

## Response to Questions on the FY 2016 Budget

**Request By:** Chairman Bulova

**Question:** Please provide comparative data on Sheriff's compensation in surrounding jurisdictions.

**Response:** The County's Department of Human Resources performs a market comparison for all public safety agencies on an annual basis. The most recent market study, completed in the fall of 2014, indicated that the Sheriff pay scales were competitive with the six other local jurisdictions examined. These jurisdictions include Alexandria, Arlington, Loudoun, Montgomery, Prince George's, and Prince William. Three Sheriff job classes are used as "benchmark" classes in the market comparison; these classes represent those with the best matches (based on actual job duties and responsibilities) to job classes in other jurisdictions.

	MIN	MID	MAX
<b>Deputy Sheriff I (Grade C17-2)</b>			
Market Average	\$45,592	\$59,860	\$74,128
Fairfax	\$47,805	\$62,838	\$77,870
<b>Fairfax as % of Market</b>		<b>105%</b>	
<b>Deputy Sheriff II (Grade C18)</b>			
Market Average	\$51,105	\$67,594	\$84,082
Fairfax	\$49,990	\$65,710	\$81,430
<b>Fairfax as % of Market</b>		<b>97%</b>	
<b>Deputy Sheriff Captain (Grade C28)</b>			
Market Average	\$75,260	\$104,239	\$133,218
Fairfax	\$73,740	\$96,928	\$120,115
<b>Fairfax as % of Market</b>		<b>93%</b>	

Current County policy is that adjustments to a pay scale will be recommended when 2 of the 3 benchmark classes fall more than 5% behind the market average midpoints. As the data above indicates, only one of the Sheriff benchmark classes, Deputy Sheriff Captain, fell outside of the competitive corridor (or below 95%). As a result, no adjustments were recommended to the Sheriff pay scales in FY 2016.

It should be noted that although the market comparison is based on the pay scale and not actual salaries, the actual average salary in Fairfax County was above the market average for all three of the above job classes (ranging from 101% to 110% of market).

### **Pay Parity in Other Jurisdictions**

For those local jurisdictions with separate Police and Sheriff's departments, only one – Prince William County – offers pay parity between the two departments. (Fire and Rescue employees are also included on the public safety scale.) However, it should be noted that the county offers Police Officers above the hiring rank 3-5% in additional pay for retention purposes. Thus, although all public safety employees are on the same pay

plan and similar positions are at the same grade, Police Officers are generally paid higher salaries than those in the Sheriff's office.

Arlington County previously offered parity, but established different pay scales in order to allow reflection of market conditions for the separate departments. Currently, the Police and Sheriff pay plans are at the same level, but market-based adjustments may end this parity in the future.

Montgomery and Prince George's County both maintain separate pay plans for Police and Sheriff employees (corrections and court services employees are on separate plans), with Police pay being higher.

Alexandria retains different pay plans for its Sheriff and Police employees. Currently, the Sheriff pay plan is higher than Police due to the compensation changes required for the Virginia Retirement System (whereby employee pay was increased, but a commensurate increase in the employee contribution rate to VRS was required).