

Total Compensation Benefits

1033.1 POLICY

Benefits and compensation are managed by St. Mary's County Government. The county provides its eligible employees with a comprehensive health prescription, dental, and vision care insurance plan to help pay medical expenses and provide additional financial security for the eligible employees and their families.

1033.2 AUTHORITY

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County agree that St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office personnel are eligible to receive all benefits that St. Mary's County Government employees receive. These benefits include, but are not limited to the following, which will be managed in cooperation with the St. Mary's County Government.

- (a) Insurance – The county provides various benefits for its eligible employees and their dependents through a pretax flexible benefits or cafeteria benefits plan, which allows employees to design an individualized benefits program to suit their own special needs. Coverage available:
 - 1. Health
 - 2. Life
 - 3. Vision
 - 4. Dental
 - 5. Prescription Drug
 - 6. Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) – The county offers both a Health Care FSA and a Dependent Care FSA. Note: As approved by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, eligible employees may be given a benefit credit, money which can be used to offset the cost of benefits. Upon proof that an employee has other health insurance, such eligible employees may elect to receive this benefit credit as 'cash back' in lieu of coverage under the county's benefit plan.
- (b) Pay – Employees will be paid every two weeks.
- (c) Benefits Statement – The county will provide an annual benefits statement which details the value of all the benefits afforded to the employee.
- (d) Direct Deposit – Employees may elect to have their net pay deposited directly into the financial institution of their choice.
- (e) Business and Travel Expenses – Employees who incur required business expenses or required travel expenses may be entitled to reimbursement.
- (f) Leave and Holidays – All full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for leave and holidays. Contract deputies are eligible for leave and holidays per the contract between that employee and the sheriff.

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- (g) Social Security and Medicare – Generally, all county employees are covered under Social Security and Medicare. The cost of this coverage is shared by both the employee and the county, with each paying fifty (50%) percent of the total cost. The employee's contribution is shown on the employee's pay stub.
- (h) Awards & Recognition – The Commissioners of St. Mary's County may, from time to time, provide special employee incentive, recognition, or award programs for employees for the purpose of enhancing employee morale. These recognition programs will be administered by the Department of Human Resources, and Sheriff's Office Personnel are eligible.
- (i) Deferred Compensation – The county offers Internal Revenue Code Section 457 Deferred Compensation Plans (like a 401K Plan) to all full-time and regular part-time employees as a supplemental retirement plan. In accordance with the tax code, as amended, employees may voluntarily invest a portion of their annual income on a pretax basis which defers federal, state, and local taxes on the investments and earnings. The county will offer a variety of plans; employees should refer to specific plan documents for more information.
- (j) State Employees Credit Union of Maryland – Employees and their dependents are eligible to join the State Employees Credit Union, subject to the rules and conditions of the Credit Union.
- (k) Professional Development & Tuition Reimbursement – The county maintains a tuition and training reimbursement program for professional development and continuing education to enable full-time and regular part-time employees to enhance and upgrade their knowledge and skills and to build their effectiveness in executing assigned duties and responsibilities. The sheriff has the authority to improve this program for all sheriff's office employees within the confines of his budget.
- (l) Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program – It is county policy to contribute toward the payment of student loan expenses incurred by attendance at an approved higher educational program, subject to the terms and conditions outlined in the County Personnel Manual.
- (m) Incentive Benefits – The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office offers deputy sign-on bonuses and deputy lateral bonuses, annual compensation education bonuses, and foreign and sign language stipends. Effective January 1, 2024, employees who qualify for one of the sign-on bonus structures outlined below shall review and sign the "Employee Sign-on Bonus Reimbursement Agreement – St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office" prior to being eligible to receive the compensation.
 - 1. Deputy Sign-On Bonus - (Three installments totaling \$1,500 prior to FY23)
 - (a) Probation Release - \$500
 - (b) Academy completion - \$500
 - (c) When Hired - \$500
 - 2. Deputy Sign-On Bonus - (Three installments totaling \$15,000 FY23 forward)
 - (a) Academy Completion - \$5,000

