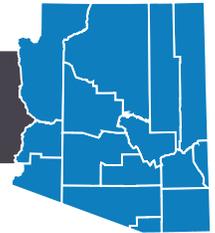


RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ARIZONA'S  
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL



Arizona Law Enforcement  
Retention Survey



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**Cover Photo:** (Left) Coconino County Sheriff's Office.

## Key Findings

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This report contains findings from a survey about retention in the public safety sector conducted by researchers at the University of Arizona and funded by the Arizona Board of Regents' Technology and Research Initiative Fund (ABOR TRIF). The survey administered asked sworn law enforcement officers (LEOs) about their experiences on the job and measured their likelihood of remaining in their current positions. The key findings of the survey are summarized below.

The LEO retention survey identified which factors are most influential in the retention and turnover decisions of sworn police and deputy sheriffs within Arizona. In total, 4,079 participants completed the survey (3,955 of whom were sworn officers), and 59% of officers responding were in Arizona Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) Tier 1.<sup>i</sup> An additional 920 individuals (804 of whom were sworn officers) began the survey but did not complete it. In the results that follow, we discuss findings for every sworn officer who responded to a particular question, regardless of whether or not they completed the entire survey.

### **Overall, Arizona law enforcement officers are satisfied with their current jobs.**

Just over 70% of respondents rated their job satisfaction at 6 or higher (on a 1 to 10 scale), and the most frequent rating was 8 (1,047 respondents, or almost 25%). The factors most positively associated with overall job satisfaction were LEOs' levels of satisfaction with "soft" workplace factors (e.g., achieving work-life balance, feelings of autonomy, receiving support from superiors, a sense of personal safety). Satisfaction with various aspects of their compensation and benefits packages also correlated strongly with their overall job satisfaction. (See "Baseline Measures of Job Satisfaction and Retention Likelihood" for further discussion.)

### **LEOs in Arizona are overwhelmingly likely to remain employed until retirement.**

About 75% of surveyed officers indicated they were either "likely" or "very likely" to remain employed as an LEO in Arizona until retirement. Less than 10% of respondents suggested that they were "very unlikely" to spend their entire careers as an Arizona LEO. The factors most positively associated with this measure of retention were a mix of compensation and soft workplace factors: satisfaction with their pension benefits, achieving work-life balance, receiving support from superiors, and a sense of personal safety. The likelihood of remaining employed as an LEO in Arizona until retirement is much larger among PSPRS Tier 1 LEOs (who have less time remaining until they are eligible for their pension benefits, relative to Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEOs), but no subset reported anything more than mild uncertainty about remaining employed in law enforcement. These results are robust to differences in age, gender, ethnicity, and education, meaning that our findings on the likelihood of remaining in the job are fairly consistent across the different groups of LEOs surveyed. (See "Baseline Measures of Job Satisfaction and Retention Likelihood" for further discussion.)

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i The Public Safety Personnel Retirement System "provides retirement benefits and programs to nearly 60,000 active members, retired members and surviving beneficiaries, and to more than 300 employer groups (municipalities, agencies and districts) throughout the state." The PSPRS tiers (1 through 3) reflect different retirement benefit packages offered to employees based on the time of their enrollment in the system. More recent hires (those joining on or after July 1, 2018) are in Tier 3; those hired between January 1, 2012 and June 30, 2018 are in Tier 2; and the most senior employees (those hired before January 1, 2012) are in Tier 1. Employees in Tiers 1 and 2 receive defined benefit plans, and Tier 3 employees receive defined benefit and defined contribution plans. See Public Safety Personnel Retirement System, About Us, <https://www.psprs.com/corrections-officer/member-eligibility--tiers>.

**Among several incentives to remain employed as an LEO until retirement, the most attractive is increased compensation, followed by a reduction in the minimum retirement age.**

LEOs responded, on average, that a \$20,000 raise would make them significantly more likely to remain working as an officer until retirement. Indeed, each proposed salary increase from \$5,000 to \$20,000 increased the likelihood of long-term retention. As one respondent put it:

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**“ The biggest issue for people in our organization is the low pay. *I have to work a second job to support my family.* ”**

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Proposed reductions in the minimum retirement age did not have a similarly strong effect, but a positive correlation existed across all PSPRS tiers (most strongly among Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEOs) between reducing the minimum retirement age and the likelihood of retention until retirement. (See “Satisfaction with Compensation and Benefits” for further discussion.)

**Officers are moderately satisfied with their employment conditions and employment benefits.**

LEOs surveyed are borderline satisfied with the primary characteristics of the job (e.g., their personal safety, feelings of autonomy, support from their superiors), whereas they signaled strong dissatisfaction with staffing levels. (See “Satisfaction with Aspects of the Job” for further discussion.) One LEO pointedly observed:

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**“ With the rise of inflation, high cost of living, it is difficult to support a family on my sole income. This low base pay forces me to work overtime to pay bills. *Morale is low due [to] low staffing issues.* Arizona is also rapidly growing with hundreds of miles of new interstate being built. With the rapid growth comes more traffic, which brings an increase in calls, and higher priority calls. *This causes an already understaffed department to exhaust officers even more.* ”**

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With respect to current compensation and benefits, respondents expressed the most satisfaction with leave policies (e.g., family and sick leave) and with their access to a take-home vehicle, while being most dissatisfied with their performance-based pay, their bonus compensation, and housing stipends. (See “Satisfaction with Compensation and Benefits” for further discussion.) In fact, one respondent noted:

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**“ If the pension system was brought back to Tier 1 level benefits, it would financially make sense to work for 25 years and then retire. *In the Tier 3 pension, I have to work for 33 years for this job to make sense. I am starting to learn that 33 years in law enforcement is not doable.* For young guys who join right after college or military, they will find that there is no way to be successful long term in policing. We will have to have second careers or spend 33 years to be able to make it in this career. ”**

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Another observed:

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“ A larger topic being discussed broadly among many police unions is the concern with medical insurance in retirement (pre-Medicare). *Many officers reach their years of service for retirement but have to go back to work due to the cost of insurance.* ”

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One LEO worried specifically about housing costs:

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“ Inflation has just surpassed cost of living so quickly. *People cannot afford to be a deputy in our agency and own a home here. If pay could compete with cost of living, more people may apply.* ”

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**LEOs are mostly satisfied with the reputations of their departments and their ability to work with colleagues in their squad but are less confident about how departments are run and are concerned about mental and emotional health.**

Respondents were content with the relationships they have with immediate supervisors and mostly agreed that their superiors support employee development, listen to their supervisees and treat them with respect, and inspire trust and confidence. LEOs are less certain that their departments are well-run organizations, that internal affairs investigations are handled fairly and objectively, that minor infractions will lead to firing, and that they will not face retaliation for reporting policy infractions. (See “Departments and Squads” for further discussion.) LEOs’ service has significant, negative impacts on their mental and emotional health. Although participants remain committed to the residents they serve, they also feel emotionally drained, perceive themselves as becoming emotionally numbed by the job, and are somewhat burned out. (See “Self” for further discussion.)

**Arizona-based LEOs do not think much about careers outside of law enforcement.**

Regardless of tenure, survey respondents expressed a moderate desire to pursue jobs other than in public safety, and LEOs seemed to look for other opportunities on, at most, an annual basis. The inclination to change jobs varies somewhat depending on LEO PSPRS Tier. (See “The Desire to Pursue Other Employment” for further discussion.)

**The desire to pursue an alternative career decreases as perception of the public’s support increases.**

LEOs who perceived that the public is mostly critical of their job had a strong desire to pursue an alternative career, and this desire steadily decreased the more they perceived public support. This distribution remains consistent regardless of whether “the public” is limited to respondents’ jurisdiction, the State of Arizona, or the entire country. (See “The Impact of Public Support” for further discussion.) Importantly, some respondents voiced real concern about the interplay between public attitudes and departmental support:

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“ The officers need to know they are supported by the city leadership and *not used as a political object.* ”

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“ Many times, it seems as though the leadership makes decisions without any knowledge of what the officers on the front lines are doing. *There are many middle managers who have been promoted to their positions and seem to forget what life is like dealing with the public on a daily basis.* Many of these people seem only concerned with their personal career advancement instead of treating their subordinates in a fair manner. ”

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### **Officers who cannot afford to buy a house in the jurisdiction in which they work are the least likely to work until retirement.**

Regardless of PSPRS tier, the self-reported likelihood of working as an LEO until retirement was significantly lower among those who said their income was insufficient to purchase a home large enough for their family within the jurisdiction where they work. (See “Satisfaction with Compensation and Benefits” for further discussion.)

Although the retention survey results do not suggest that Arizona LEOs will leave their positions en masse any time soon, there are clear aspects of the work giving sworn officers pause. Concerns over staffing levels are preeminent, followed by worries that current compensation and future pension benefits are not sufficient to retain LEOs. Notwithstanding these genuine concerns, sworn officers seem content with their work and expect to remain in their positions. Policymakers should generally focus attention on LEOs in populous jurisdictions, as they are most likely to report low levels of current job satisfaction and a greater propensity to leave law enforcement before retirement.

## **Law Enforcement Officer Retention Survey Findings**

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The law enforcement officer retention survey (LEO retention survey) identified which factors are most influential in the retention and turnover decisions of sworn police and deputy sheriffs within Arizona. In total, 4,079 participants completed the survey (3,955 of whom were sworn officers), and 59% of officers responding were in PSPRS Tier 1. An additional 920 individuals (804 of whom were sworn officers) began the survey but did not complete it. In the figures that follow, we discuss results for every sworn officer who responded to a particular question, regardless of whether they completed the survey.

### **Respondent Demographics**

This section describes the retention survey population with respect to their service experience, demographic characteristics, and economic or political factors. Such data help contextualize the findings in later sections by indicating the types of LEOs who responded to the survey. Among all LEOs who completed the retention survey, 2,537 participants were in PSPRS Tier 1; 902 participants were in Tier 2; and 850 participants were in Tier 3. A majority of participants have spent more than 25 years as an LEO in Arizona.

## Respondents' PSPRS Tier, Position, Department, and Experience

Tables 1 - 3 describe the retention survey respondents by, the PSPRS tier in which they are enrolled, their job title or rank, and their department or agency of employment. As Table 1 shows, most respondents were in PSPRS Tier 1 (meaning they were enrolled before January 1, 2012), and Table 2 confirms that a plurality of those who took the survey are standard officers rather than administrators or higher-ranking employees. Finally, the Arizona Department of Public Safety, the Phoenix Police Department, and the Tucson Police Department are the most represented agencies among the survey respondents.

**Table 1. LEOs' PSPRS tier.**

PSPRS Tier	Count	Percent
1	2,537	59.2%
2	902	21.0%
3	850	19.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,289</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2.<sup>ii</sup> LEOs' rank or job title.**

Job	Count	Percent
Administrative	*	*
Assistant Chief	17	0.4%
Captain	50	1.3%
Chief Deputy	*	*
Chief of Police	30	0.7%
Commander	59	1.5%
Community Service Officer	*	*
Deputy Chief	14	0.4%
Deputy Sheriff	257	6.5%
Detective/Investigator	778	19.6%
In Police Academy/Training	12	0.3%
Lieutenant	204	5.1%
Officer	1,634	41.2%
Other	51	1.3%
Sergeant	803	20.3%
Support	*	*
Undersheriff	*	*
Prefer not to say	54	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,963</b>	<b>100%</b>

ii In this table and all others, \* denotes that fewer than 10 (possibly zero) responses were collected.

**Table 3. LEOs' department or agency of employment.**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Apache County Sheriff's Office	*	*
Apache Junction Police Department	*	*
Arizona Department of Public Safety	459	11.9%
Arizona State University Department of Public Safety	16	0.4%
Avondale Police Department	53	1.4%
Benson Police Department	*	*
Bisbee Police Department	*	*
Bullhead City Police Department	24	0.6%
Casa Grande Police Department	*	*
Chandler Police Department	62	1.6%
Chino Valley Police Department	11	0.3%
Clarkdale Police Department	*	*
Cochise County Sheriff's Office	*	*
Coconino County Sheriff's Office	35	0.9%
Coolidge Police Department	*	*
Cottonwood Police Department	*	*
Douglas Police Department	*	*
Eloy Police Department	*	*
Flagstaff Police Department	20	0.5%
Florence Police Department	*	*
Gila County Sheriff's Office	15	0.4%
Gila River Police Department	*	*
Gilbert Police Department	152	3.9%
Glendale Police Department	137	3.5%
Goodyear Police Department	31	0.8%
Graham County Sheriff's Office	*	*
Greenlee County Sheriff's Office	*	*
Holbrook Police	*	*
Huachuca City Police Department	*	*
Kearny Police Department	*	*
Kingman Police Department	*	*
La Paz County Sheriff's Office	*	*
Marana Police Department	*	*
Maricopa County Sheriff's Office	135	3.5%
Mesa Police Department	237	6.1%
Mohave County Sheriff's Office	27	0.7%
Navajo County Sheriff's Office	14	0.4%

Nogales Police Department	*	*
Northern Arizona University Police Department	10	0.3%
Oro Valley Police Department	15	0.4%
Other	35	0.9%
Page Police Department	*	*
Paradise Valley Police Department	10	0.3%
Parker Police Department	*	*
Payson Police Department	*	*
Peoria Police Department	*	*
Phoenix Police Department	1,013	26.3%
Pima County Sheriff's Office	122	3.2%
Pinal County Sheriff's Office	102	2.6%
Pinetop-Lakeside Police Department	10	0.3%
Prescott Police Department	27	0.7%
Prescott Valley Police Department	15	0.4%
Quartzsite Marshal's Office	*	*
Queen Creek Police Department	15	0.4%
Safford Police Department	*	*
Sahuarita Police Department	25	0.6%
San Luis Police Department	31	0.8%
Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office	13	0.3%
Scottsdale Police Department	82	2.1%
Show Low Police Department	*	*
Sierra Vista Police Department	24	0.6%
Snowflake-Taylor Police Department	*	*
Somerton Police Department	*	*
St. Johns Police Department	*	*
Superior Police Department	*	*
Surprise Police Department	62	1.6%
Tempe Police Department	131	3.4%
Tucson Police Department	468	12.1%
University of Arizona Police Department	17	0.4%
Wickenburg Police Department	*	*
Williams Police Department	*	*
Winslow Police Department	*	*
Yavapai County Sheriff's Office	33	0.9%
Yuma County Sheriff's Office	15	0.4%
Yuma Police Department	33	0.9%
Prefer not to say	122	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,858</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 reports several measures of how long the LEOs in our sample have served in law enforcement. The data indicate that most respondents are in the early portion of their careers or senior-level employees. In addition, although the average time as an LEO outside of Arizona is less than a year, small percentages of the respondents served in other states for at least a decade.

**Table 4. Length of work experience as a law enforcement officer.**

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>0-5 years</b>	<b>5-10 years</b>	<b>10-15 years</b>	<b>15-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
Years of Service in Current Department	13.53	21%	21%	12%	24%	22%
Years of Service in Arizona	14.22	18%	19%	14%	24%	25%
Years Left Until Pension	11.78	42%	7%	7%	27%	17%
Years of Service Outside Arizona	0.84	94%	3%	1%	1%	1%

### Respondents' Other Demographic Characteristics

Tables 5 - 12 document basic demographic characteristics that summarize the sample of LEOs who responded to the retention survey. The vast majority of LEOs identify as men (about 85%). Their ages are somewhat normally distributed but skewed older, with a mean age of 42. Nearly two-thirds of the sample are white, and Latino and Black individuals comprise an additional 18% of the respondents. Finally, almost all LEOs who responded identify as straight.

In terms of household structure and economics, most respondents earned between \$90,000 and \$100,000 before taxes. Although almost 300 LEOs reported income over \$150,000, the clear majority earned somewhere between \$50,000 and \$150,000. That said, not even half of the respondents reported being able to afford a home in the jurisdiction where they worked, and, perhaps as a result, less than half of the LEOs lived in the jurisdiction they served.

