



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: MAY 27, 2025

DEPARTMENT: HUMAN RESOURCES

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TITLE: VACANCIES, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION EFFORTS

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Receive staff report on workforce vacancies, recruitment, and retention efforts consistent with Assembly Bill (AB) 2561 (Government Code Section 3502.3). No action is requested.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

AB 2561 requires public agencies, including the City of Salinas, to present the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts during a public hearing once per fiscal year.

BACKGROUND:

VACANCIES

AB 2561 was introduced to address the issue of job vacancies in local government, which adversely affects the delivery of public services and employee workload. Among other requirements, the bill mandates that public agencies present the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts during a public hearing before the agency's governing body at least once per fiscal year prior to the adoption of the next fiscal year's budget and identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures, and recruitment activities that may lead to obstacles in the hiring process. The bill was enacted into law and is codified as Government Code section 3502.3, effective January 1, 2025.

For purposes of this report, data was secured from calendar year 2024. The table below shows a breakdown of the percentage of vacancies for regular, full-time positions at the end of each month in 2024. For calendar year 2024, the City's collective annual average percentage of vacancies for regular, full-time positions was 13.8%.

The table below shows vacancies for newly added positions and openings due to promotions and separations. The new vacancies were added to existing vacancies from calendar year 2023.

CY 2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Vacancies Filled	16	10	14	10	10	24	11	11	12	5	10	11	144
New Vacancies	12	15	18	7	5	12	5	9	14	7	7	13	124
Remaining Vacancies (Running Total)	99	104	108	107	101	89	83	81	83	85	83	85	-

For purposes of this report and vacancy tracking, every regular, full-time position was counted, including City Council appointees, frozen, unassigned, and over hire positions. Employee units were tracked as listed below and reflect vacancies as of December 31, 2024.

Employee Units	Vacancies	FTEs	% of Vacancies
Association of Management Personnel of Salinas (AMPS)	22	81.5	26.99%
Department Directors	2	9	22.2%
Police Managers Association (PMA)	6	30	20%
Confidential Management	3	16	18.8%
Confidential Miscellaneous	2	13	15.4%
Fire Supervisors (FSA)	1	7	14.3%
Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Crew Supervisors	1	7	14.3%
Salinas Police Officers Association (SPOA)	16	125	12.8%
Salinas Municipal Employees Association (SMEA)	24	193.5	12.4%
Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Blue Collar	6	81	7.4%
International Association of Firefighters (IAFF)	0	100	0%

During calendar year 2024, Human Resources ran 96 recruitments for regular positions as listed in Attachment A, including various continuous recruitments for difficult-to-fill positions such as Police Recruit, Police Officer, and Senior Civil Engineer. The City filled 144 positions throughout the year,

including 8 Police Recruits promoting to Police Officer and 17 Firefighter Recruits promoting to Firefighter. During the same time, Human Resources processed 68 separations; these included retirements, resignations, and dismissals.

The table above reflects that the Association of Management Personnel of Salinas (AMPS), Department Directors, and Police Managers Association employee groups had vacancy rates of 20% or greater. AMPS includes professional staff managing and supervising personnel and/or programs. A list of vacancies in AMPS existing on December 31, 2024, is included in Attachment B; since then, 6 positions have been filled. Department Directors had two vacancies at the end of 2024: the Assistant City Manager and Assistant Chief of Police. The Assistant City Manager recruitment was in progress at the end of 2024 and is now filled. The Assistant Chief of Police was placed on hold until new eligibility lists could be established at the level of Police Sergeant and Police Commander. The Assistant Chief of Police recruitment is scheduled to open at the end of May 2025.

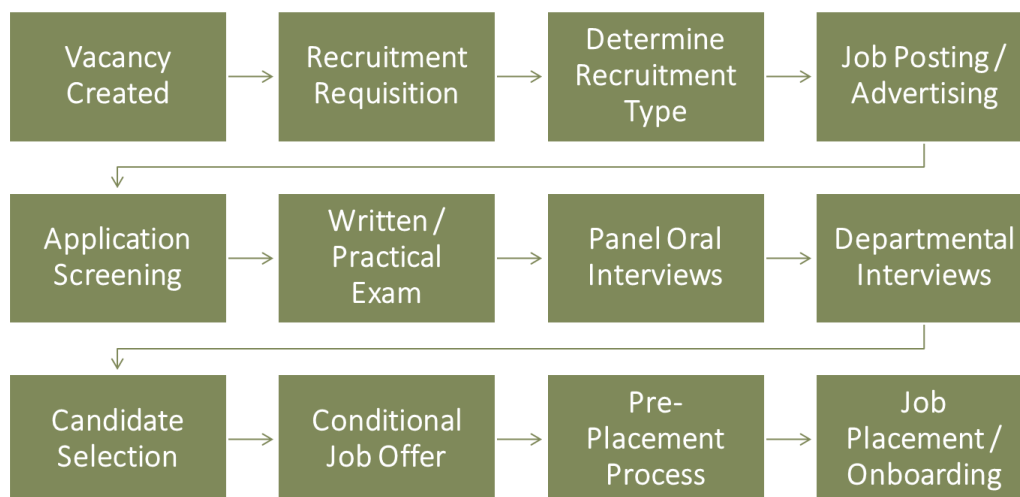
As of April 30, 2025, there were 64 total vacancies reflecting a vacancy rate of approximately 10% and 21 personnel requisitions at various stages of the recruitment and hiring process.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION EFFORTS