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- (b) Completion of Probation - \$5,000
 - (c) One year after completion of Probation - \$5,000
- 3. Deputy Lateral Bonus Program - (Three installments totaling \$22,500) Employees who were certified by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions upon being hired are eligible for this bonus program.
 - (a) Completion of FTO - \$7,500
 - (b) Probation Release - \$7,500
 - (c) One year after completion of Probation - \$7,500
- 4. Correctional Officer Sign-On Bonus Program - (Three installments totaling \$1,500 prior to FY23)
 - (a) When Hired - \$500
 - (b) Academy completion - \$500
 - (c) Probation Release - \$500
- 5. Correctional Officer Sign-On Bonus Program - (Three installments totaling \$10,500 FY23 forward)
 - (a) Academy Completion - \$3,500
 - (b) Completion of Probation - \$3,500
 - (c) One year after completion of Probation - \$3,500
- 6. Correctional Officer Lateral Bonus Program - (Three installments totaling \$18,000) Employees who were certified by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions upon being hired are eligible for this bonus program.
 - (a) Completion of FTO - \$6,000
 - (b) Probation Release - \$6,000
 - (c) One year after completion of Probation - \$6,000
- 7. Education Bonus
 - (a) All full time merit employees are eligible for additional compensation based on their level of formal higher education. Payment will be requested by detail to the Sheriff through the employee's chain of command. This detail must include proof, either a copy of official diploma or transcript (indicating degree awarded) from an accredited college or university. One detail will carry forward through an employee's career with the Sheriff's Office; an updated detail will only be required when a higher degree is earned. Employees are eligible for one award annually for highest degree achieved, regardless of multiple degrees. The Personnel Section will maintain a list of personnel who have been approved for the bonus compensation. In November of each year, the Personnel Section will prepare and compile the appropriate County forms for all eligible employees and forward same to the Commander of the Administrative

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Division for review. A subsequent review will be performed by the Fiscal Section prior to forwarding the forms to County HR for processing. Employees who are approved for the education bonus compensation after November will be placed on the approved list and payment will be made the following year. Payment amounts will be commensurate with the degree earned:

- Associates Degree - \$125
- Bachelor's Degree - \$250
- Master's Degree - \$375
- Doctorate Degree - \$500

8. Foreign and Sign Language Pay

- (a) Employees providing foreign language or sign language translation services on behalf of the Sheriff's Office are entitled to a language skills stipend and will earn \$125 annually for their services. Employees are eligible to receive a stipend for each foreign language. To be eligible for this stipend, employees will make request by detail to the Sheriff through the employee's chain of command. This detail must include language competency, with any available supporting documentation. One detail will carry forward through an employee's career with the Sheriff's Office. The Personnel Section will maintain a working list of approved employees available to provide these services on behalf of the Sheriff's Office. In November of each year, the Personnel Section will prepare and compile the appropriate County forms for all eligible employees and forward same to the Commander of the Administrative Division for review. A subsequent review will be performed by the Fiscal Section prior to forwarding the forms to County HR for processing. Employees who are approved for the foreign and sign language bonus compensation after November will be placed on the approved list and payment will be made the following year.
- (n) Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – An Employee Assistance Program is available for use by employees and their immediate family to assist in resolving personal problems which may adversely affect employee performance. The EAP offers confidential and professional means to address and resolve personal problems such as alcohol/substance abuse, emotional distress, financial difficulties, marital issues, and stress management.
- (o) Family and Medical Leave Act Policy (FMLA) – FMLA will be managed by the county with the cooperation and coordination of the Sheriff's Office personnel section. An FMLA leave of absence is an approved absence which is available to eligible employees for up to twelve (12) work weeks for the following reasons:
 - 1. The birth of the employee's child and care for the newborn (eligibility to take FMLA for this reason expires 12 months after delivery).
 - 2. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care (eligibility to take FMLA for this reason expires 12 months after placement).

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3. When an employee is needed to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition.
 4. For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of his or her job. It is incumbent on supervisors to provide their employees with an FMLA packet; and incumbent on the employee to coordinate with the Personnel Manager or designee of the Sheriff's Office to ensure all appropriate forms and information are provided to the county.
- (p) Leave Donation Program – The county has established and manages a Leave Donation Program to cover major illnesses, accidents, and the resulting recuperative period by an eligible employee for that employee's personal use. Employees may donate accrued annual, compensatory, sick and safe, or personal leave to another eligible county employee who has exhausted all accrued leave.
- (q) Death Benefit – When an eligible employee dies, the following benefits may be available:
1. Pay and Leave
 2. Life Insurance
 3. Death Benefits from employee Retirement Plan (Sheriff's Office Retirement Plan (SORP)) or the Maryland State Retirement/Pension Plan Agency, if any
 4. Health Insurance for eligible surviving spouses and dependents
- (r) Workers Compensation – All county employees, to include Sheriff's Office employees, are insured and protected for accidental injuries suffered on the job, certain job-related occupational diseases or disabilities, and for loss of life resulting from such injuries. Employees are required to report all injuries to their supervisor or department head, who will make the report. The county will continue to handle all aspects of claims for on-the-job injuries or occupational diseases through appropriate insurance.
- (s) Unemployment Compensation – All employees are covered under the Maryland State Unemployment laws and may be eligible for unemployment compensation upon separation or termination from county/sheriff's office employment.
- (t) Extended Health Benefit Coverage – Upon separation, retirement, or other qualifying event, full-time and regular part-time employees and/or their eligible dependents may be entitled to retain their health insurance under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) of 1985.
- (u) Retirement Benefits – Full-time and regular part-time employees are required to participate in a retirement plan designated by the county and may be eligible for continuation of health and life insurance benefits. In addition to the County Intranet, current retirement plans can be reviewed on PowerDMS.