**Table 5. LEOs by gender.**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Man	3,365	84.9%
Woman	393	9.9%
Non-Binary	15	0.4%
Transgender Man	*	*
Transgender Woman	*	*
Other	17	0.4%
Prefer not to say	175	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,965</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6. LEOs by age.**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Younger than 25	97	2.5%
25-30	396	10.0%
30-35	537	13.6%
35-40	657	16.5%
40-45	659	16.5%
45-50	646	16.3%
50-55	499	12.6%
55-60	180	4.5%
60-65	51	1.3%
Older than 65	13	0.3%
Prefer not to say	235	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,970</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Mean: 42</b>		

**Table 7. LEOs by race/ethnicity.**

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	2,485	62.6%
Hispanic/Latino	636	16.0%
Black	106	2.7%
Native American	64	1.6%
Asian	63	1.6%
Pacific Islander	30	0.8%
Other	111	2.8%
Prefer not to say	475	11.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,970</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8. LEOs by sexual orientation/identity.**

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Straight	3,299	83.1%
Lesbian	44	1.1%
Gay	18	0.4%
Bisexual	17	0.4%
Asexual	123	3.0%
Other	32	1.0%
Prefer not to say	437	11.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,970</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 9. LEOs by educational attainment.**

<b>Education Attainment</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
High school diploma or GED	165	4.2%
Some college, no degree earned	1,227	30.9%
2-year college, degree earned	592	14.9%
4-year college, degree earned	1,374	34.6%
Postgraduate degree	479	12.1%
Prefer not to say	133	3.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,970</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 10. LEOs by income.**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
\$20,000-\$30,000	*	*
\$30,000-\$40,000	*	*
\$40,000-\$50,000	40	1.0%
\$50,000-\$60,000	164	4.2%
\$60,000-\$70,000	275	6.9%
\$70,000-\$80,000	360	9.1%
\$80,000-\$90,000	408	10.3%
\$90,000-\$100,000	681	17.2%
\$100,000-\$110,000	466	11.8%
\$110,000-\$120,000	354	8.9%
\$120,000-\$130,000	274	6.9%
\$130,000-\$140,000	151	3.8%
\$140,000-\$150,000	153	3.9%
Over \$150,000	295	7.4%
Prefer not to say	342	8.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,963</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 11. LEOs by household economics details.**

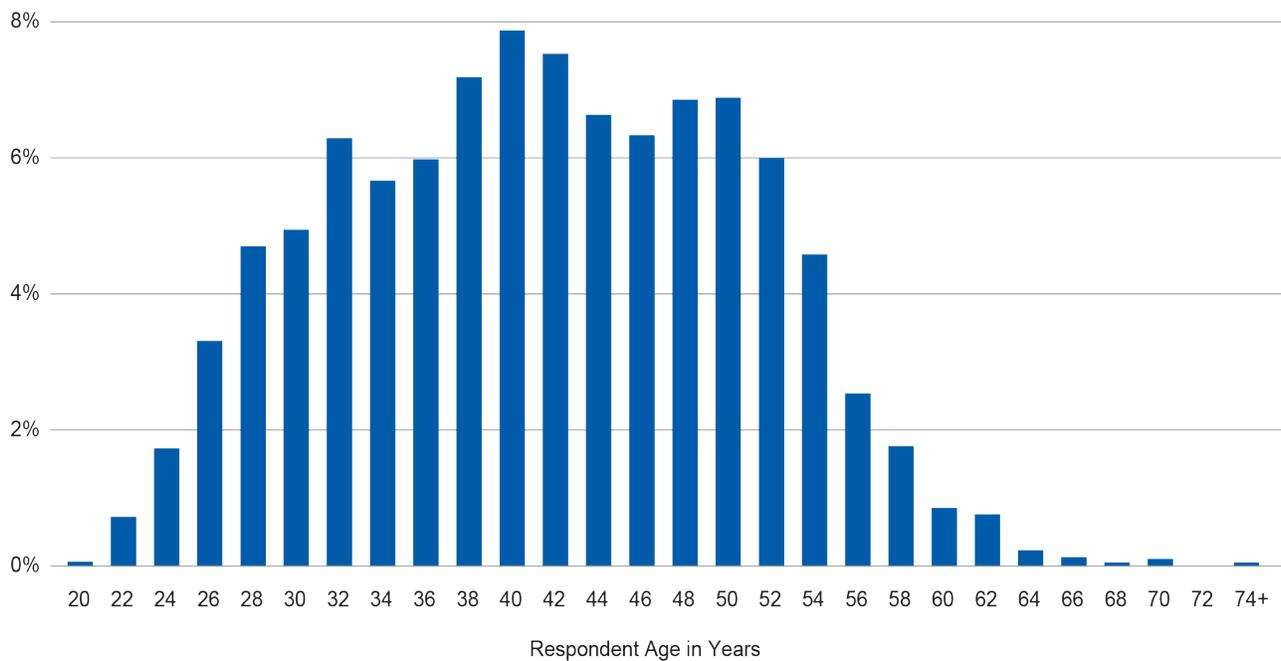
	<b>Percent</b>
Sufficient income to buy a house in the jurisdiction	40.9%
Single-Income household	37.5%
Live in the jurisdiction	46.5%
Work a shift-based schedule	64.7%

**Table 12. LEOs by number of dependents.**

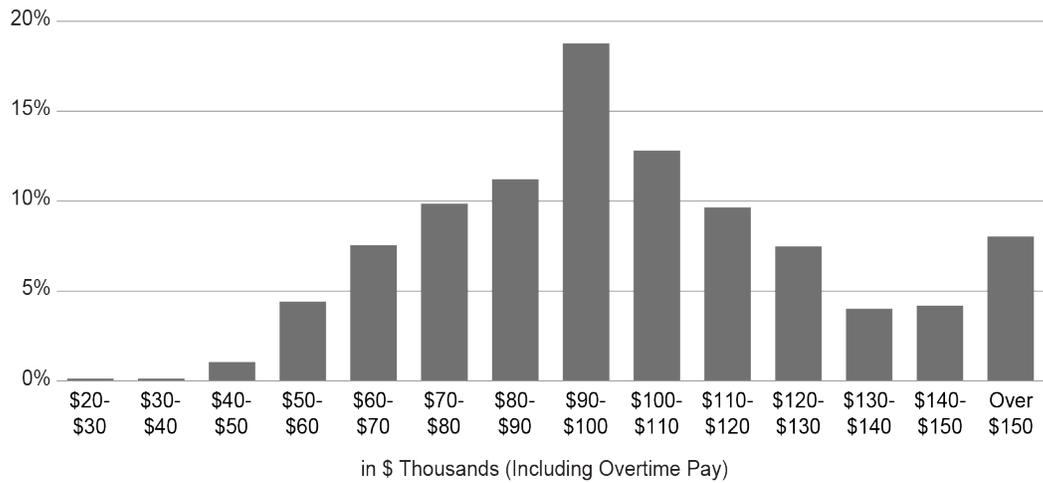
Dependents	Count	Percent
0	1,302	32.8%
1	677	17.1%
2	969	24.4%
3	474	11.9%
4	214	5.4%
5	63	1.6%
6	28	0.7%
7 or more	12	0.3%
Prefer not to say	231	5.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,970</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figures 1 - 3 provide a sense of LEOs' age, income, and personal political affiliation as well as their understanding of the residents they serve. The majority of respondents identified as between "leaning" toward and being "very strongly" affiliated with the Republican Party (52.0%), followed by independent or unaffiliated status. Quite interestingly, the same LEOs understand their constituencies as being almost equally divided between the Democratic (31.9%) and Republican (30.2%) Parties.

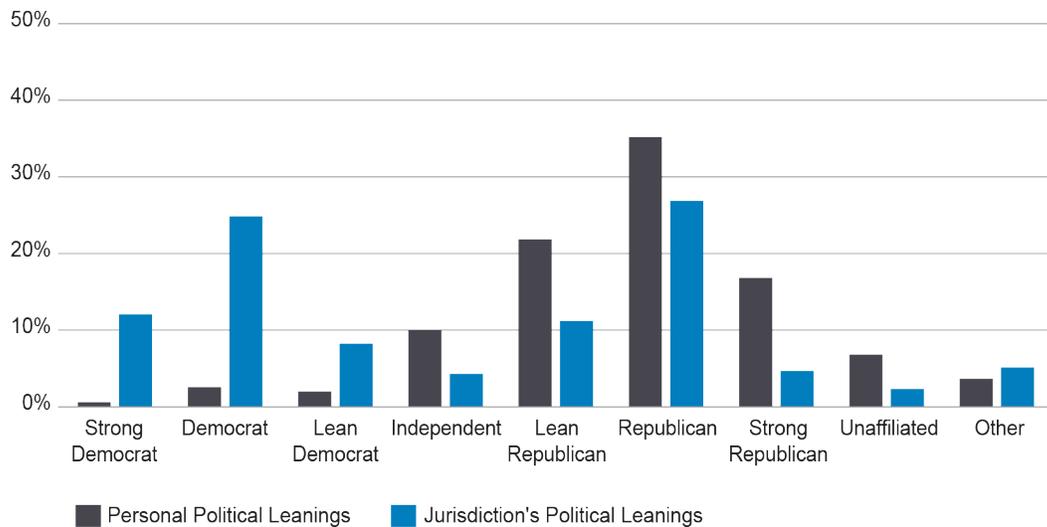
**Figure 1. LEOs by Age.**



**Figure 2. LEOs' Pre-Tax Annual Income from Law Enforcement Position.**



**Figure 3. LEOs' Personal Political Leanings and Perceptions of Their Jurisdiction's Leanings.**



**Baseline Measures of Job Satisfaction and Retention Likelihood**

Figures 4 - 6 show LEOs' job satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being most satisfied, disaggregated by PSPRS Tier (Table 4), LEO agency/department type (Table 5), and the size of the population they serve (Table 6). The aggregate ratings suggest that 72% of survey respondents rated their satisfaction as 6 or higher, with 25% rating an 8. Only 18% of respondents reported job dissatisfaction (ratings between 1 and 4). Ratings were not that different across PSPRS tiers for the lowest scores, but Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEOs were more likely to express moderate satisfaction, and Tier 1 LEOs were more likely to choose the highest ratings of 9 or 10. Sheriff's office LEOs are consistently more likely than police officers or public safety department employees to choose low satisfaction scores and are less likely to choose higher scores. Similarly, LEOs that serve large populations are more likely to choose lower satisfaction scores.

Figures 4 - 6. LEOs' overall levels of satisfaction with their current job.

Figure 4. LEOs' Overall Satisfaction by PSPRS Tier Membership.

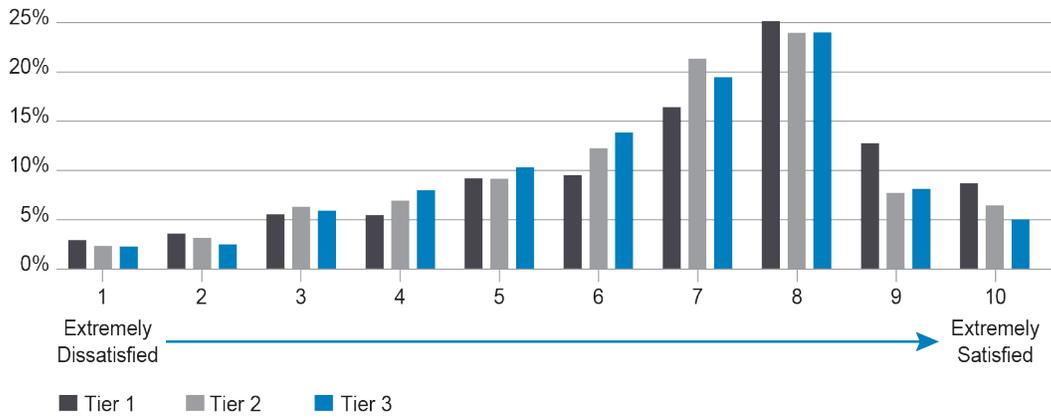


Figure 5. LEOs' Overall Satisfaction by Law Enforcement Agency Type.

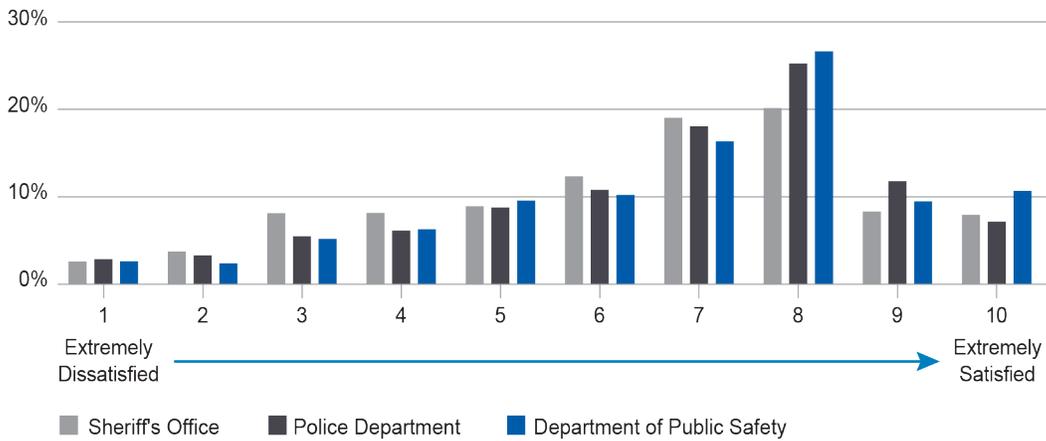
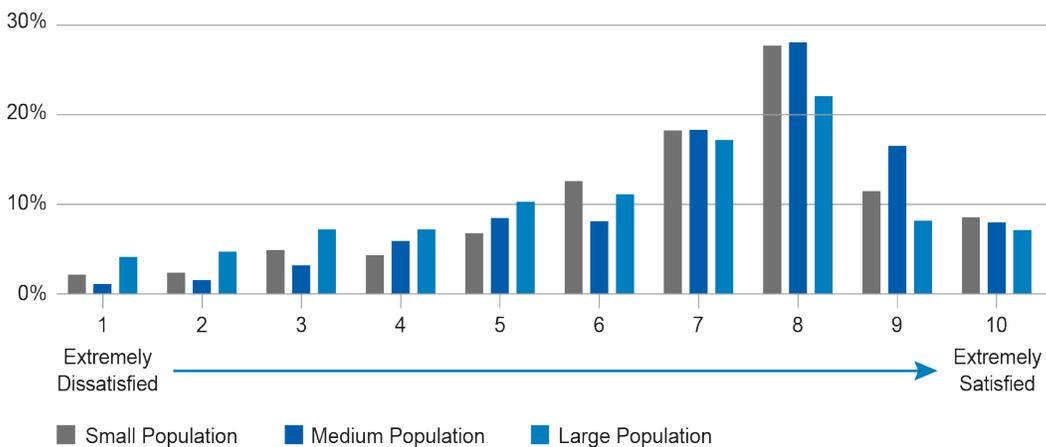


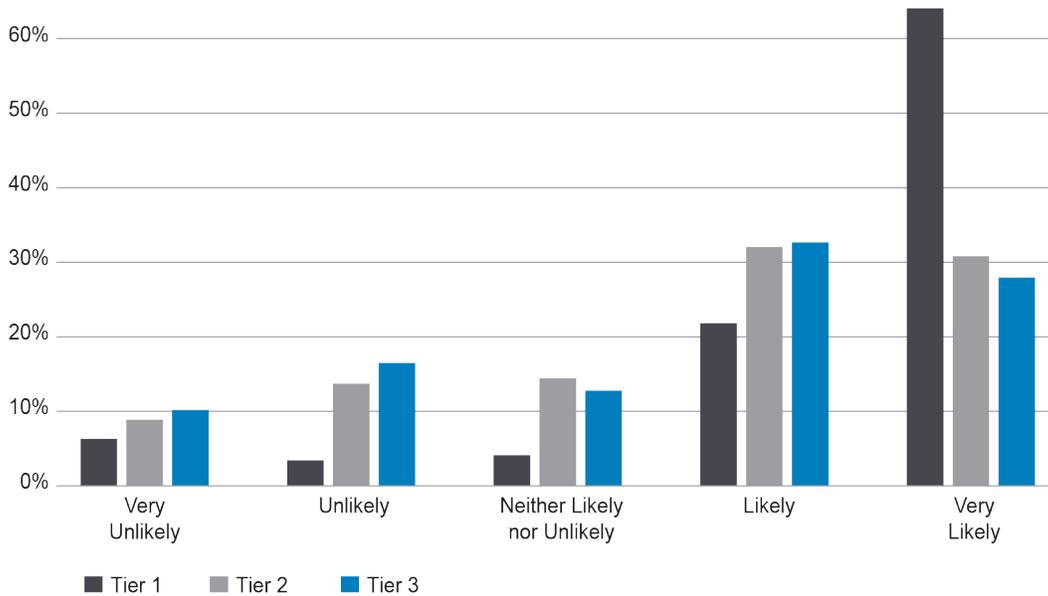
Figure 6. LEOs' Overall Satisfaction by Jurisdiction Size.



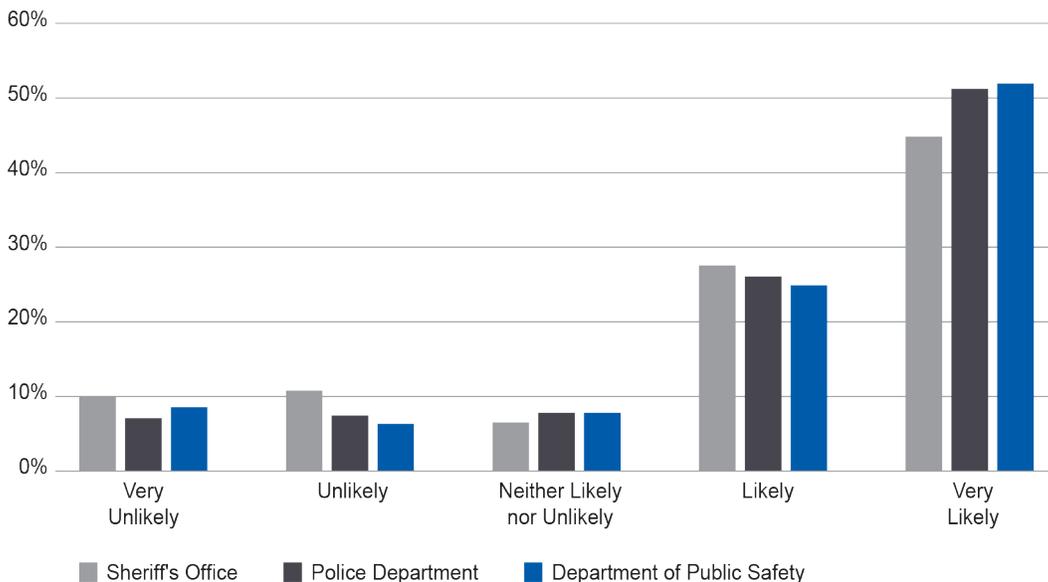
Figures 7 - 9 indicate a predictable trend in the likelihood to remain in law enforcement until retirement. PSPRS Tier 1 LEOs were twice as likely to report such plans for the future, whereas Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEOs were more likely than Tier 1 colleagues to be unlikely or undecided. When the data are disaggregated by LEO agency/department type or the size of the population they serve, the only noticeable differences are that slightly fewer sheriff's office employees (large population jurisdiction officers) were "very likely" to remain in their positions compared to police officers or DPS officers (smaller population jurisdiction officers).

