

State announces incentives to attract new cops

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The state announced it is making available \$24 million to cover increased expenses in law enforcement basic training and \$30 million for recruitment bonuses for law enforcement.

The announcement, regarding expenses included in this year's Tennessee budget, come after Gov. Bill Lee announced a \$100 million violent crime intervention fund earlier this week.

Lee was given a "D" rating in the Cato Institute's Fiscal Report Card on America's Governor this week related to his taxing and spending policies, pointing to a 21% budget increase for Tennessee this year.

The new \$24 million basic training support will cover the local cost of 12 weeks of training for new officers that will save departments more than \$3,000 per officer. The fund will cover Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy, training uniforms and other professional development expenses.

"To stay ahead of the nationwide spike in crime, Tennessee is taking every step to recruit, train and retain highly-qualified law enforcement officers to keep our communities safe," Lee said. "I commend police departments and sheriff's offices for their continued partnership, and I'm confident these additional measures will strengthen public safety and relieve financial burdens for local law enforcement agencies."

The \$30 million in recruitment bonuses will give bonuses to more than 3,000 new officers, paid in early 2023 after rulemaking determines the details of the program.

"Providing law enforcement with the best training available is what Tennessee citizens expect, and it is what we go to work every day to provide," said Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance Commissioner Carter Lawrence. "Governor Lee's bold, visionary plan for training and recruitment will help provide quality training for more local recruits at Tennessee's premier law enforcement training academy without impacting the bottom line of Tennessee's local governments."