



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego Approves Hiring Incentives, Pay Increases to Fill Key Vacancies

SIGNING BONUSES WILL BE OFFERED IN EFFORT TO RECRUIT ADDITIONAL SANITATION DRIVERS

SAN DIEGO – In order to attract qualified candidates in the face of a nationwide truck driver shortage, the City of San Diego is launching a Sanitation Driver Sign-On Bonus Program to hire and retain qualified Sanitation Drivers for the City's Environmental Services Department. These key positions provide a critical service in collecting refuse, recycling and organic waste from San Diego homes and businesses.

The City Council today approved signing bonuses for Sanitation Drivers and, separately, approved a special salary increase for the recruitment and retention of Pool Guards in the City's Parks and Recreation Department.

"As one of the largest employers in our region, the City has experienced impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the demand for qualified drivers, similar to what's happening on a national level," said Jay Goldstone, Chief Operating Officer for the City of San Diego. **"The City offers competitive benefits and opportunities for our employees to advance their careers. Now, we will have even more of a competitive advantage in attracting new talent for these key positions."**

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated an industrywide shortage of drivers. According to the Solid Waste Association of North America, the shortage is at the most critical point in 15 years due to a surging freight economy and lack of qualified drivers. This mirrors the challenges experienced in the Environmental Services Department, where Sanitation Drivers, represented by Local 127, have been working longer hours and collecting an increased tonnage of waste on their routes.

The Environmental Services Department also has new obligations to meet the requirements of State Senate Bill 1383 (SB 1383), which requires the reduction of organic waste disposed of in landfills. Staff have determined they'll need to hire at least 40 additional Sanitation Drivers to expand organic waste collection for residents and businesses.

“City of San Diego Sanitation Drivers have worked day in and day out to provide critical essential services throughout this pandemic. They deserve our utmost appreciation and support,” said Renee Robertson, Director of the City’s Environmental Services Department. “These new programs will assist our City in hiring and retaining new qualified commercial drivers to fill existing vacancies and meet our planned organics waste collection expansion under SB 1383. We’re encouraging all to apply and join the team that keeps the City clean.”

As part of the Sanitation Driver Sign-On Bonus Program, successfully hired candidates will receive a total of \$2,500 with \$1,250 being paid at the time of hire and \$1,250 after one year of active service. The program will be capped at 100 successfully hired Sanitation Drivers through June 30, 2023. Faced with similar hiring challenges, private waste collection companies and municipalities are offering similar sign-on bonuses in 24 states, including California and Arizona.

Today, the City Council also approved special assignment pay for Pool Guards in the City’s Parks and Recreation Department. As of September, the department has identified 130 Pool Guard vacancies. The special assignment pay is the equivalent to 10% of base pay for the Pool Guard positions.

Despite continuous recruitment efforts, the City has continued to experience recruitment and retention issues for this position, impacting the department’s ability to keep City pools open for public use.

“Making sure our municipal pools are staffed with well-trained employees is our number one priority, and the lack of pool guards has severely hindered our ability to keep our facilities open to meet the needs of the community,” said Andy Field, Director of the City’s Parks and Recreation Department. “These pay increases will help the City be a more competitive and attractive place for people looking for their first job or hoping to start their career in the public sector. We encourage everyone to explore the wide variety of Parks and Recreation employment opportunities the City has to offer.”

To view open jobs for the City of San Diego and to apply online, visit sandiego.gov/CityJobs.

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