**Figures 7- 9. LEOs' responses to the question "How likely are you to continue working as a law enforcement officer in Arizona until retirement?"**

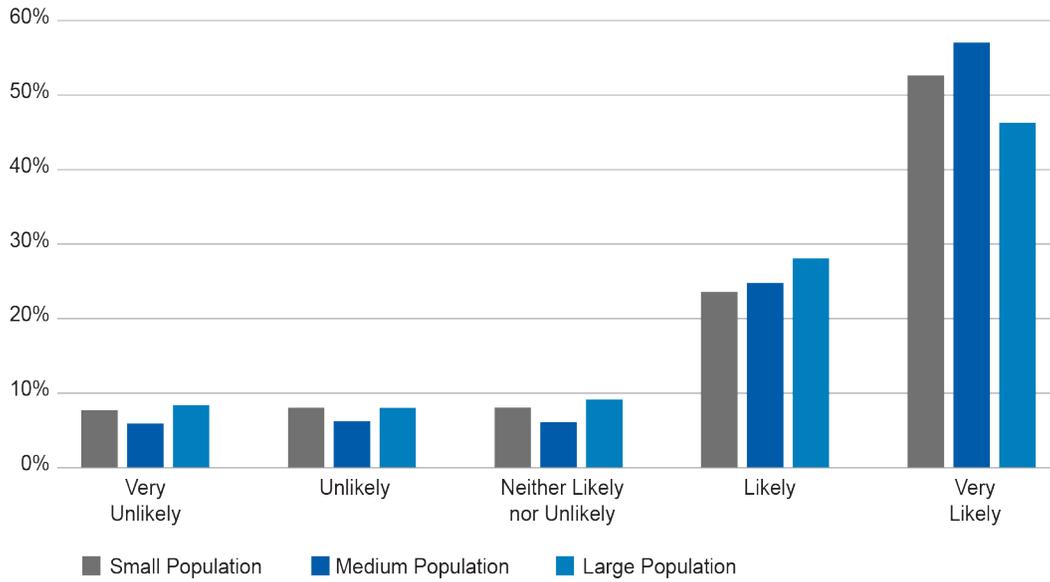
**Figure 7. LEOs' Likelihood to Remain in Law Enforcement by PSPRS Tier Membership.**



**Figure 8. LEOs' Likelihood to Remain in Law Enforcement by Agency Type.**



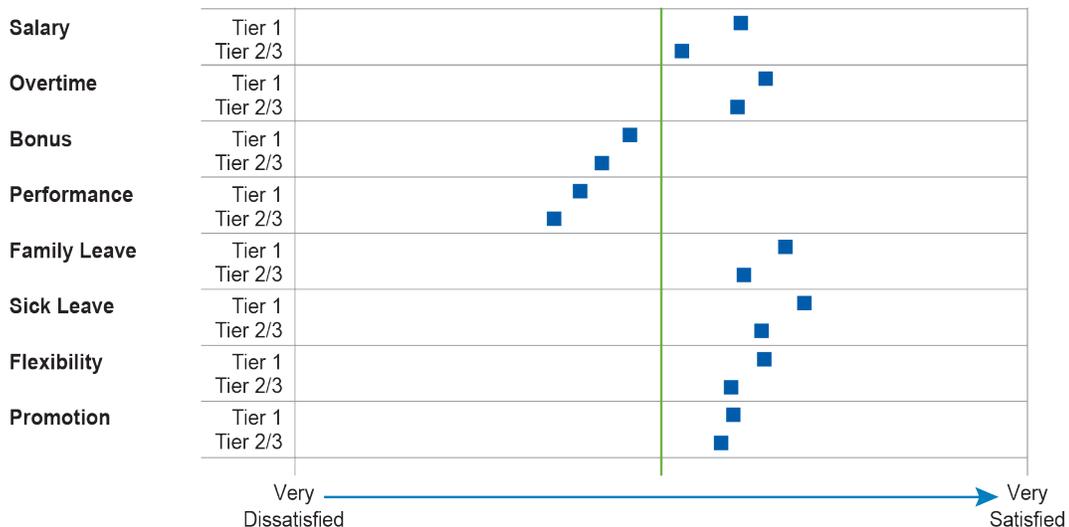
**Figure 9. LEOs' Likelihood to Remain in Law Enforcement by Jurisdiction Size.**



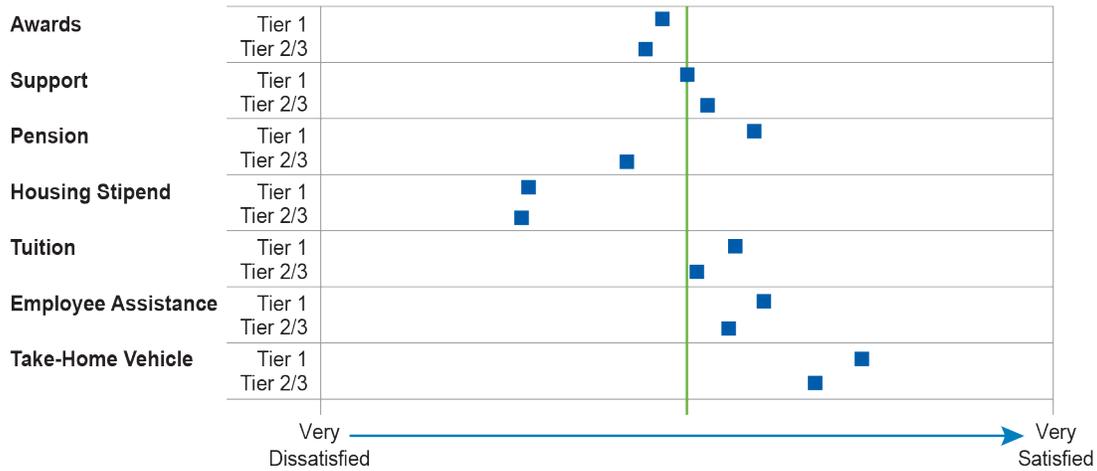
**Satisfaction with Compensation and Benefits**

In terms of job compensation and financial benefits, participants reported general satisfaction overall with their baseline salary and overtime pay, as well as paid family and sick leave allowances. However, the story changes when the data are disaggregated by PSPRS tier in Figures 10 and 11. LEOs in all three tiers are more dissatisfied than not with bonus and performance-based pay, and they are only moderately content with their job flexibility and opportunities for promotion. The strongest level of satisfaction across all three tiers is with access to a take-home vehicle. Conversely, the most obvious source of dissatisfaction regardless of PSPRS tier is with housing stipends. Somewhat predictably, Tier 1 LEOs are more satisfied than not with their pension benefits, while Tier 2 and 3 employees are less pleased.

**Figure 10. LEOs' levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their compensation, benefits, and other non-financial aspects of the job.**



**Figure 11. LEOs’ levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their compensation, benefits, and other non-financial aspects of the job.**

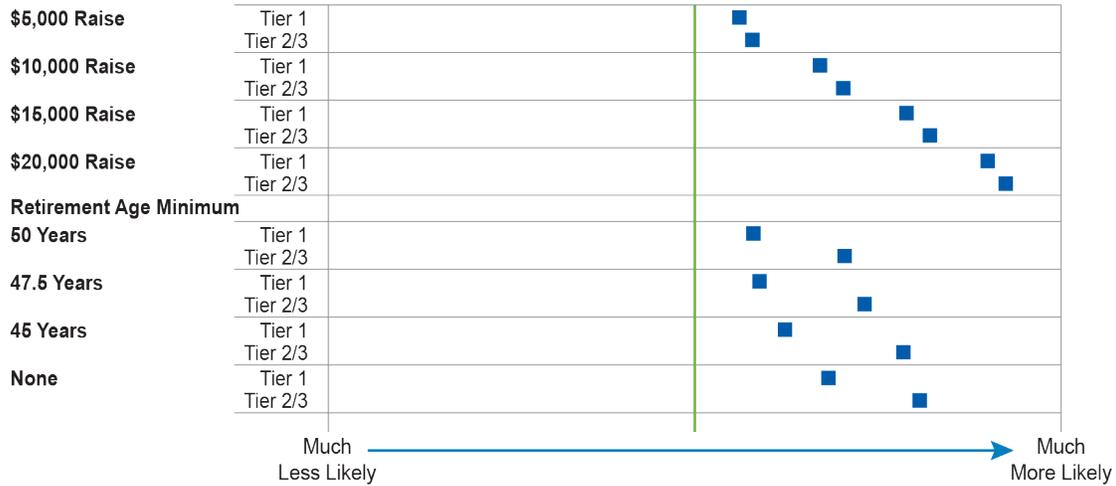


Importantly, the three factors with which participants were clearly dissatisfied relate to financial benefits, i.e., bonuses, performance-related pay, and housing stipends. The upshot is that, although non-financial factors are driving satisfaction, LEOs’ current dissatisfaction with certain financial benefits seem to be looming obstacles to retention. Dissatisfaction with housing stipends likely correlates with LEOs’ inability to find a home *in the jurisdiction where they work*; about 60% of participants reported that their incomes were too low to afford a house for them and their families where they work. Second, participant dissatisfaction with bonus and performance pay—in contrast to general satisfaction with base salary levels—indicates that LEOs seek more acknowledgment of, and appreciation for, their performance from their superiors and departments more generally.

With these observations in mind, there is an opportunity to improve overall job satisfaction by increasing housing stipends and finding ways to recognize excellent performance within departments. Adjusting bonus and performance pay may also address LEOs’ feelings that they are undervalued and, in turn, promote higher job satisfaction.

Hypothetical raises figure most prominently among possible incentives for maintaining or increasing retention rates. Participants reported being “more” or “much more” likely to work as an LEO until retirement when presented with a possible raise between \$10,000 and \$20,000, and the likelihood increased with the size of the raise. While reducing the retirement age correlated positively with the likelihood of retention until retirement, the effect is understandably stronger among PSPRS Tier 2 and 3 LEOs relative to Tier 1 employees.

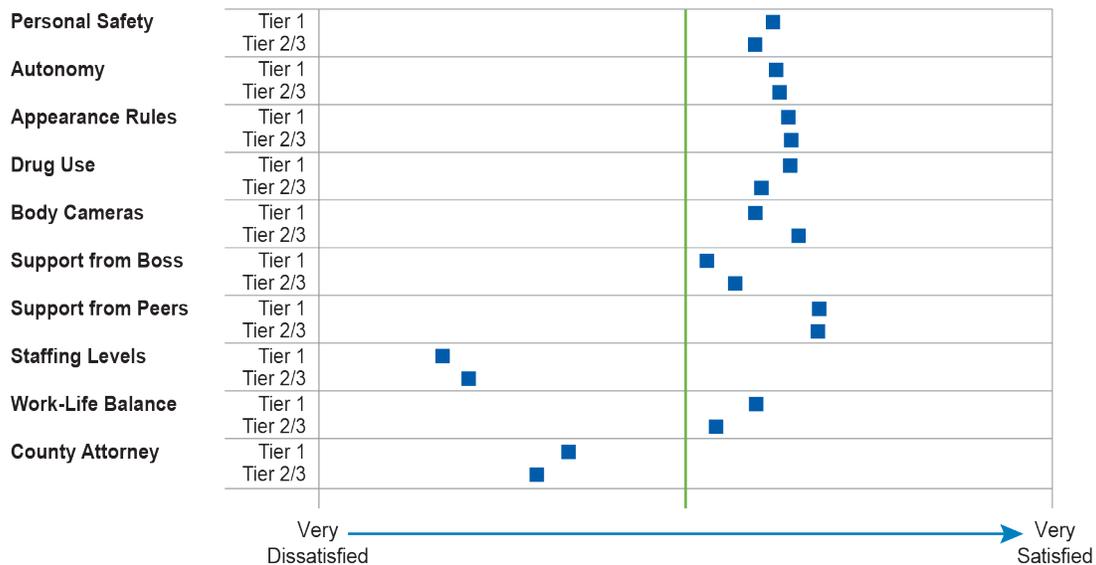
**Figure 12. LEOs' responses linking a hypothetical change to their compensation and benefits to their likelihood of remaining an LEO in Arizona until retirement.**



**Satisfaction with Aspects of the Job**

Participants reported moderate satisfaction with almost all day-to-day aspects of LEO work. Support from superior officers and a sense of achieving work-life balance are sources of borderline satisfaction. These data suggest that LEOs might benefit from more supervisor attention in general and closer inspection of shift length or intensity. The clear sources of dissatisfaction, which are consistent across PSPRS tiers, were staffing levels and opinions about how the County Attorney’s Office handles prosecutions. Despite the high levels of overall job satisfaction reported by the LEO sample, the considerable unhappiness with these aspects of the job—especially staffing levels, which are themselves functions of lower retention and recruitment rates—highlight areas for policy focus. To the extent that turnover rates increase because of declining financial support, staffing levels may continue to suffer beyond the preexisting negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Figure 13. LEOs' levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their day-to-day job experience.**



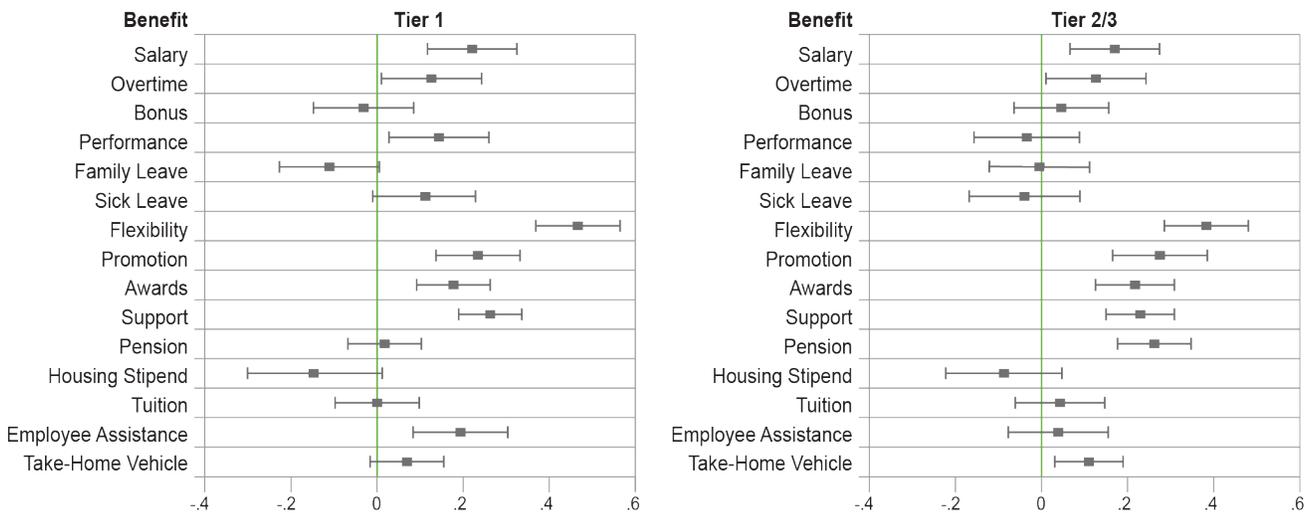
**Correlations Between Aspects of the Job and Satisfaction/Retention**

Figures 14 - 21 offer a glimpse into the magnitude and statistical significance of the correlation between the most important aspects of LEO work and job satisfaction or retention likelihood, respectively. The intuition for all four tables is as follows. The value for each dot or point on the horizontal axis is the estimated relationship between the factor on the vertical axis and satisfaction/retention likelihood. The bracketed lines to the left and right of the “point estimate” contain a range of values known as the *confidence interval (CI)*. We interpret this interval as containing the “true” relationship between the factor and satisfaction/retention likelihood with a 95% level of confidence. Therefore, if the value 0 is included in the interval, i.e., the interval crosses the vertical green line, we cannot confidently reject the notion that there is *no relationship*. If the interval does not cross the vertical green line, standard practice in social science suggests that the result is *statistically significant*.

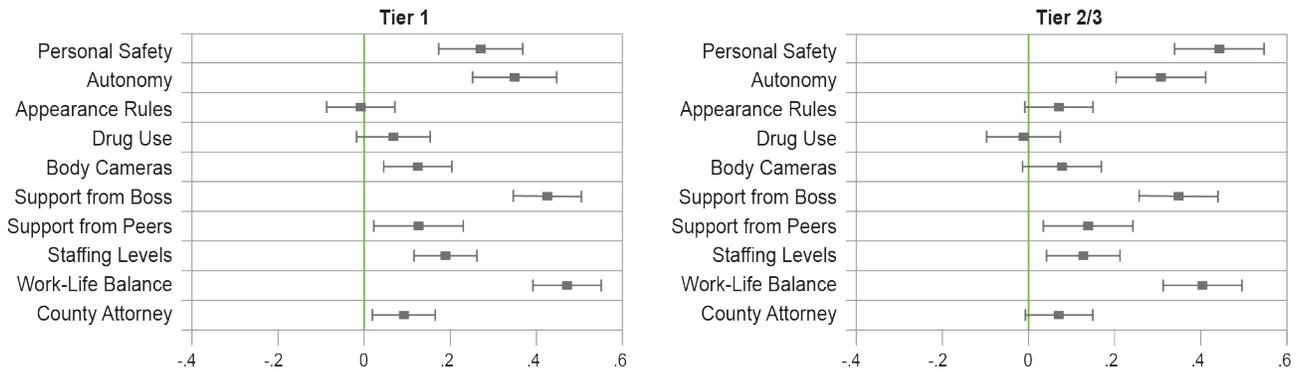
The importance of these figures is to suggest which benefits and job feature levers policy makers might adjust if they want to increase LEO satisfaction levels and retention rates. For job satisfaction, all LEOs are positively responsive to job flexibility, promotion opportunities, supervisor support, and recognition through awards. Given their closer proximity to retirement, PSPRS Tier 1 employees’ satisfaction is not statistically sensitive to changes in pension benefits, but Tier 2 and 3 LEOs’ is responsive (with effect size of about 0.25). Retention rates are, again, not statistically responsive to just about all these factors among Tier 1 employees. Tier 2 and 3 LEOs, however, are heavily influenced by the generosity of pension benefits—in all likelihood because their benefits are not as robust as their senior colleagues’.

