credit	Sick days	Vacation days	
			Patriot	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Full difference, 30 business days
	★★½			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Full pay, 4 weeks, then full difference, 203 months
		★★½	Patriot	✓	✓	✓			✓	No pay
★	★★★★	★★★½	Above and Beyond	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Partial difference, unlimited
★	★★									No pay
★★★★	★	½		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Full difference, 52 weeks, then full difference, unlimited
				✓	✓	✓				Training: full pay, 15 business days; activated: no pay
★★★★★	★★½	★★★½	Patriot	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Full pay, unlimited
	★★★★★			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Training: full pay, 120 hours; activated: full difference, unlimited
	★★		Freedom	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Training: full pay, 30 business days; activated: full pay, 30 business days, then full difference, 5 years
★★★★★	★		Above and Beyond <sup>2</sup>					✓	✓	Full pay, 21 business days
	★★			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Full pay, 120 hours
			Freedom <sup>2</sup>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Training: no pay; activated: full difference, unlimited
				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Full difference, 52 weeks
★★★★★	★★★½		Above and Beyond	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Full difference, 240 hours
		★★½		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Full pay, 240 hours
	★	★★½		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Training: full pay, 30 business days, then full difference, unlimited; activated: full difference, 30 business days, then partial difference, unlimited
★★★★			Above and Beyond <sup>2</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Training: full pay, 30 business days; activated: partial difference, 2 years
★★★★★	★★★½	★★½	Extraordinary Employer Support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Training: full pay, 1 month; activated: full difference, unlimited
★★★★★										Full pay, 15 business days