

Department Morale



CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Police Department

June 8, 2022

Morale Defined

Morale can be defined as confidence, enthusiasm, and discipline of a person or group at a particular time.

Key indicators of the state of morale include but are limited to the willingness to perform assigned tasks, or work towards the Department's objectives.



State of Policing Nationally & San Francisco

Research released by the Police Executive Research Forum revealed that a survey of 194 police departments, from April 2020 to April 2021, demonstrated that resignations were up 18% and retirements were up 45%.

Morale is cited by a number of Departments as a factor believed to have contributed to the increase in retirements and resignations.

The San Francisco Police Department has experienced similar trends over the last couple of years. We have experienced an increase in resignations and retirements since the beginning of 2020. Morale is believed to be a contributing factor.

Since 2020, SFPD sworn full duty staffing has gone from 1829 officers to 1639, with officer retirements spiking in 2021 and resignations/terminations increasing in 2020 and 2021. At the same time, recruits entering the Police Academy have sharply declined in 2020 and 2021.

Factors Impacting Morale

These reflect the most common factors that are impacting the morale of our members, based on voluntary admissions by members of the SFPD.

RESOURCES

Need for adequate and updated equipment, vehicles, and facilities

Lack of staffing necessary to do the job at hand

Internal Procedural Justice within the Department

The consistency and fairness of Command Staff

INTERNAL SUPPORT

Command Staff attention or concern for the health and wellbeing of line officers

The level of trust the Command Staff has in its officers

Lack of organizational support for line officers

Lack of support for the Department and its members

One sided, biased reporting regarding police incidents and/or the Department.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Negative & disrespectful public comments by members of the Commission about the Department and its members

Perception of unfair prosecutions of officers

POLICY IMPACTS

Mixed messages and/or unrealistic policing expectations

POLITICAL IMPACTS

Negative and vitriolic sociopolitical factors regarding policing in general and specifically regarding the SFPD and its members.

Impacts to Morale

How officers feel about their jobs contributes to their state of mind, which in turn has an impact on individuals and overall morale.

Officers have reported the following top five emotions that negatively impact their morale:

- **Unappreciated**
- **Frustrated**
- **Worried**
- **Beaten Down**
- **Angry**



Strategies Addressing Morale



Our strategies to address morale are broken down into five broad categories:

1. Wellness & Concern for Line Officers & Members
2. Organizational Support (training, staffing mitigation strategies, member appreciation efforts)
3. Command Staff Leadership Development
4. Facilities, Equipment, Vehicle Upgrades
5. Internal Procedural Justice Consistency & Fairness of Discipline System

Commitment to Improving Morale

SFPD is working with Stanford University SPARQ (Social Psychological Answers to Real-world Questions) to address morale and culture.

Stanford SPARQ's research has included in person interviews and analysis with Department members and community members regarding morale related topics, including community perspectives on how they see and value SFPD officers. Department culture is among the topics to be analyzed and shaped.

Stanford SPARQ research intends to:

- Analyze data obtained,
- Leverage empirical data to evaluate the effectiveness of department interventions and approaches,
- Analyze internal agency culture

This information will be used to develop evaluation tools, techniques, and trainings to intentionally shape our culture in ways that improve outcomes and morale for our members and the community members we serve.

Thank you.
Any questions?

**SAN FRANCISCO
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