**Figures 14 – 17. Regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for the most important sources of job satisfaction. These estimates come from regressions of overall job satisfaction ratings on each response variable denoted on the y-axis.**

**Figures 14 & 15. Regression coefficients and 95% CI for sources of job satisfaction.**

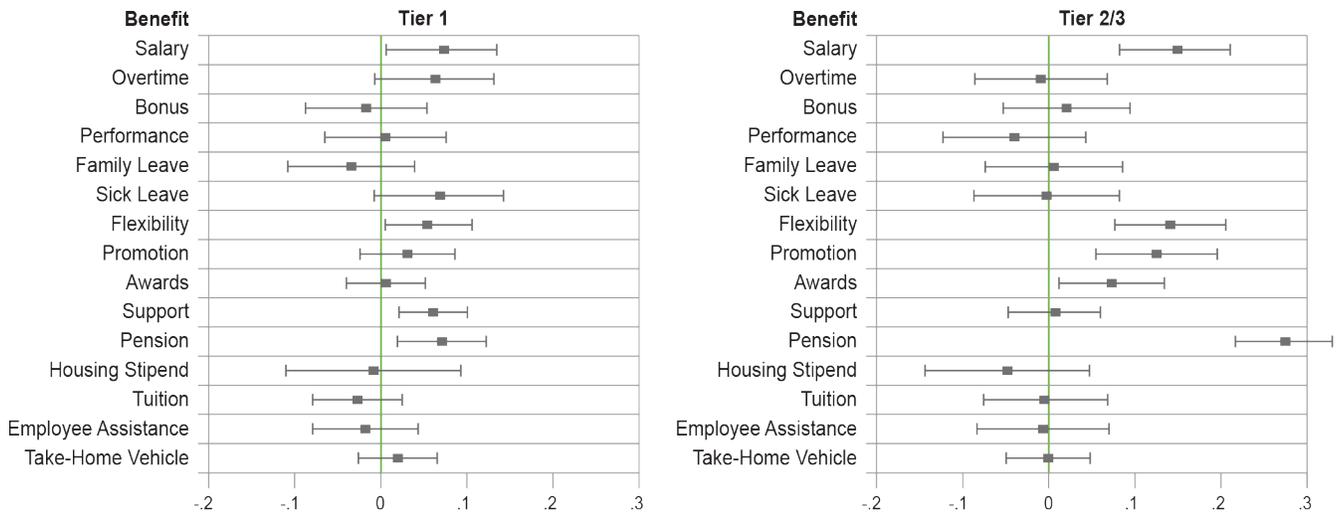


**Figures 16 & 17. Regression coefficients and 95% CI for sources of job satisfaction.**

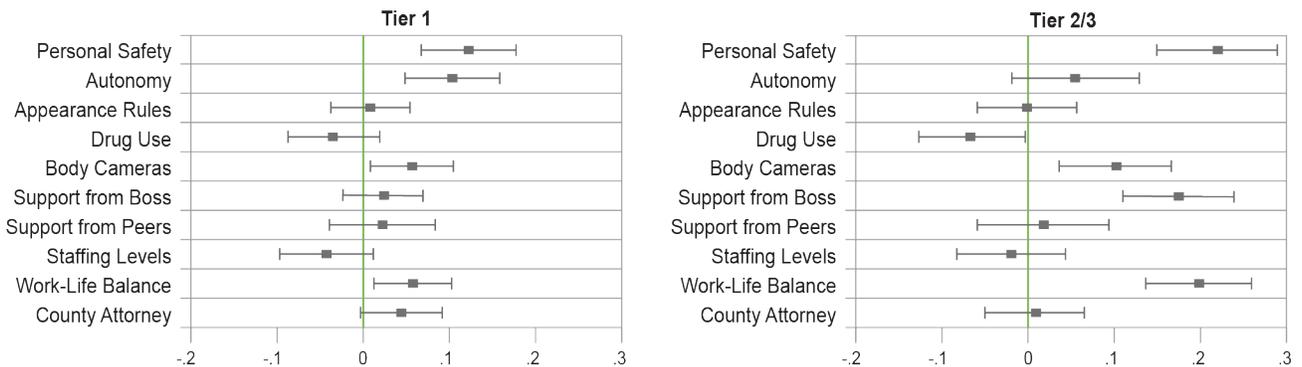


**Figures 18 – 21. Regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for the most important sources of retention likelihood. These estimates come from regressions of retention likelihood on each response variable denoted on the y-axis.**

**Figures 18 & 19. Regression coefficients and 95% CI for sources of retention likelihood.**



**Figures 20 & 21. Regression coefficients and 95% CI for sources of retention likelihood.**



## Perceptions of Public Support and the Desire to Seek Another Job

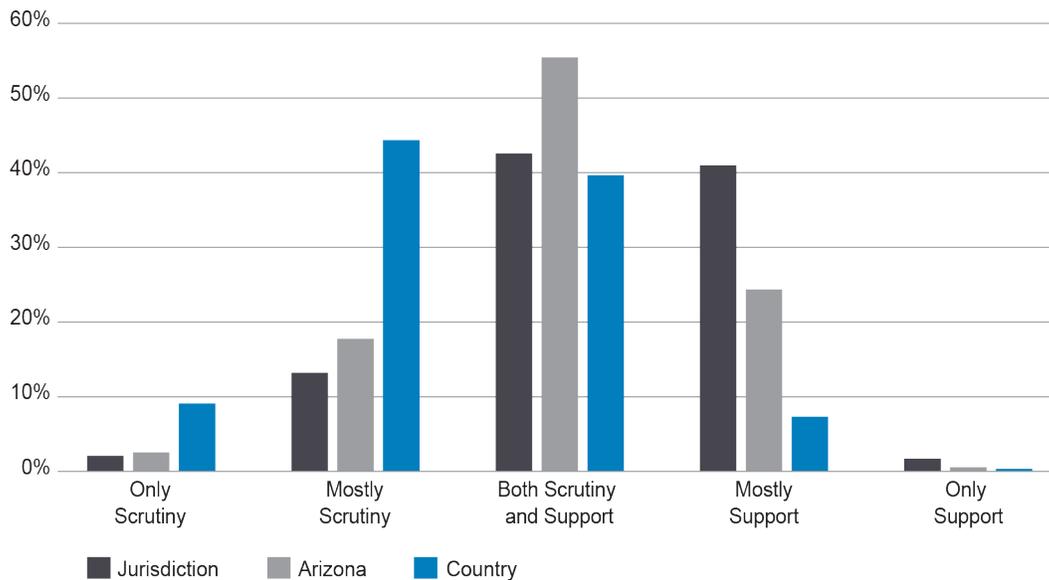
### The Impact of Public Support

The majority of retention survey participants believe that Arizonans are both critical and supportive of their work and even more assert that their local jurisdictions' residents are clearly supportive. In contrast, Arizona LEOs understand the rest of the country to be highly critical of their work. At the end of the day, sample respondents view the public, at both micro and macro levels, as holding a range of views about law enforcement officers; very few of them think the public exclusively supports or disapproves of their efforts. These trends in perception of public support were consistent even when the data are disaggregated by PSPRS tier, LEO agency/department type, and jurisdiction population size.

Beginning with this section, for many of the responses, we present results disaggregated in three ways: (1) by PSPRS Tier, (2) by the type of department or agency in which the respondent works, and (3) the size of the jurisdiction's population.

**Figure 22. LEOs' aggregated perceptions of public support for law enforcement officers from (1) residents in their jurisdiction, (2) residents in Arizona (outside of their jurisdiction), and (3) residents across the country (outside of Arizona).**

**Figure 22. LEOs' perceptions of public support of law enforcement.**



Figures 23 – 25. LEOs’ disaggregated perceptions of public support among (1) residents in their jurisdiction, (2) residents in Arizona, and (3) residents across the country. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 23. LEOs’ perceptions of public support of law enforcement.

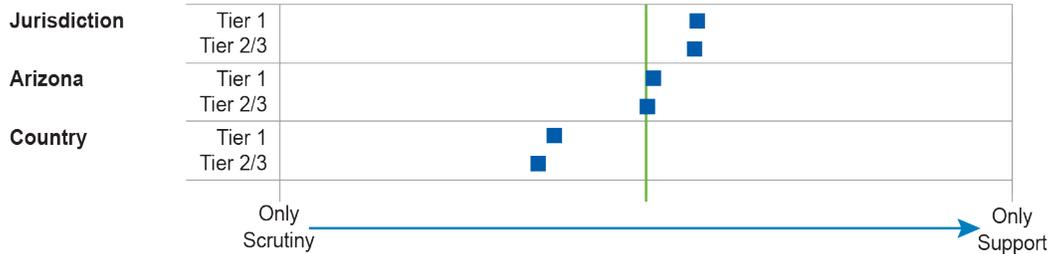


Figure 24. LEOs’ perceptions of public support of law enforcement by agency type.

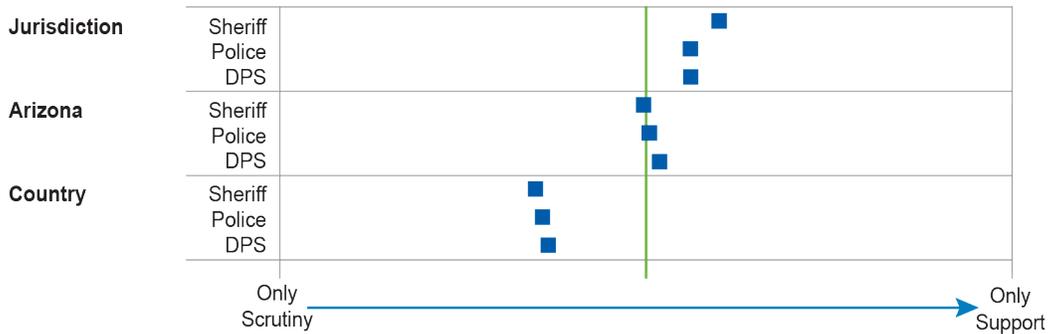
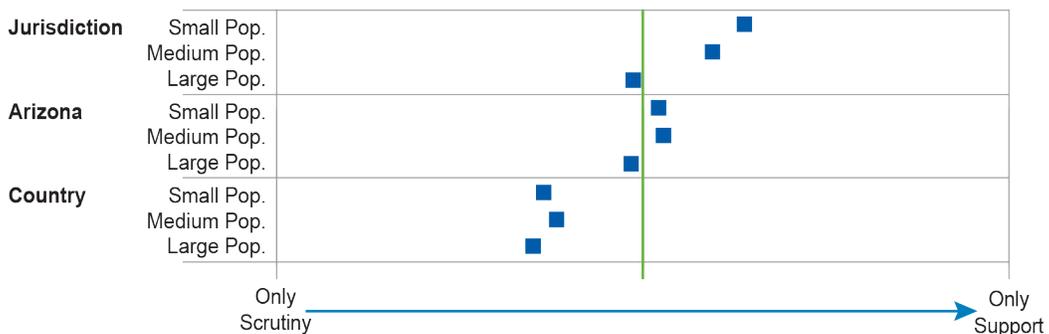


Figure 25. LEOs’ perceptions of public support of law enforcement by jurisdiction population size.

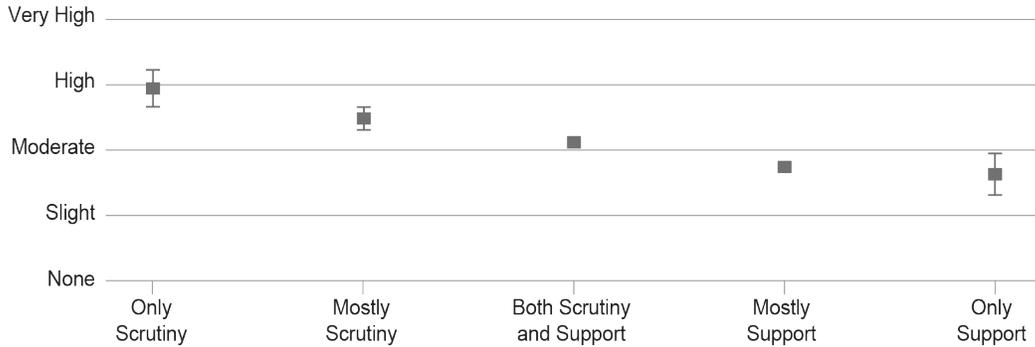


Figures 26 – 28 then examine the relationship between perceptions of public support at the three levels of analysis, i.e., local jurisdiction, Arizona, and the United States, and LEOs’ current desire to seek a career outside of law enforcement. All three figures demonstrate a negative correlation between public support and that desire. In other words, the more LEOs believe that the public is on their side, the less they want to consider alternative employment options. The estimates at the “only support” end of the spectrum have

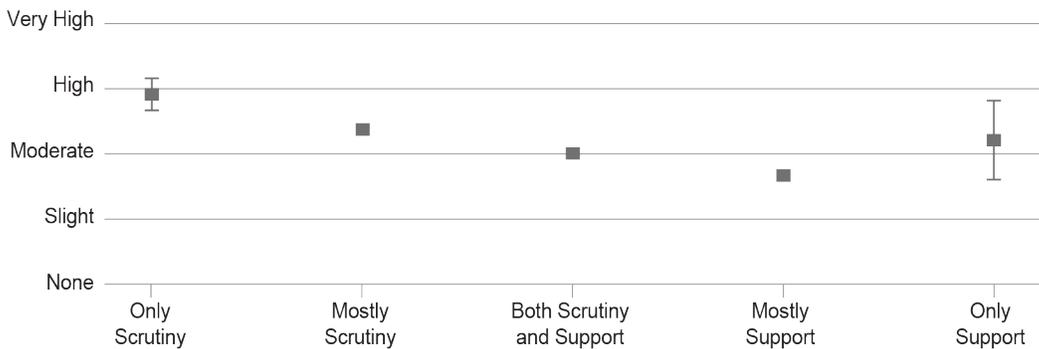
wide confidence intervals because relatively few LEOs hold these beliefs. So, focusing only on the first four categories—“only scrutiny” to “mostly support”—the negative relationship is consistent regardless of how local or national the public is defined.

**Figures 26 – 28. LEOs’ current desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO by level of perceived public support. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

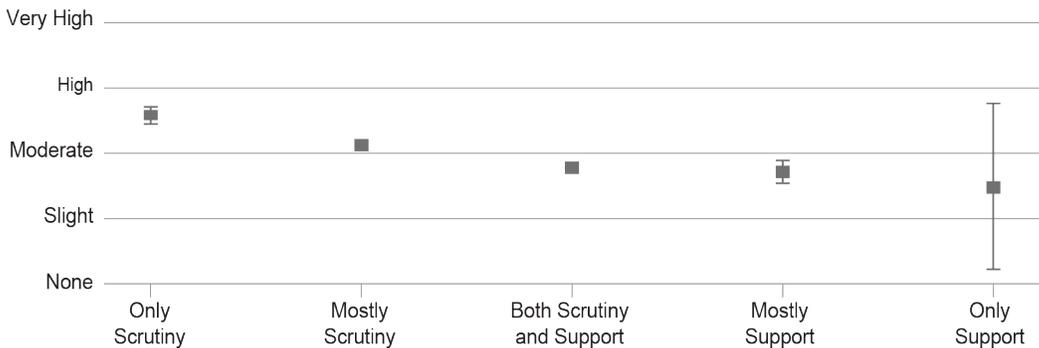
**Figure 26. LEOs’ current desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO by perceived public support from their own jurisdiction.**



**Figure 27. LEOs’ current desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO by perceived public support from Arizona.**



**Figure 28. LEOs’ current desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO by perceived public support from the Country.**



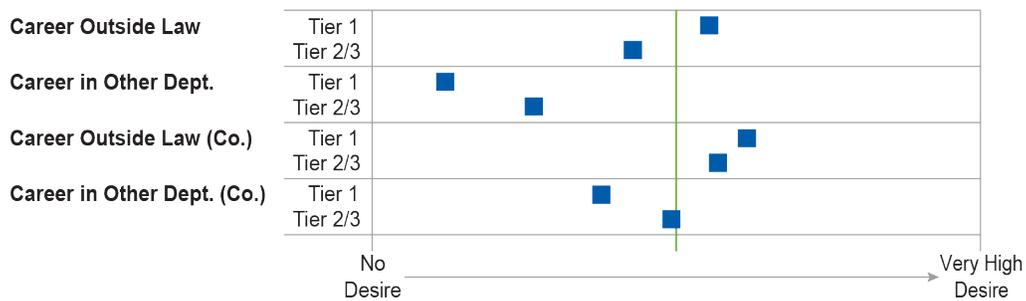
### The Desire to Pursue Other Employment

In this section, we examine the desire to consider other employment options inside and outside of law enforcement by PSPRS tier, agency type, and jurisdiction population size. Figures 29 - 31 provide only weak support for both the propositions that LEOs are thinking about outside opportunities and that they believe their colleagues are doing the same. LEOs themselves have only a slight desire to move to another department, and they think their co-workers have only a moderate desire to do so. The lack of desire is more pronounced among PSPRS Tier 1 employees. Interestingly, the desire to seek employment opportunities outside of law enforcement is between moderate and high among the respondents, and they imagine their colleagues feel the same way. Even more unexpectedly, the desire is *higher* among PSPRS Tier 1 LEOs, perhaps because they have been in their roles for longer and are curious about experiences in other lines of work. That said, the results from “Baseline Measures of Job Satisfaction and Retention Likelihood” clearly showed that most Tier 1 employees intend to remain in their position until retirement.

