



City of New Bedford
Office of the Mayor
Contact: Holly Huntoon
(508) 989-4407
Holly.Huntoon@newbedford-ma.gov

Date: Wednesday, July 12, 2023
For Immediate Release

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

PRESS RELEASE

City and Police Union Reach Contract Agreement *Body-Worn Cameras, More Competitive Salaries*

New Bedford, MA – After months of negotiation, the City and the New Bedford Police Union have entered a new collective bargaining agreement, which will increase police wages and benefits to address the Police Department’s staffing shortages. The agreement also paves the way for the use of body-worn cameras by all officers. The agreement runs from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2024, and is subject to City Council approval.

The agreement includes the following new provisions:

- The residency requirement for new officers would be reduced from ten years to four years, and the City is authorized to waive the requirement if the Department’s staffing needs demand it.
- 2% cost of living adjustment in each year of the contract.
- 2% added to the base pay for the officer’s certification by the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission, effective January 1, 2024, and again on June 30, 2024.
- Effective on July 1, 2022: Step 1 on the pay scale is eliminated.
- Effective on July 1, 2023: Step 2 on the pay scale is eliminated and a new step, Step 6, is created at 2% above Step 5.
 - o For officers with 15+ years of service in the New Bedford Police Department, a new 15-year step is created at 4% above Step 5.
 - o Step 5A becomes the 25-year step at 6% above Step 5 for officers with 25+ years of service.
 - o Rank differential is increased to 18%.
- \$3,000 retention payment for officers who remain employed with the City 30 days after City Council funds the contract.

- Education incentive payments are increased, and additional degrees are added to the list of qualifying degrees.
- Vacation time added for officers with 15-20 years of service.
- Added pay for officers who work on Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- Restrictions on the use of sick time.
- The police chief may use retired officers to conduct background checks.
- After training, the department can begin to introduce body-worn cameras.

“I am pleased that both sides worked toward a resolution that enables us to address staffing shortages with which departments across America are struggling,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell. “I am proud of the work our officers do to keep New Bedford safe, and I believe that this new contract will put them in a stronger position to achieve professional success.”

“I’m very pleased that the City has reached an amicable agreement with the union and settled this contract,” said Police Chief Paul Oliveira. “I look forward to working with the union leadership as we continue to serve the citizens of New Bedford. As always, I remain very proud of the men and women of this department.”

The term of the contract is estimated to cost \$3.5 million from the City’s General Fund.