

RCW 43.43.386 Annual longevity bonus. (Expires June 30, 2029.)

(1) Beginning July 1, 2024, an eligible commissioned employee completing 26 or more years of service shall qualify for an annual state trooper longevity bonus of \$15,000 on the employee's anniversary date of state employment, which shall be paid in four equal quarterly payments.

(2) The establishment of the state trooper longevity bonus is subject to a change to the applicable collective bargaining agreements negotiated with the exclusive bargaining representatives.

(3) This section does not interfere with, impede, or in any way diminish the right of the officers of the Washington state patrol to bargain collectively with the state through the exclusive bargaining representatives as provided for in RCW 41.56.473.

(4) The state patrol longevity bonus created in this section is a time-limited incentive targeted at retaining senior personnel and is not intended to be included in salary or average final salary for calculation of pension benefits in this chapter.

(5) The benefits provided pursuant to chapter 237, Laws of 2024 are not provided to employees as a matter of contractual right. The legislature retains the right to alter or abolish these benefits at any time.

(6) Beginning July 15, 2024, and every three months thereafter, the Washington state patrol must submit a report showing the average filled positions in field force trooper positions in comparison to the 683 total authorized field force trooper positions in the prior fiscal quarter. The quarterly reports detailed must be submitted to the office of financial management and the transportation committees of the legislature. The authorized field force trooper level as the basis for this comparison may be adjusted as specified in the omnibus transportation appropriations act.

(7) For the purposes of this section, "eligible commissioned employee" means a Washington state patrol employee with 26 or more years of service in the Washington state patrol retirement system.

(8) This section expires June 30, 2029. [2024 c 237 s 2.]

Performance review—2024 c 237: "(1) By November 1, 2028, the joint legislative audit and review committee must conduct a performance review of the state patrol longevity bonus pilot program. The performance review must evaluate, at minimum:

(a) The program's impact on retention of senior commissioned staff of the state patrol;

(b) The change in vacancies in each of the commissioned staff categories over time;

(c) An evaluation of optimal commissioned staffing levels at the state patrol, including a comparison to other states' field force staffing levels;

(d) A description of other factors that may be impacting retention and vacancy rates; and

(e) Recommendations for addressing state patrol staffing levels, which must include whether to continue the state patrol longevity bonus program.

(2) This section expires June 30, 2029." [2024 c 237 s 4.]

Findings—Intent—2024 c 237: "The legislature finds that the Washington state patrol has made strides in its efforts to recruit new troopers and address the unprecedented levels of vacancies within its

ranks. The legislature has supported those efforts by providing sign-on bonuses for cadets and lateral hires, retention bonuses for new troopers and lateral hires, and requiring parity of trooper salaries relative to other law enforcement agencies in the state of Washington. The legislature further finds that trooper and sergeant vacancies diminish the staff available to advance up through the ranks of commissioned staff to build the leadership team for the organization. The legislature further finds that increases in retirement-eligible staff, with 122 commissioned staff expected to have 25 years of service or more in 2024, means that more needs to be done in the near term to ensure the success of efforts to rebuild the commissioned ranks of the state patrol. Therefore, the legislature intends to strengthen the Washington state patrol's ability to retain senior, experienced commissioned staff with the establishment of a state patrol longevity bonus pilot program." [2024 c 237 s 1.]