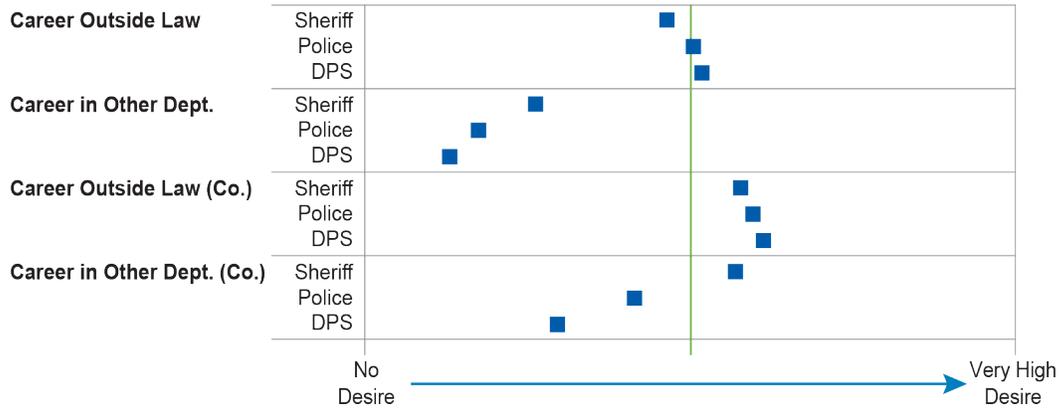
Consistent with some results above indicating more dissatisfaction among sheriff’s office employees, Figure 30 shows they are more likely than police officers or public safety department officers to think about leaving their departments but staying in law enforcement. That desire is only slight, however. More noticeably, sheriff’s deputies think their colleagues desire that move much more than the other two agency types. The only discernible trend that emerges when the data are disaggregated by jurisdiction population size is that officers from large population jurisdictions express a greater desire to pursue a career outside of law enforcement.

**Figures 29 - 31. LEOs’ current desire and perceptions of their colleagues’ desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO or a career in another department. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

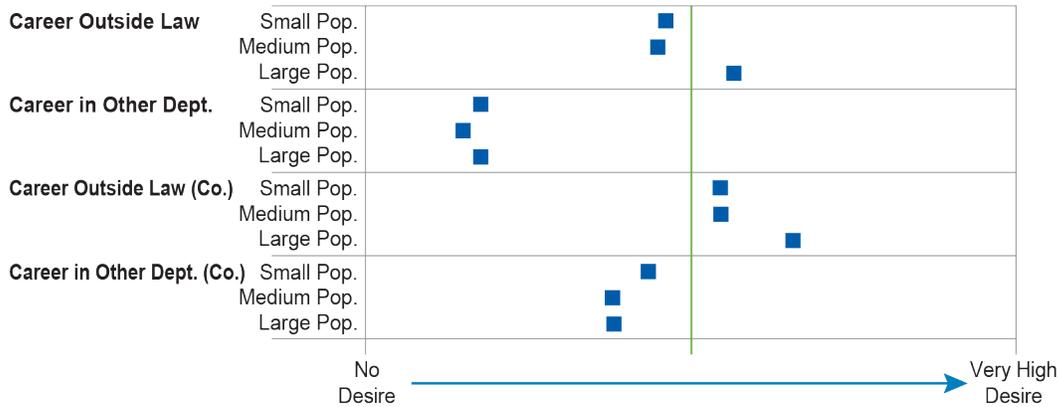
**Figure 29. LEOs’ current desire and perceptions of their colleagues’ (Co.) desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO or a career in another department.**



**Figure 30. LEOs' current desire and perceptions of their colleagues' (Co.) desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO or a career in another department.**



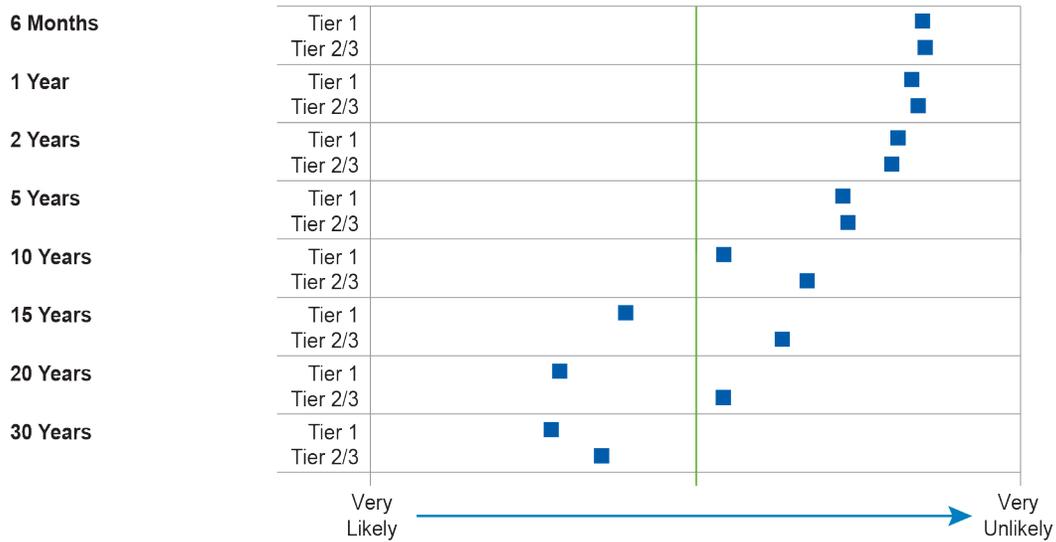
**Figure 31. LEOs' current desire and perceptions of their colleagues' (Co.) desire to pursue a career outside of being an LEO or a career in another department.**



## Likelihood of Remaining in Law Enforcement in the Future

Figure 32 examines one final view on general retention attitudes, this time looking at the likelihood of staying in LEO work at several time horizons into the future. As expected, it is easier for officers to imagine themselves still working in public safety anywhere from six months to five years later. And the likelihood of retention at these time horizons does not vary by PSPRS tier. But, starting with a decade into the future, PSPRS Tier 1 employees are much less likely to imagine themselves still working in law enforcement. This finding must be a function of the relatively few years remaining until natural retirement or until their pensions would vest. Of importance to policy makers, Tier 2 and 3 LEOs responded that they are at least ambivalent about the odds of remaining in law enforcement at 15 to 20 years into the future. Only when the time horizon expands to three decades is this group unlikely to stay in their public safety positions.

**Figure 32. LEOs' likelihood of remaining in law enforcement at various decision points in the future.**



## Sentiments About Supervisors, Departments, Colleagues, Civilians, and Self

Participants in the retention survey were asked a series of questions to elicit feelings about their immediate supervisors, their units or departments, their colleagues, and the public they serve. We also asked them about their emotional and psychological wellbeing, as well as their values and ambitions.

### Supervisors

Starting with attitudes about LEOs' supervisors, respondents reported satisfaction with their immediate supervisors. This pattern is remarkably consistent across the PSPRS tiers, law enforcement agency types, and jurisdiction population sizes, as demonstrated in Figures 33 – 35. LEOs generally agreed with statements that their immediate supervisors support employee development, listen to their supervisees and treat them with respect, and inspire trust and confidence.

**Figures 33 – 35. LEOs' agreement with statements about their supervisors. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

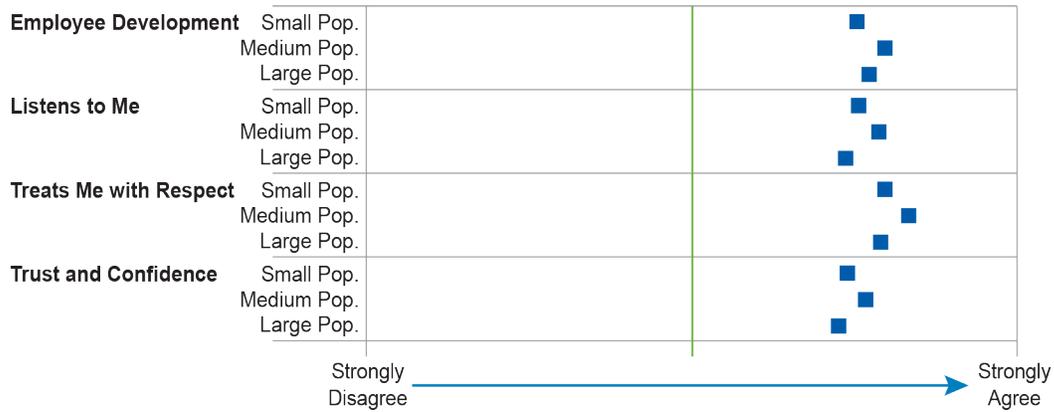
**Figure 33. LEOs' agreement with statements about their supervisors.**



**Figure 34. LEOs' agreement with statements about their supervisors.**



**Figure 35. LEOs' agreement with statements about their supervisors.**



**Departments and Squads**

Zooming out to opinions about the LEOs' departments and the professional standards within those organizations, the story is less clear. LEOs agreed that their departments maintain strong reputations, uphold high ethical standards, treat civilians fairly, and employ evidence-based practices, but they were uncertain as to whether their departments are well-run organizations. Across Tables 36 - 38, we see that Tier 2 and 3 LEOs are more likely to agree that their departments are effective compared to Tier 1 colleagues. Interesting patterns also emerge when the data are disaggregated by agency type and population size. In keeping with more pessimistic views among sheriff's office employees, county-based LEOs agree least with the statements, with agreement increasing among police officers and even more among public safety department employees. LEOs in jurisdictions with larger populations are also more concerned about departmental effectiveness than their counterparts in smaller jurisdictions.

Figures 36 – 38. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ effectiveness. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 36. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ effectiveness.

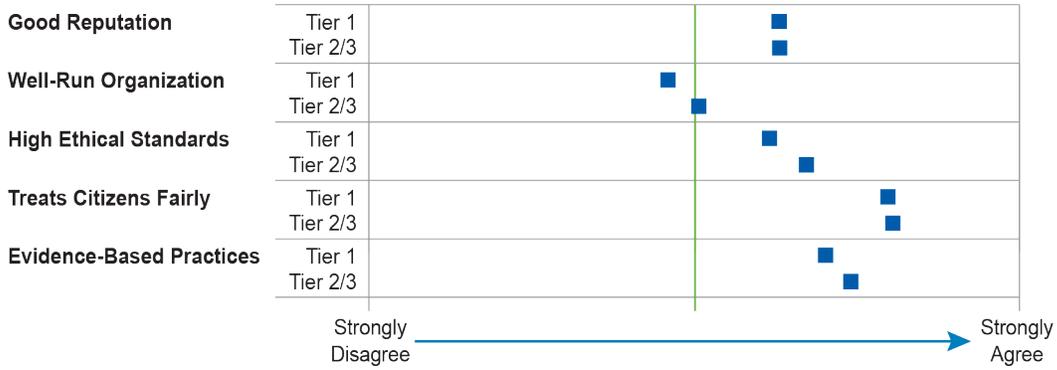


Figure 37. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ effectiveness.

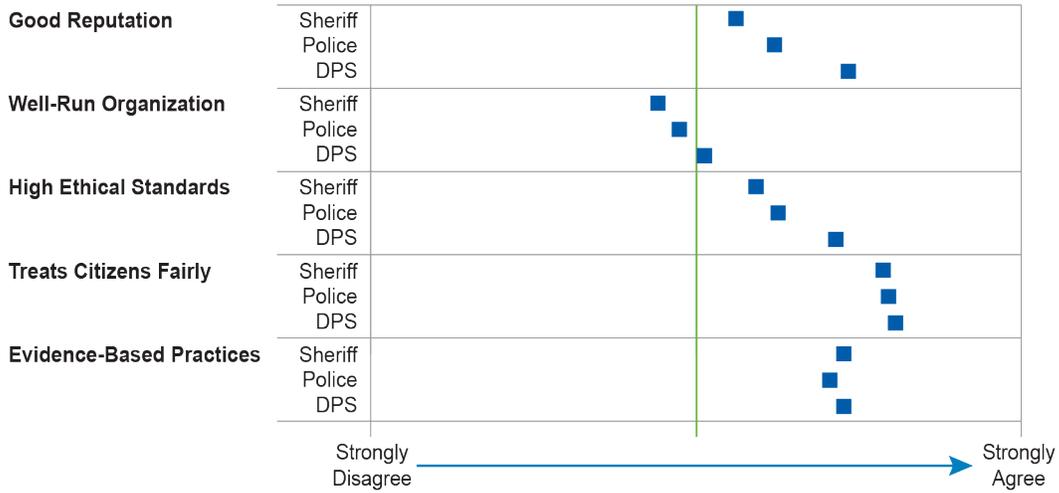
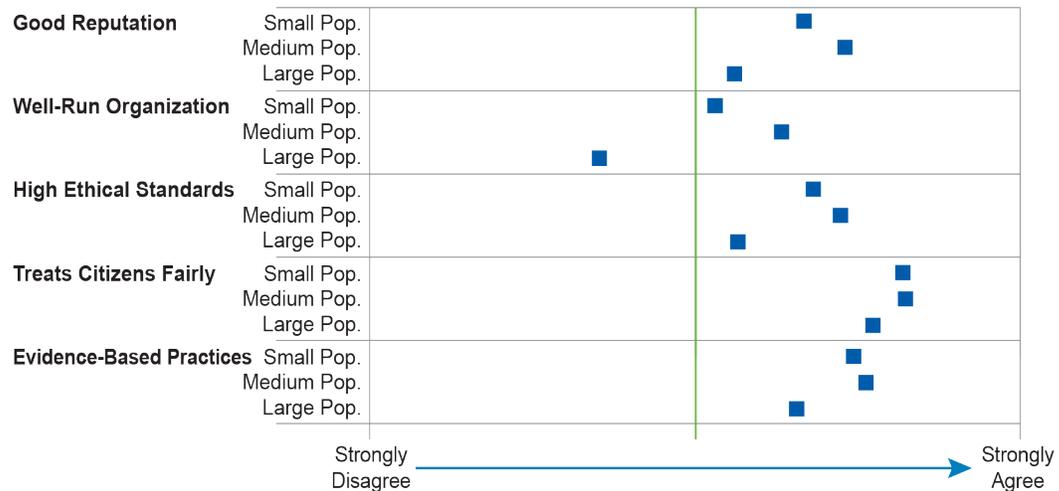


Figure 38. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ effectiveness.

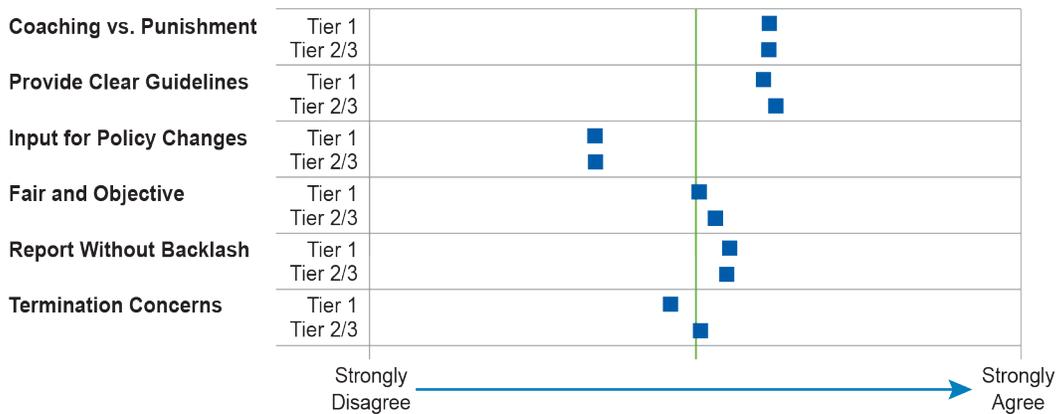


Turning to professional conduct standards in Figures 39 - 41, LEOs believed that their departments prefer individualized coaching over punishment for minor mistakes and that they provide clear guidelines for how officers should conduct themselves on the job. But they were less certain about whether internal affairs investigations have been conducted fairly and objectively, whether widespread concern exists over the possibility that minor infractions will lead to employment termination, and whether they could report suspected departmental policy violations without facing retaliation. Finally, LEOs unambiguously disagreed that their departments seek officer input when instituting major policy changes.

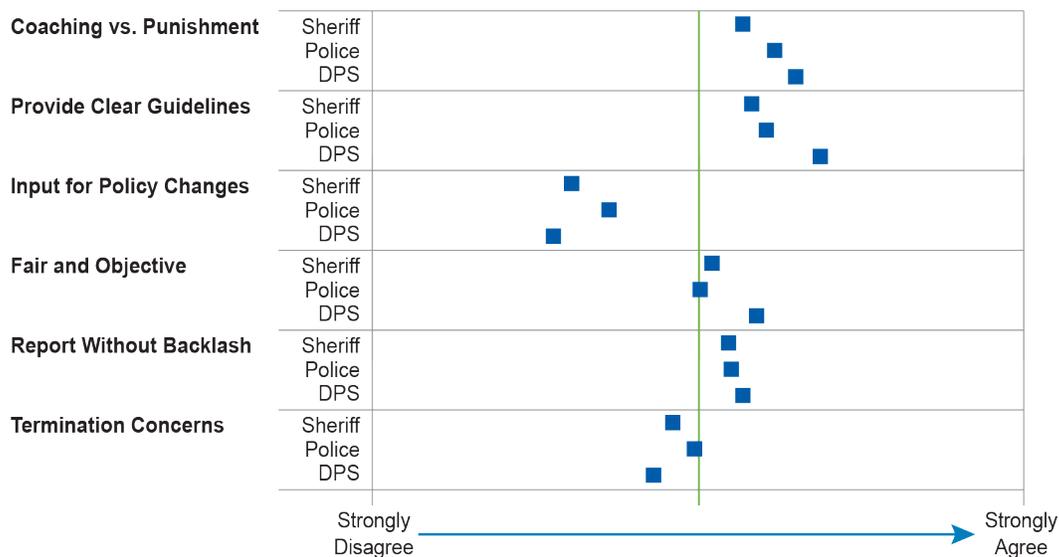
As before, LEOs serving larger populations were least likely to agree that their departments uphold these professional standards. Their concerns were most pronounced on the issues of LEO input when instituting major policy changes and internal affairs investigations. These findings affirm the earlier observation in “Baseline Measures of Job Satisfaction and Retention Likelihood” that LEOs within more populous jurisdictions are more likely to report the lowest levels of job satisfaction.

