

Response to Questions on the FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan

Request By: Supervisor Kauffman

Question: Please explain how court overtime in the Police Department is used.

Response: Court overtime is used for officers who are required to attend court on their scheduled day off or while they are off duty. To the extent possible, time for Police Officers to attend court is scheduled for periods when they are on duty and do not have to use overtime in order to appear in court. However, since most court sessions (traffic, criminal, and juvenile) are held in the morning, officers working the evening and midnight shifts must attend while they are not on duty. Officers may also be mandated to attend court by subpoena on what would have been their scheduled day off. In these instances, officers are currently entitled to claim a minimum of 2.0 hours of overtime, even if the time requirement is less than 2.0 hours. This benefit is in recognition of the fact that a majority of officers may need to commute considerable distances in rush hour traffic and because they may need to readjust their family lives, including changing childcare arrangements. When travel time to and from court, gas prices, and other financial requirements (such as childcare) are taken into account, officers are often expending more than is reimbursed by the 2.0 hour overtime benefit.

Based on a survey of trends in neighboring jurisdictions of the maximum hours of overtime granted for mandated court attendance less than 2.0 hours, the court overtime entitlement averages between 2 and 3 hours. In order to ensure that officers are adequately compensated for this mandatory duty, and to provide a compensation package that is attractive to new applicants and competitive with neighboring jurisdictions, a 3.0 hour minimum court overtime entitlement has been recommended for FY 2006. If officers are required to attend court in excess of three hours, they will receive hour for hour overtime reimbursement. The cost of providing an additional hour of guaranteed court overtime is estimated to be \$881,750.