



Major Crimes Down 26% in 2020

2021: SFPD Adding New Hires by Recruiting Transfers and Trainees

The Santa Fe Police Department is building on the successes of 2020 by recruiting and training new members to join the force.

In 2020 major crimes declined by 26% percent from 2019, with the largest declines in murder (down 62.5%), assault and battery (down 44%), and larceny (down 25%).

The department is bringing on four new patrol officers who are scheduled to start working on April 5, 2021. The new members are lateral hires, which means they are pre-qualified law enforcement officers who have served in other departments previously. “They don’t need to go to the Law Enforcement Academy and are able to hit the streets a lot sooner,” says Chief Andrew Padilla.

The department, which has a reputation for hiring top-performing candidates with excellent service records, is currently offering a \$15,000 hiring incentive for experienced Lateral Police Officers. Applicants must begin the hiring process before April 30, 2021, to be eligible for the incentive. In addition, experienced Lateral Police Officers will also receive 160 hours of leave. Interested applicants will find information at SFPDonline.com. They may also contact Recruiting Officer Blake Byford at (505) 955-5166 or babyford@santafenm.gov to schedule a test.

Additionally, the Department is currently testing candidates for the Law Enforcement Academy cadet cohort that will begin training in July, and join the force next year. This is expected to add another 10-15 officers to the force. The Academy reopened in January after a closure mandated by the pandemic.

The Santa Fe Police Department Training and Recruiting Unit will be conducting Police Cadet testing on April 10, 2021. This will be the final monthly testing session for the July 2021 Police Academy. Candidates must go to SFPDonline.com to complete an interest card and submit an application to participate in the upcoming session.

In the spring, SFPD will restart the Patrol Safety Aide program, which hires young people out of high school interested in a career in law enforcement to train alongside and assist police officers and, if they choose, go on to enter the Police Academy and work for the department.

Chief Padilla says: "I'm proud of the people we've brought into the agency this year and we're optimistic about the number of people we expect to bring in before June. We have high hiring standards and we attract the cream of the crop. We want to bring in officers who are the best fit for the community."

Kyra Ochoa, Acting Director of Community Health and Safety, says: "Increasing the capacity of the department to respond quickly to calls, solve crime, and engage in the important work of community policing is a top priority. To do all of that requires investment in people, in technology, and in alternative responses to certain non-violent calls for service. We are doing all of these things. Our Police Department is moving in the right direction and building on its strengths."