**Figures 39 - 41. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ professional standards. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

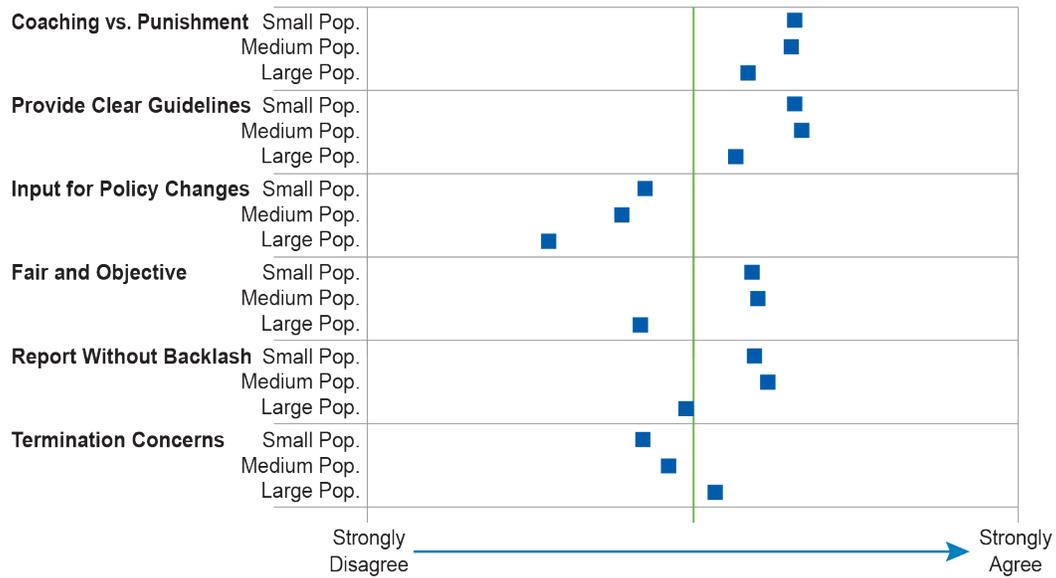
**Figure 39. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ professional standards.**



**Figure 40. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ professional standards.**



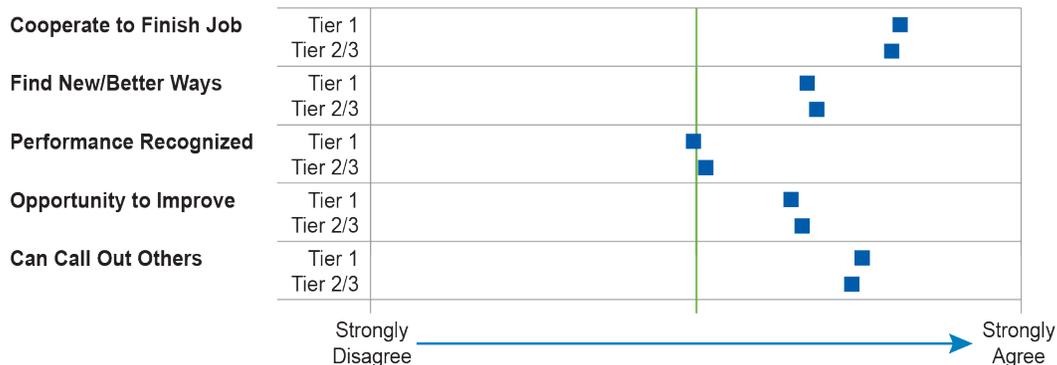
**Figure 41. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their departments’ professional standards.**



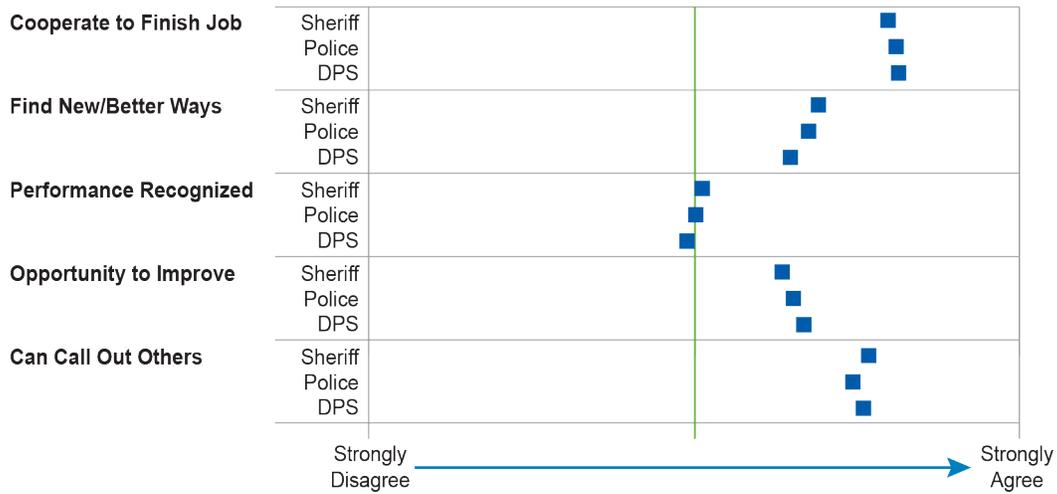
LEOs’ sentiments about their squads are presented in Figures 42 – 44. Survey respondents expressed generally positive attitudes about their units and how they operate. No matter how the data are disaggregated, LEOs believe their squads cooperate to accomplish tasks, that they are encouraged to be innovative, are given real opportunities to improve their skills, and would feel comfortable calling out a coworker’s deviation from protocol. That said, respondents seemed indifferent to the notion that differences in performance were meaningfully recognized in their squadrons. These feelings were unanimous, and LEOs serving larger populations reported the strongest disagreement on this dimension. Such findings are once again reflective of earlier conclusions that LEOs seek more departmental recognition and feel under-appreciated by their supervisors, as well as the fact that LEOs in large jurisdictions are more likely to report the lowest levels of job satisfaction.

**Figures 42 – 44. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their squads. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

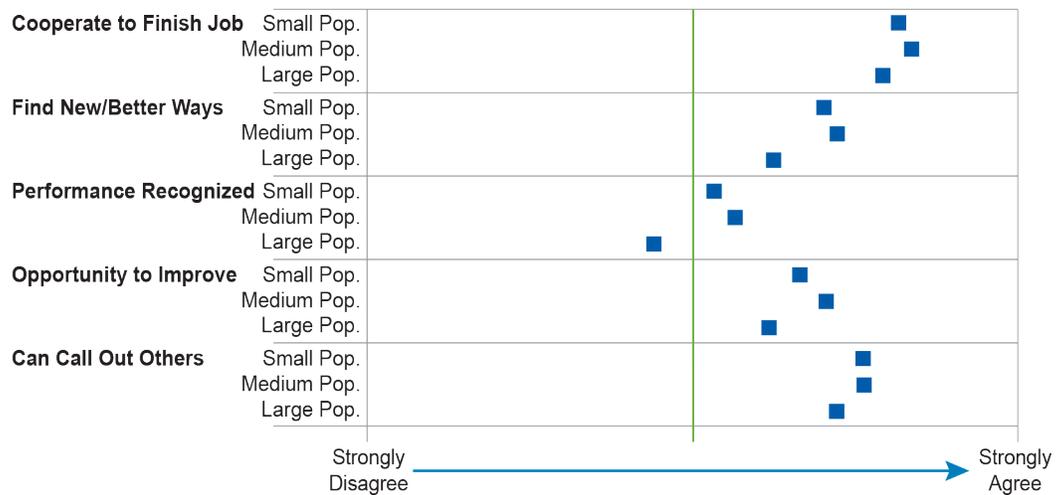
**Figure 42. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their squads.**



**Figure 43. LEOs' agreement with statements about their squads.**



**Figure 44. LEOs' agreement with statements about their squads.**



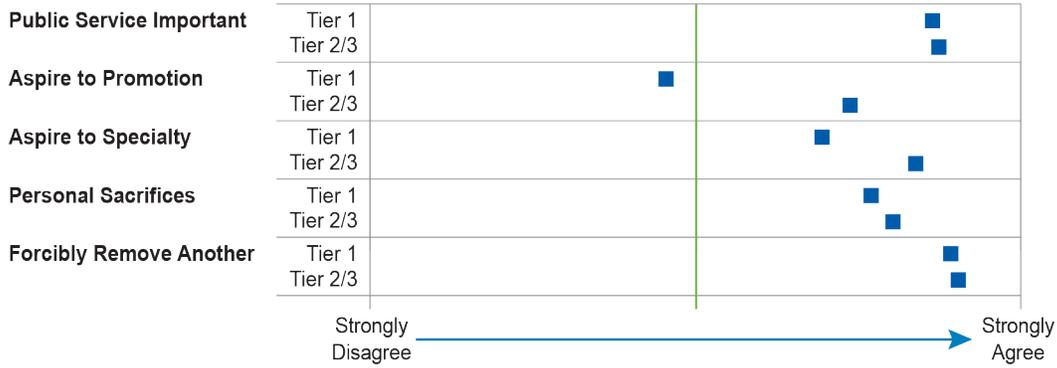
**Self**

With respect to personal evaluations, LEOs across PSPRS tiers expressed the most significant agreement that meaningful public service is personally important and that they would feel comfortable forcibly removing a coworker from a situation in which their conduct violated policy. They also agreed that they are prepared to make personal sacrifices to benefit others, aspire to specialty positions in their departments, and seek promotion within their department. The most obvious exception was found among Tier 1 LEOs, who reported less aspiration for promotion than their more junior colleagues. This result likely reflects the contentment that veteran LEOs experience in their current roles. Further, while these trends were largely uniform across law enforcement agency types and population sizes, sheriff's office employees reported notably stronger aspirations for promotion relative to those in the Department of Public Safety and

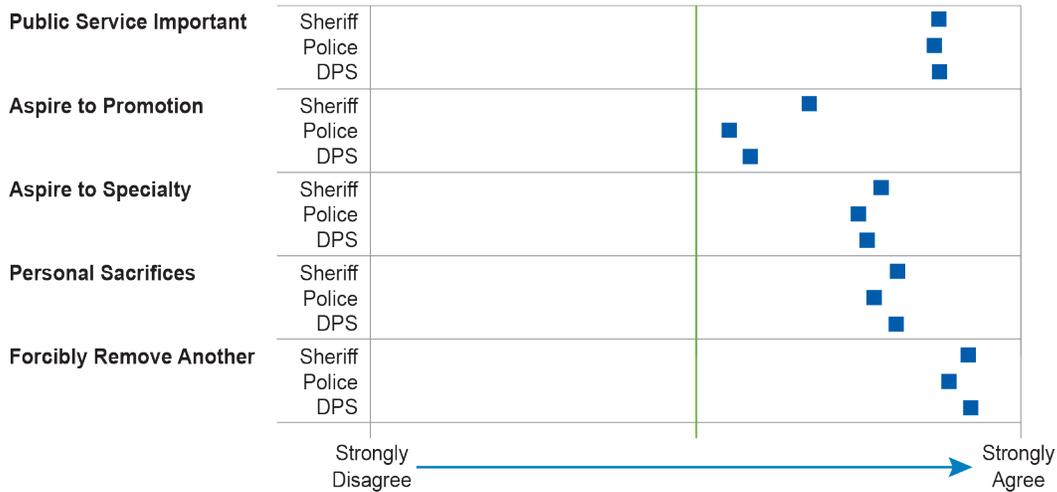
police departments. Promotion goals are also muted when the data are broken down by jurisdiction; larger populations once again sought promotion the least.

**Figures 45 – 47. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their values and ambitions. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

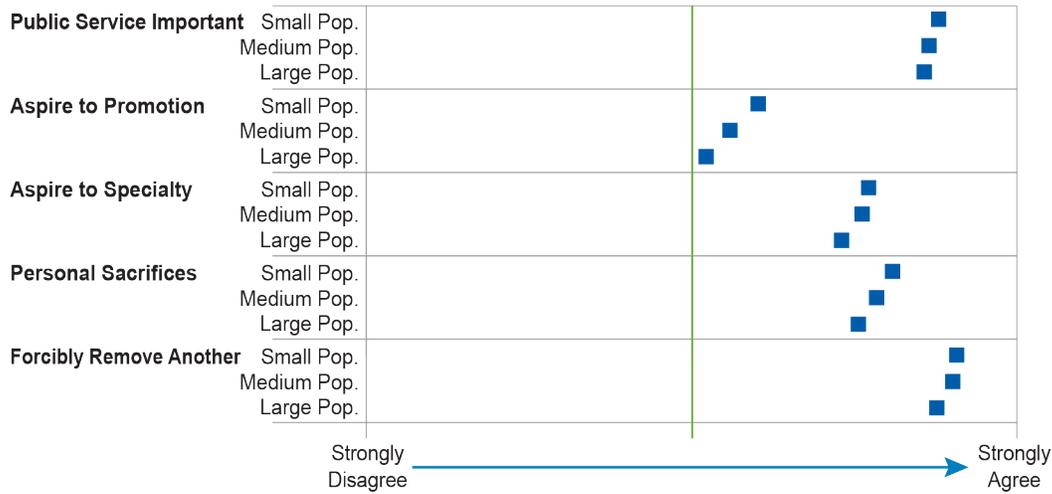
**Figure 45. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their values and ambitions.**



**Figure 46. LEOs’ agreement with statements about their values and ambitions.**



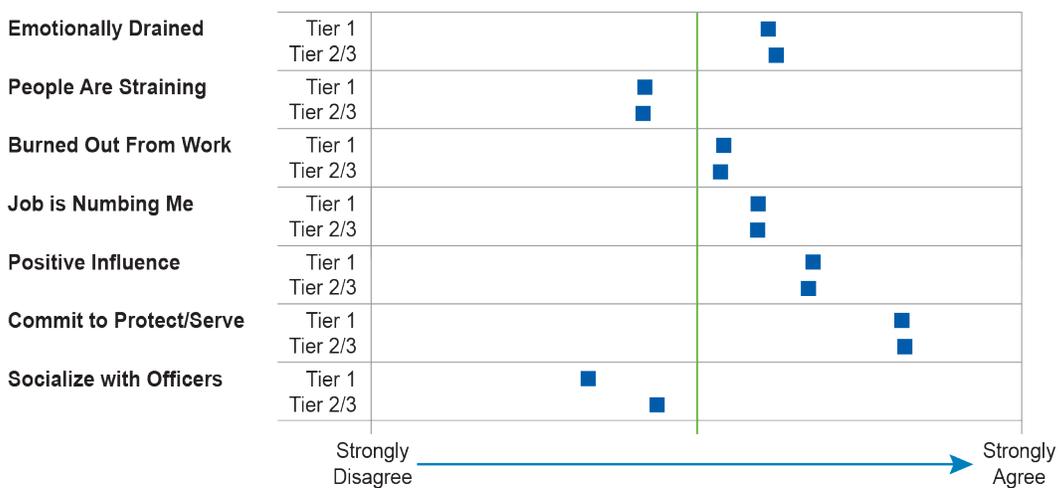
**Figure 47. LEOs' agreement with statements about their values and ambitions.**



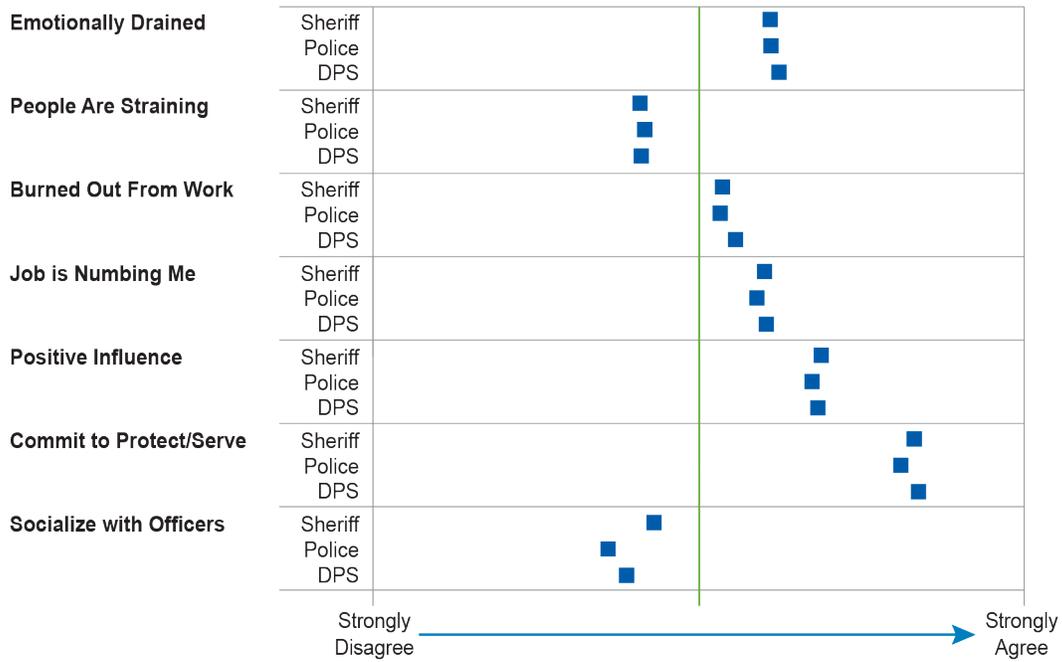
LEO work has obvious and pervasive impacts on LEOs' mental and emotional health. While participants remain resolute in their commitment to protect and serve their jurisdictions and feel that they are positively influencing the lives of others, they also feel emotionally drained, perceive themselves as becoming emotionally numbed by the job, and are somewhat burned out. However, participants do not feel distress from working with others all day, and most of their social interactions outside of work are not with other LEOs. These findings were mostly consistent across PSPRS tiers, law enforcement agency types, and jurisdiction population sizes.