Recruitment and retention challenges include recruitment length, compensation, smaller applicant pools, remote work requests (since the pandemic), advertising, and background investigations.

Human Resources uses NEOGOV (Governmentjobs.com), a cloud-based software platform used by public agencies for job announcements and applicant tracking. This single platform allows for a more streamlined process and direct means of communication with applicants.

The recruitment process has many steps, as depicted below.



Review of Job Descriptions: Before opening a recruitment, Human Resources reviews the job description with the hiring department to ensure accuracy in job duties and requirements and works

with union representatives on proposed changes. In the past year, 12 job descriptions were revised or developed with modifications to the education and experience, to widen the applicant pool. This has contributed to increasing the number of qualified applicants; however, the process of revising job descriptions can be lengthy.

Remote Work: A challenge being faced by many local government agencies is the demand for remote work. Prior to the pandemic, “work from home” was non-existent in the City. Since March 2020, the City approved remote work on a case-by-case basis to accommodate social distancing, medical needs, and workstation needs. In 2025, the State of California, City of San Francisco, and City of Oakland have called employees back to the office, like many other agencies, with some compromise. The City is reviewing a remote work policy and impacts on IT security, supervision, and public service for those positions possibly eligible for remote work.

Advertising and Social Media: NEOGOV (Governmentjobs.com) job announcements are seen nationwide. The City advertises job opportunities through paid and professional and industry-specific job boards, such as the American Public Works Association, American Planning Association, and American Library Association. These job boards can be effective in recruiting hard-to-fill positions but are costly; ads can run an average \$700.00 per ad. In addition, Human Resources staff post announcements on LinkedIn and the City’s social media sites. A dedicated site for consistent posting will be explored.

Compensation/Hiring Incentives: One of the most significant challenges in filling positions is compensation. The cost of living in Monterey County is a significant factor for applicants. Hard-to-fill positions have been reviewed and adjusted in the recent past. In 2021, the City Council approved a hiring incentive for the Senior Civil Engineer classification after aggressive recruitment efforts proved unsuccessful; hiring remains challenging for this classification, currently due to smaller applicant pools and due to private sector competition.

The salary ranges for Assistant Finance Director and Deputy Librarian were adjusted in 2022 and 2023, respectively, as these were hard-to-fill positions. In 2023 and 2024, the City Council approved hiring incentives for Police Recruits and lateral Police Officers. In 2024, the Council also approved a recruitment and retention incentive for Police Service Technicians (PST) and recently adjusted the salary range due to the challenges in filling PST vacancies. In addition to the recruitment and retention incentives, the City has also extended referral incentives for Police Officer positions. An employee referral program could be explored.

Applicant Backgrounds: A background investigation may consist of a fingerprint live scan or a full background investigation as required by the City or by the State of California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) for public safety positions and IT positions. Medical evaluations may be required based on classification type. Live scan results are typically received within 24-48 hours; however, results may be delayed anywhere from 7-60 days or longer. Fast

tracking backgrounds and onboarding new hires contingent on successful completion of background investigations is an approach recently used to expedite hiring.

Human Resources and Departments have reviewed other approaches to filling vacancies through reorganization and/or underfilling positions to develop employee skills and provide a career path towards advancement.

City staff continue to address these challenges and are working collaboratively with employee units and Departments to fill vacancies and retain existing staff.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE 84308 APPLIES:

No, Government Code section 84308 does not apply to this item.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

This report supports the Effective and Culturally Responsive Government Council Goal.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The Human Resources Department coordinates with all City Departments relative to recruitment and retention efforts.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

No impact on the approved fiscal year operating budget is anticipated.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A

Attachment B: AMPS Vacant Positions