**Figures 48 - 50. LEOs' agreement with statements about their emotional and mental well-being. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

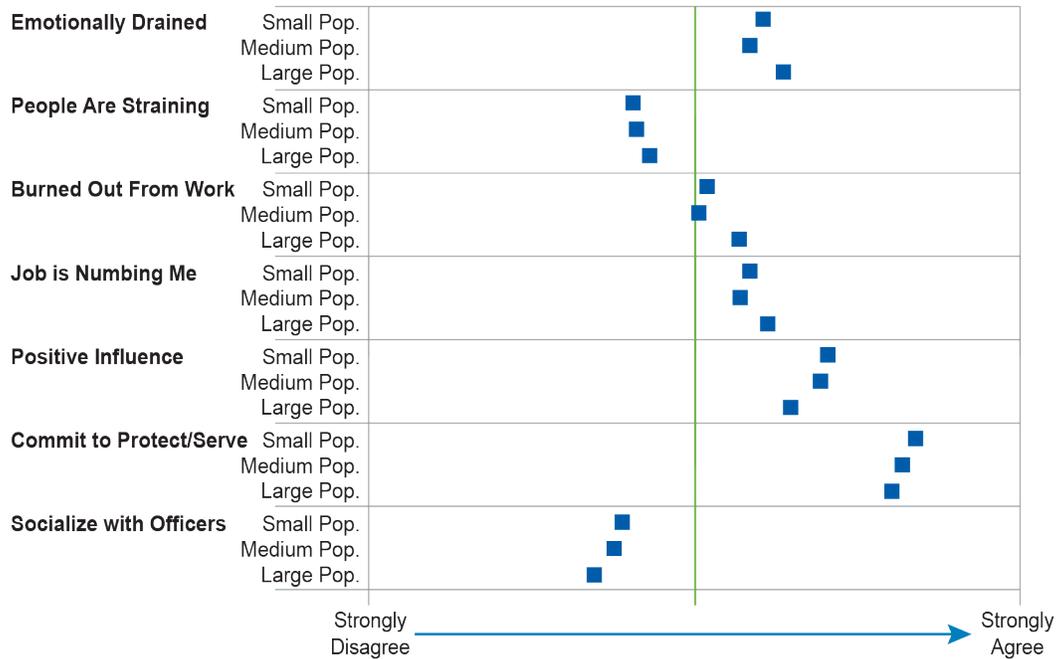
**Figure 48. LEOs' agreement with statements about their emotional and mental well-being.**



**Figure 49. LEOs' agreement with statements about their emotional and mental well-being.**



**Figure 50. LEOs' agreement with statements about their emotional and mental well-being.**



All told, these results suggest that while LEOs experience a toll on their mental and emotional health because of the high-stakes nature of their work, but such distress does not seem to impact their overall commitment to the job.

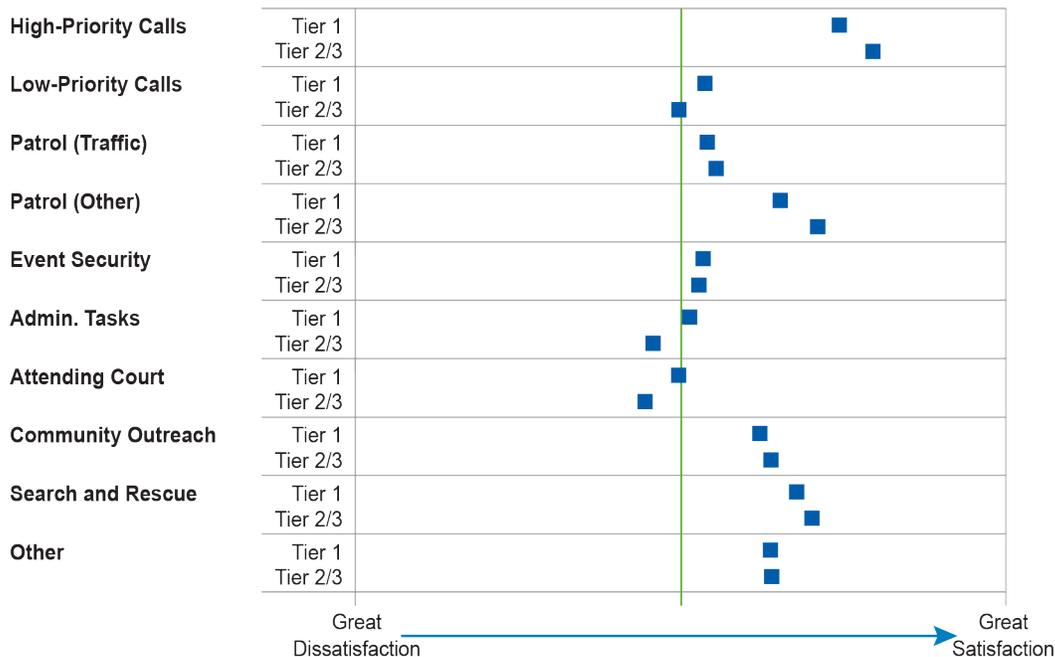
## Satisfaction with and Preferences for Aspects of Law Enforcement Work

In this section, we discuss how LEOs feel about discrete elements of their work. The results cover satisfaction by task before looking at how they might prefer to restructure their operations. These survey components were designed to understand how LEOs would design their ideal work schedules and duties, as the findings might inform micro-level changes that departments could implement to increase retention rates.

### Specific Tasks

LEOs who participated in the retention survey were mostly indifferent about the specific tasks that constitute their day-to-day work, but they were considerably more satisfied with the most high-stakes tasks, as indicated in Figure 51. High-priority calls are the most preferred, followed by patrol and search and rescue. Relatively low-stakes duties such as community outreach, low-priority calls, and event security are not as favored. Finally, attending court and administrative duties generated mild dissatisfaction.

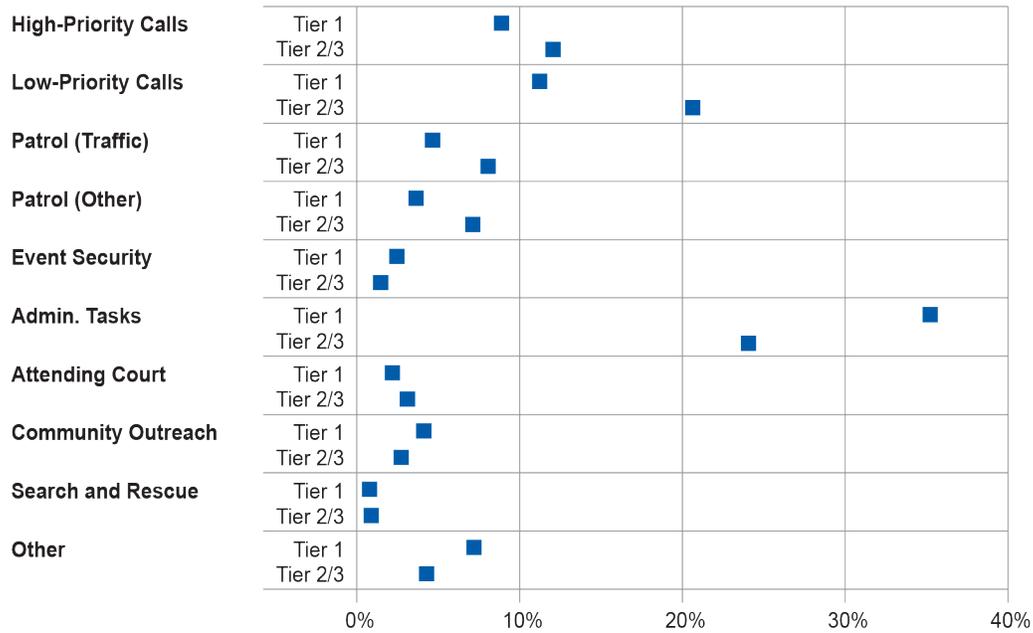
**Figure 51. LEOs’ satisfaction with various tasks. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**



### Time Allocation to Each Task

In light of the responses in the previous section, LEOs unfortunately reported spending much more time per month on their least preferred tasks. For example, 25% to 30% of officers’ time is spent on administrative tasks, with Tier 1 LEOs spending the most time on that feature of the work. That allocation dwarfs the average time allocated to search and rescue, event security, and community outreach, respectively, each of which accounts for no more than 5%. This pattern likely reflects the unavoidable requirements of law enforcement departmental activity.

**Figure 52. LEOs' allocation of their time each to certain tasks.**



**Desire to Eliminate Certain Tasks**

As Table 13 suggests, LEOs considered the low-stakes tasks as most ripe for elimination, with low-priority calls, event security, and administrative tasks, cited by about 25%, 20%, and 17% of respondents, respectively. As expected, the high-stakes tasks were least likely selected for elimination. Notably, about 41% of LEOs said they would not eliminate *any* of these regular tasks from their day-to-day work routine.

**Table 13. Percent of LEOs who said they would choose to eliminate certain day-to-day tasks if possible.**

Income	Percent
None	40.8%
Low-Priority Tasks	25.3%
Event Security	19.9%
Administrative Tasks	17.3%
Traffic Patrol	15.2%
Attending Court	12.1%
Community Outreach	12.1%
Search and Rescue	8.8%
Other	5.8%
Other Forms of Patrol	5.4%
Ongoing Training	3.9%
High-Priority Tasks	2.2%

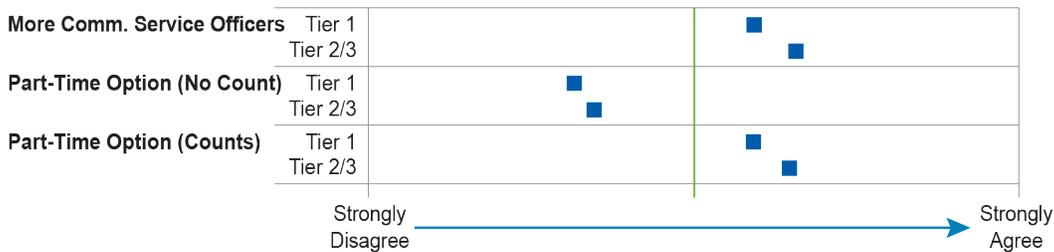
These findings suggest possible opportunities for improving LEO job satisfaction. First, officers might be more satisfied with their work if some of the lower-stakes tasks were delegated, where appropriate, to civilian personnel. For example, administrative tasks that could be completed by other department staff might free up time to devote to more popular tasks like search and rescue. The next section considers other methods for increasing satisfaction with the day-to-day aspects of law enforcement service.

**Sources of Increasing Satisfaction**

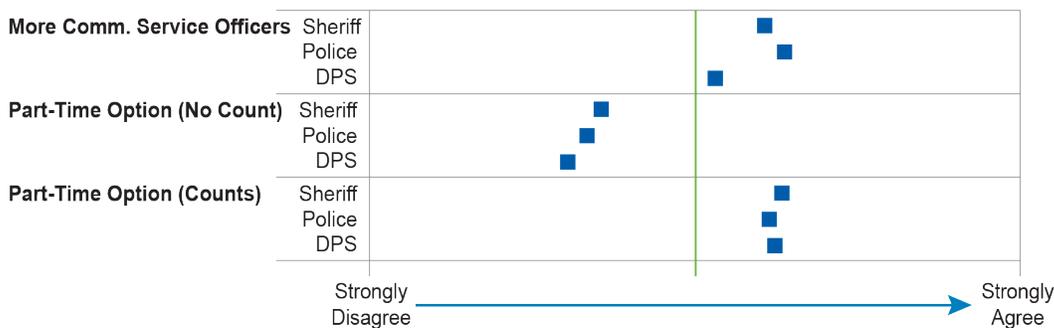
We then asked LEOs whether they might feel more satisfied in their work if certain features of the job were to change. Figures 53 - 55 consider three options: employing more community service officers to take over low-to-no stakes tasks such as community outreach, administrative duties, and low-priority calls; part-time work that *did not count* toward pension eligibility; and part-time work that *did count* toward pension eligibility. Hiring more community service officers garnered agreement among all LEO types except, somewhat understandably, Arizona Department of Public Safety employees. The other discernible pattern is that LEOs would be more satisfied with their job duties if they were offered part-time work, i.e., less than 20 hours per week, to accommodate personal matters, *as long as part-time hours count toward pension eligibility*.

**Figures 53 - 55. LEOs’ agreement with how their satisfaction would increase with various changes to staffing and schedules. Average values and 95% confidence intervals.**

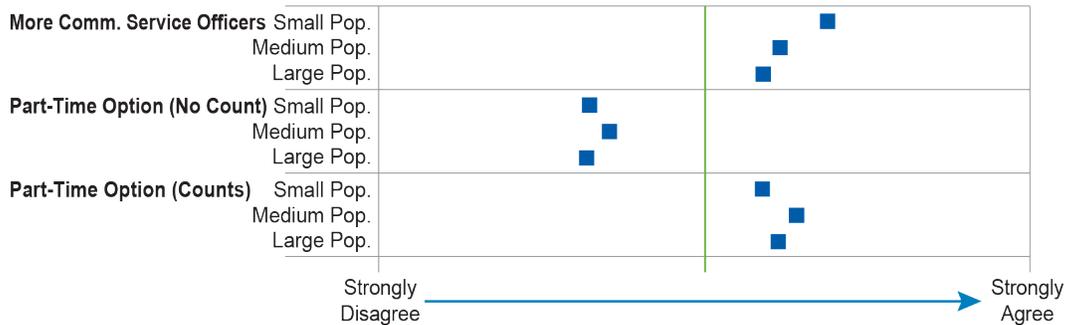
**Figure 53. LEOs’ agreement with how their satisfaction would increase with various changes to staffing and schedules.**



**Figure 54. LEOs’ agreement with how their satisfaction would increase with various changes to staffing and schedules.**



**Figure 55. LEOs' agreement with how their satisfaction would increase with various changes to staffing and schedules.**



## Comparison of Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter Retention Survey Findings

The research team from Northern Arizona University (NAU) conducted a similar, though not identical, retention survey among current firefighters serving the State of Arizona. Those findings, like the responses above, suggests overall job satisfaction among public safety officers. However, while 92% of firefighters expected to remain in their position until retirement, only 76% of LEO participants reported the same.<sup>1</sup> Thus, there seems to be a stronger propensity among firefighters to remain in their positions than LEOs, despite the comparable levels of job satisfaction.

Considering attitudes about job-related benefits, LEOs and firefighters both reported satisfaction with promotion opportunities as well as paid sick leave, family leave, and overtime pay.<sup>2</sup> In addition, both LEOs and firefighters reported notable levels of dissatisfaction about the availability of departmental awards and recognition and believe that support from superiors is highly important for job satisfaction.<sup>3</sup>

Turning to preferred job tasks, both LEOs and firefighters responded that high-stakes tasks were the most satisfying, specifically high-priority calls for LEOs and working on fire grounds for firefighters.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, however, LEOs were more satisfied taking part in community outreach efforts, whereas firefighters identified community engagement as one of the least satisfying tasks.<sup>5</sup>

Both LEOs and firefighters are strongly committed to public service, but they are concerned about the negative effects of public safety work on their mental health. LEOs believe themselves to have a positive influence on others but feel emotionally drained, numbed by the job, and somewhat burned out. Comparatively, firefighters reported feeling proud and fulfilled, but mental demands, stress, and sleep deprivation were the strongest contributing factors toward firefighter turnover rates.<sup>6</sup>

In sum, even though both LEOs and firefighters report overall satisfaction with their respective careers, they are similarly dissatisfied with the extent of intra-departmental appreciation and share concern about the mental health impacts of the job. LEO retention rates appear to be more sensitive to strains on officer well-being. Although there are no comparable results about public attitudes toward firefighters, LEOs' belief in public disapproval of their work likely contributes to the lower retention rate of LEOs relative to firefighters.

## Appendix: Arizona Law Enforcement Retention Survey Protocol

This survey has been developed by researchers from the University of Arizona to understand which factors are the most influential in the retention and turnover decisions of law enforcement officers in the State of Arizona. Your individual responses will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team, so you can answer each question honestly.

Your participation in this survey is incredibly important, as your responses and those of your fellow law enforcement officers will be aggregated together and analyzed to determine what changes in policies, incentives, and programs should be made to better attract, develop, and retain law enforcement officers.

In addition, if you complete and submit the survey before August 25, 2023, and provide us with your email address, you will be entered into a drawing to be one of 500 winners of a \$50 Amazon gift card.

If you are unable to complete the survey in a single sitting, you can leave the page and restart from where you left off using the same link.

**Do you consent to participating in this study?**

Yes  No

**By selecting “No” to the previous question, you have indicated that you do not want to complete this survey. Is that correct?**

- I confirm that I DO NOT want to complete the survey  
 I DO WANT to complete the survey, and I consent to participating in the study

**Are you currently a sworn officer in the State of Arizona?**

Yes  No

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. The survey is comprised of 5 different sections. Here, in the first section, you will be asked several different questions about your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various aspects of your job. If you prefer not to answer a particular question, please mark “Prefer not to say.”

**How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with the following monetary and non-monetary benefits that you receive?**

If a particular benefit is not currently available to you, but you would like it to be, please choose “Not Provided, but Desired.” If a particular benefit is not applicable to your job role, please choose “N/A.”

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Not provided, but desired	Prefer not to say	N/A
Annual base salary								
Overtime pay								
Bonus pay								
Performance-based pay								
Paid family leave								
Paid sick leave								
Flexible work schedule								
Opportunities for promotion								
Departmental awards and recognition								
Public appreciation/support								
Pension and other retirement benefits								
Housing allowance								

College tuition reimbursement								
Employee assistance program								
Take-home vehicle								

**If we asked your co-workers the same question, how satisfied/dissatisfied do you think they are with the following monetary and non-monetary benefits that they receive?** If a particular benefit is not currently available to your co-workers, but you think they would want it to be, please choose “Not Provided, but Desired.” If you don’t know how your co-workers would respond or if a particular benefit is not applicable to their job role, please choose “N/A.”

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Not provided, but desired	Prefer not to say	N/A
Annual base salary								
Overtime pay								
Bonus pay								
Performance-based pay								
Paid family leave								
Paid sick leave								
Flexible work schedule								
Opportunities for promotion								
Departmental awards and recognition								
Public appreciation/ support								
Pension and other retirement benefits								
Housing allowance								
College tuition reimbursement								
Employee assistance program								
Take-home vehicle								

**Which tier of the Arizona Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) are you in?**

- Tier 1 (membership date before January 1, 2012)
- Tier 2 (membership date on or after January 1, 2012 and before July 1, 2017)
- Tier 3 (membership date on or after July 1, 2017)
- I don't know
- Prefer not to say

**How likely are you to continue working as a law enforcement officer in Arizona until retirement, i.e., until you're eligible for your pension/retirement benefits?** If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please choose “N/A.”

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Likely
- Very likely
- Prefer not to say
- N/A

**How would the following changes to your compensation and benefits affect your likelihood of continuing to work as a law enforcement officer in Arizona until retirement?** If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please choose "N/A."

	Much less likely	Less likely	No effect	More likely	Much more likely	Prefer not to say	N/A
A \$5,000 raise next year							
A \$10,000 raise next year							
A \$15,000 raise next year							
A \$20,000 raise next year							
Reducing the retirement age minimum to 50							
Reducing the retirement age minimum to 47.5							
Reducing the retirement age minimum to 45							
Removing the retirement age minimum altogether							

**Over the last year, how satisfied/dissatisfied have you been with the following aspects of your day-to-day job experience?** If a particular item is not applicable to your job role, please choose "N/A."

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Prefer not to say	N/A
Your personal safety							
The autonomy you have to choose how you do your work							
Policies regulating personal appearance (e.g., facial hair, tattoos, piercings)							
Policies regarding tobacco and marijuana use							
Policies about wearing body cameras at all times							
The support/guidance you receive from your superiors							
The support/guidance you receive from your peers							
Staffing levels within your department (e.g., whether there are enough officers)							
Your current work schedule							
Your work/life balance							
Opportunities for additional training							

**This question is for sworn officers who have made arrests in the last year. Consider the arrests that you've made in the last year. How satisfied/dissatisfied have you been overall with how the County Attorney handled those cases?**

If you are not a sworn officer who made any arrests in the last year, please choose "N/A."

- Very dissatisfied    Dissatisfied    Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied    Satisfied    Very satisfied    Prefer not to say    N/A

**Are you currently in a position that requires a shift-based work schedule, meaning anything other than a fairly regular Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM schedule?**

- Yes  No  Prefer not to say

**How satisfied are you with your department’s policy for choosing who works what shifts/schedules (e.g., selecting shifts based on seniority, officer bidding, needs-based allocation, etc.)?** If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please choose “N/A.”

- Very dissatisfied  Dissatisfied  Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  Satisfied  Very satisfied  Prefer not to say  N/A

**Overall, how satisfied are you with your current job?** Please choose a number below, where 1 means Extremely Dissatisfied and 10 means Extremely Satisfied.

<b>Extremely Dissatisfied (1)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Extremely satisfied (10)</b>	<b>Prefer not to say</b>
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*Thank you for completing the first section of the survey. In the second section, you will be asked questions about how supported you feel in your law enforcement role and your intentions for staying in or leaving your current role.*

**Before moving on, please complete the following question.** It is meant to ensure that humans, not automated programs or “bots,” are completing the survey. What vegetable is in this picture?



- Carrot  Broccoli  Potato  Pepper

**Consider how you feel about the public’s perception of law enforcement.**

**How much support/scrutiny do you feel law enforcement officers receive from the following groups of people?**

	<b>Only scrutiny</b>	<b>Mostly scrutiny</b>	<b>Equal scrutiny and support</b>	<b>Mostly support</b>	<b>Only support</b>	<b>Prefer not to say</b>
Citizens in the city/town in which you live						
Citizens in your state (but outside the city/town in which you live)						
Citizens in the United States (but outside your state)						

**To what extent do you currently have a desire to pursue a career outside of being a law enforcement officer?**

- No desire  Slight desire  Moderate desire  High desire  Very high desire  Prefer not to say

**To what extent do you currently have a desire to pursue a career as a law enforcement officer in another department?**

- No desire  Slight desire  Moderate desire  High desire  Very high desire  Prefer not to say

**To what extent do you think your co-workers currently have a desire to pursue a career outside of being a law enforcement officer?** If you do not know, please mark “I don’t know.”

- No desire  Slight desire  Moderate desire  High desire  Very high desire  Prefer not to say  I don’t know

**To what extent do you think your co-workers currently have a desire to pursue a career as a law enforcement officer in another department?**

- No desire  Slight desire  Moderate desire  High desire  Very high desire  Prefer not to say  I don’t know

Please indicate how likely it is that you will be working as a law enforcement officer in Arizona in the future. If you plan to be retired by a certain time horizon, please mark "Retired by Then." If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark "N/A."

	Retired by then	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Likely	Very likely	Prefer not to say	N/A
6 months from now								
1 year from now								
2 years from now								
5 years from now								
10 years from now								
15 years from now								
20 years from now								
30 years from now								

**How often do you look for job opportunities outside of law enforcement?**

- Never
- Yearly
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily
- Prefer not to say

**Have any sworn officers left your department in the last year?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- Prefer not to say

**Are you aware of the specific reasons why those sworn officers left your department?** (Please select all that apply or mark "I don't know.")

- Seeking better pay
- Seeking better benefits
- Family reasons
- Geographical preference
- Decided job wasn't for them
- Felt unsupported by the community
- Low departmental morale
- Work-life balance
- Conflict with superior
- Conflict with peers
- Other (please specify):
- I don't know
- Prefer not to say

**Did you previously work for any other law enforcement agency before working in your current position?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**Why did you leave your previous law enforcement agency?** (Please select all that apply.)

- Seeking better pay
- Seeking better benefits
- Family reasons
- Geographical preference
- Decided prior position wasn't for you
- Seeking a more supportive community
- Seeking department with better morale
- Seeking better work-life balance
- Conflict with superiors at prior agency
- Conflict with peers at prior agency
- Other (please specify):
- Prefer not to say

Thank you for completing the second section of the survey. In the third section of the survey, you will be asked several different questions about how you feel about the various aspects of your job.

**Consider your experiences with your immediate supervisor.** Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements. If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark "N/A."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	N/A
My supervisor supports employee development.							
My supervisor listens to what I have to say.							
My supervisor treats me with respect.							
I have trust and confidence in my superior.							

**Consider your personal values and ambitions.** Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements. If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark "N/A."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	N/A
Meaningful public service is very important to me.							
I aspire to earn a promotion in a more senior position within my department.							
I aspire to work in a specialty position within my department (e.g., detective, drug unit, traffic unit, etc.)							
I am prepared to make personal sacrifices for the benefit of others.							
I would forcibly remove a fellow officer from a situation if their behavior violated policy (e.g., using excessive force.)							

**Consider your experiences with your current squad/unit.** Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements. If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark "N/A."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	N/A
The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.							
I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.							
Differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.							
I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills.							
I feel comfortable calling out my fellow officers if they do not adhere to protocol.							

**Consider your department’s professional standards and approach to evaluating employees.** Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements. If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark “N/A.”

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	N/A
For minor mistakes, my department relies on coaching and counseling the individual, rather than punishment.							
My department provides clear and consistent guidelines for standards of professional conduct.							
My department seeks input from officers when considering a major policy change.							
Investigations conducted by the Office of Professional Standards (or internal affairs) are done in a fair and objective manner.							
I can report a suspected violation of department policy without fear of backlash.							
Within my department, there are widespread concerns that a minor infraction will lead to employment termination.							

**Consider your emotional, mental, and social well-being.** Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements. If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark “N/A.”

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	N/A
I feel emotionally drained from my work.							
Working with people all day is really straining for me.							
I feel burned out from my work.							
I worry that this job is numbing me emotionally.							
I feel that I am positively influencing other peoples’ lives through my work.							
I feel very committed to protecting and serving citizens in my jurisdiction.							
Most of my social interactions outside work are with other law enforcement officers.							

**Consider your current department.** Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements. If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark "N/A."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	N/A
Overall, my current department has a good reputation.							
My department is a well-run organization.							
My department maintains high ethical standards.							
My department treats the citizens in my jurisdiction fairly.							
My department uses evidence-based practices.							

*Thank you for completing the third section of the survey. You are over halfway done! In the fourth section of the survey, you will be asked several different questions about which tasks bring you the most and least satisfaction.*

**Consider a typical month on the job. How much satisfaction/dissatisfaction do you receive from the following tasks?**

If a particular task is not applicable to your job role, please mark "N/A."

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Prefer not to say	N/A
Responding to high-priority calls							
Responding to low-priority calls							
Patrolling with a focus on traffic violations							
Patrolling with a focus other than traffic violations							
Providing security at events							
Administrative tasks (e.g., completing reports)							
Attending court for your cases							
Ongoing training programs							
Community policing or community outreach events							
Search and rescue							
Other (please specify):							

**In a typical month, what fraction of your time is spent on each of the following parts of your job?** For instance, if attending court for your cases takes up about 10% of your time, put a "10" in that box. (The values you choose should add up to 100%.) If you prefer not to answer, please put 100 in the "Prefer not to say" row. If the question is not applicable to you, please put 100 in the "N/A" row.

	Percentage
Responding to high-priority calls	
Responding to low-priority calls	
Patrolling with a focus on traffic violations	
Patrolling with a focus other than traffic violations	
Providing security at events	
Administrative tasks (e.g., completing reports)	
Attending court for your cases	
Ongoing training programs	
Community policing or community outreach events	
Search and rescue	
Other (please specify):	
Prefer not to say	
N/A	

**If you had complete control over what you have to do for your job, which parts would you eliminate?**

(Select as many duties as apply or "None.")

- Responding to high-priority calls
- Responding to low-priority calls
- Patrolling with a focus on traffic violations
- Patrolling with a focus other than traffic violations
- Providing security at events
- Administrative tasks (e.g., completing reports)
- Attending court for your cases
- Ongoing training programs
- Community policing or community outreach events
- Search and rescue
- Other (please specify):
- None
- Prefer not to say

*Some departments have begun hiring Community Service Officers to reduce the burden placed on sworn officers (e.g., by responding to low-stakes calls, engaging in community outreach, completing administrative tasks, etc.). Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statement:*

**My day-to-day job satisfaction would increase if my department employed any (or more) Community Service Officers. If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark "N/A."**

- Strongly disagree    Disagree    Neither agree nor disagree    Agree    Strongly agree    Prefer not to say    N/A

*Some departments have considered allowing officers to work part-time (~20 hours per week) for an extended period of time to accommodate a personal matter (e.g., child-rearing, elderly care, etc.). Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:*

**My likelihood of working as a law enforcement officer in Arizona until retirement would increase if the opportunity to work part-time was made available, even if my part-time hours did not count towards my pension eligibility.** If you feel this question is not applicable to you, please mark "N/A."

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Neither agree nor disagree  Agree  Strongly agree  Prefer not to say  N/A

**My likelihood of working as a law enforcement officer in Arizona until retirement would increase if the opportunity to work part-time was made available and my part-time hours did count towards my pension eligibility.**

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Neither agree nor disagree  Agree  Strongly agree  Prefer not to say  N/A

*Thank you for completing the fourth section of the survey. In the fifth and final section of the survey, you will be asked several questions about your work experience in law enforcement and your demographic characteristics.*

**What is your current rank/position in your department?**

- Chief of Police  
 Deputy Chief  
 Assistant Chief  
 Captain  
 Sheriff  
 Undersheriff  
 Chief Deputy  
 Commander  
 Lieutenant  
 Sergeant  
 Deputy Sheriff  
 Officer  
 In Police Academy/Training  
 Detective/Investigator  
 Community Service Officer  
 Civilian Volunteer  
 Administrative (e.g., finance, human resources, internal affairs)  
 Support (e.g., dispatcher, records clerk, crime analyst)  
 Other  
 Prefer not to say

**In which department do you currently work?**

[drop-down box (list of relevant jurisdictions)]

**For how long have you been working as a law enforcement officer in your current department?**

[drop-down box (list of years from "less than one" to "more than 25")]

**For how long have you been working as a law enforcement officer anywhere in the State of Arizona?**

[drop-down box (list of years from "less than one" to "more than 25")]

**For how many more years do you need to work as a law enforcement officer in the State of Arizona to earn your pension benefits?**

[drop-down box (list of years from "1" to "more than 25")]

**For how many years have you worked as a law enforcement officer outside of Arizona?**

[drop-down box (from "0 years (i.e., you've never worked as a law enforcement officer outside of Arizona)" to "more than 25 years")]

**What is your approximate gross (pre-tax) annual income from your law enforcement position (including overtime pay)?**

- Less than \$20,000  \$20,000 - \$30,000  \$30,000 - \$40,000  \$40,000 - \$50,000  \$50,000 - \$60,000  \$60,000 - \$70,000  \$70,000 - \$80,000  \$80,000 - \$90,000  \$90,000 - \$100,000  \$100,000 - \$110,000  \$110,000 - \$120,000  \$120,000 - \$130,000  \$130,000 - \$140,000  \$140,000 - \$150,000  More than \$150,000  Prefer not to say

**What is your age?**

[open-ended]

**What is your gender?**

Man  Woman  Transgender Man  Transgender Woman  Non-binary  Other (please specify):  Prefer not to say

**Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**

No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin  Yes, Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano  Yes, Puerto Rican  
 Yes, Cuban  Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, Spanish origin (please specify):  Prefer not to say

**What is your race? (Select all that apply.)**

White  Black or African American  American Indian or Alaska Native  Asian  
 Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander  Other (please specify):  Prefer not to say

**Which of the following options best describes your sexual identity/sexual orientation?**

Straight  Lesbian  Gay  Bisexual  Asexual  Other  Prefer not to say

**What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

High school diploma or GED  Some college, no degree  2-year college degree  4-year college degree  
 Post-graduate degree  Prefer not to say

**What is your marital/partnership status? (Select all that apply.)**

Married  Divorced  Separated  Widowed  Partnered (not single)  Single  Live with spouse/partner  
 Prefer not to say

**Do you live with individuals that you care for as a parent or guardian (e.g., children, adults with special needs, elderly individuals)? If so, how many?** [open-ended]

**Are you the sole source of income for your household (i.e., are you in a single-income household)?**

Yes  No  Prefer not to say

**Which of the following best describes the type of building you live in?**

Single-family house  Condominium/townhouse  Apartment  Manufactured/mobile home  
 Other (please specify):  Prefer not to say

**Is the income from your law enforcement position sufficient to purchase a home that is large enough for your family within the jurisdiction in which you work?**

Yes  No  Prefer not to say

**Generally speaking, how do you identify politically?**

Strong Democrat  Democrat  Independent leaning to Democrat  Independent  
 Independent leaning to Republican  Republican  Strong Republican  Unaffiliated  Other (please specify):  
 Prefer not to say

**Generally speaking, how do you perceive the political orientation of the police department in the jurisdiction in which you live?**

Strong Democrat  Democrat  Independent leaning to Democrat  Independent  
 Independent leaning to Republican  Republican  Strong Republican  Unaffiliated  Other (please specify):  
 Prefer not to say

*You have completed all five sections of the survey. Thank you!*

**If you would like to enter the drawing to win one of 500 available \$50 Amazon gift cards, please enter your email address in the box below.** [open-ended]

*Please provide us with any other feedback or insights that you have regarding the recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers in Arizona. (Leave blank if you prefer not to say.)* [open-ended]

## End Notes

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- 1 Dierdra Bycura, Fefei Zhang, Osei Akoto Kwarteng, Ian Syfert, Hulan Edward, Emma Raney, and Gabriella Diaz, "Arizona Fire Service Retention Survey", Northern Arizona University, 2023.
- 2 Dierdra Bycura, Fefei Zhang, Osei Akoto Kwarteng, Ian Syfert, Hulan Edward, Emma Raney, and Gabriella Diaz, "Arizona Fire Service Retention Survey", Northern Arizona University, 2023.
- 3 Dierdra Bycura, Fefei Zhang, Osei Akoto Kwarteng, Ian Syfert, Hulan Edward, Emma Raney, and Gabriella Diaz, "Arizona Fire Service Retention Survey", Northern Arizona University, 2023.
- 4 Dierdra Bycura, Fefei Zhang, Osei Akoto Kwarteng, Ian Syfert, Hulan Edward, Emma Raney, and Gabriella Diaz, "Arizona Fire Service Retention Survey", Northern Arizona University, 2023.
- 5 Dierdra Bycura, Fefei Zhang, Osei Akoto Kwarteng, Ian Syfert, Hulan Edward, Emma Raney, and Gabriella Diaz, "Arizona Fire Service Retention Survey", Northern Arizona University, 2023.
- 6 Dierdra Bycura, Fefei Zhang, Osei Akoto Kwarteng, Ian Syfert, Hulan Edward, Emma Raney, and Gabriella Diaz, "Arizona Fire Service Retention Survey", Northern Arizona University, 2023.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ARIZONA'S  
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL

## Arizona Law Enforcement Retention Survey



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ARIZONA

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