

Fort Lauderdale Police Department 2021 Annual Staff Recruitment & Demographics Report

Report Compiled by Performance Analysis
Assistant Chief Doug McDougall



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SUBJECT: Annual Staff Recruitment and Demographics Report
January 2021 to December 2021

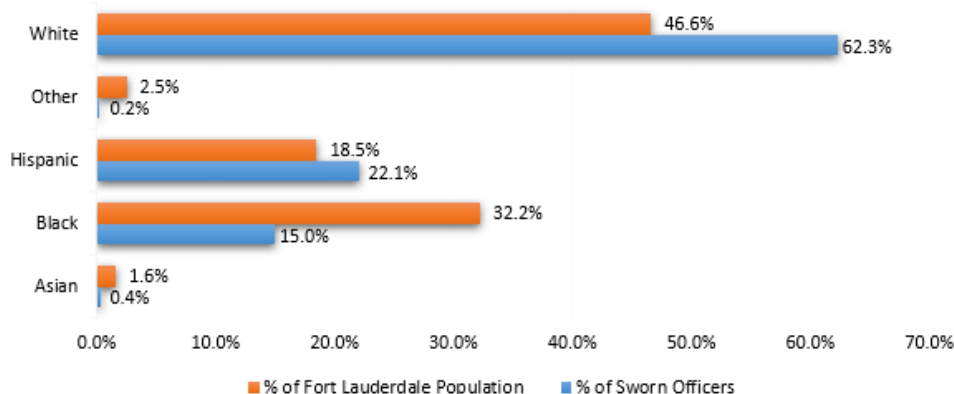
The Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD) began 2021 with 18 vacancies. By the end of 2021, vacancies decreased to 10. Sworn officer demographics as of December 31, 2021, are illustrated in the charts below along with a comparison to the population of the City of Fort Lauderdale.

| 2021 YEAR-END SWORN STAFFING LEVELS ¹ BY RACE | | | |
|--|------------|---------------|--|
| Race | 2021 | % of Total | 2020 City of Fort Lauderdale Census % ² |
| Asian | 2 | 0.4% | 1.6% |
| Black | 78 | 15.0% | 32.2% |
| Hispanic | 115 | 22.1% | 18.5% |
| Other | 1 | 0.2% | 2.5% |
| White | 324 | 62.3% | 46.6% |
| Total | 520 | 100.0% | |

| 2021 YEAR-END SWORN STAFFING LEVELS ¹ BY GENDER | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|---|
| Gender | 2021 | % of Total | 2020 Est. City of Fort Lauderdale Census % ² |
| Female | 105 | 20% | 47.8% |
| Male | 415 | 80% | 52.2% |
| Total | 520 | 100% | |

The bar graphs below illustrate the FLPD data above. The races of sworn staff does not currently resemble the racial makeup of the City of Fort Lauderdale reflected in the 2020 census. With the exception of officers that identify as Hispanic/Latino, the remaining race categories are under/overrepresented. For example, according to the latest census population, white residents make up 46.6% of the total population, while the Department’s staff that identify as white is 62%. Additionally, there is an overrepresentation of male officers and an underrepresentation of female officers. While females make up 47.8% of the City of Fort Lauderdale population, they account for 20% of our officers. In contrast, males make up 52.2% of the City’s population; however, they account for 80% of the officers

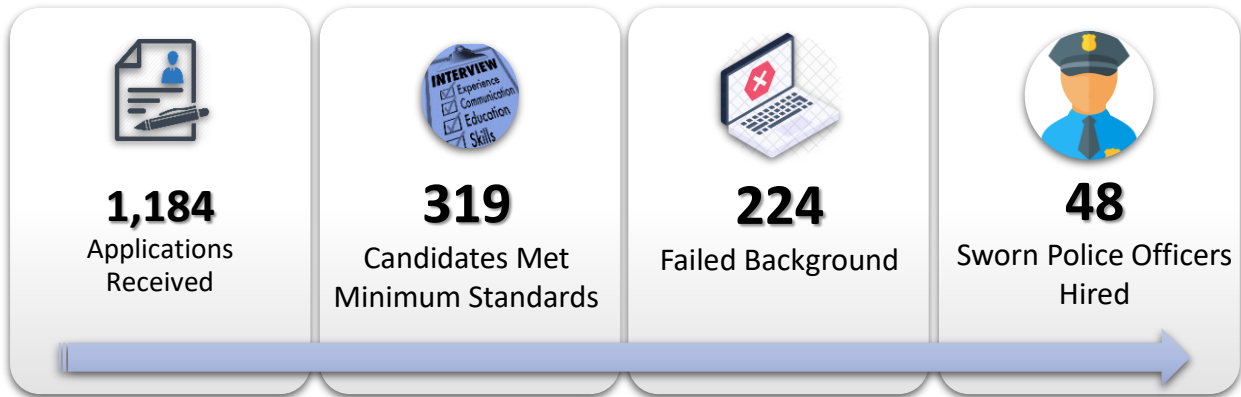
2021 Comparison of City Population and FLPD Staffing



1 - Totals current as of December 31, 2021, of all sworn officers, not including reserves. Source: Telestaff
 2 - 2020 is the most recent United States City of Fort Lauderdale Census data available. Source: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?g=1600000US1224000>
 3 - Note: Hispanic Census respondents may be of any race.

2021 HIRING STATISTICS

At the beginning of 2021, the Department began with 530 budgeted sworn positions. In 2018, the Fort Lauderdale Police Department initiated and completed a total revision of our application and hiring process. This process improvement accelerated potential applicant processing and paved the way to more efficient hiring from 2019 through 2021. The easing of pandemic restrictions (due to the ongoing covid-19 pandemic that began in 2019) created opportunities for more robust recruiting efforts and hiring. Applications for certified and non-certified positions closed in May 2021 and only certified reopened in December 2021. FLPD received a total of 1,184 applications in 2021. By contrast, FLPD received 1,067 applications in 2020.



Upon closer examination of the 1,184 applications received, a total of 319 candidates met minimum standards and therefore were processed further to participate in oral board interviews. However, only a total of 267 chose to participate in oral boards. Along with an increase in applications received in 2021, almost 27% met minimum standards, compared to 2020 when only 19% met minimum standards. The acceptance rate (applicants hired) increased to 4% from 1.6% in 2020.

| Breakdown of Sworn Positions 2021 Applicants | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | American Indian | Asian | Black | Hispanic | Native Hawaiian | Two or More Races | White | Unknown/ Not Specified | Grand Total |
| Female | 0 | 3 | 61 | 69 | 0 | 6 | 52 | 2 | 193 |
| Male | 6 | 12 | 219 | 346 | 0 | 29 | 347 | 21 | 980 |
| Unknown/ Not Specified | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 11 |
| Total Applicants | 6 | 15 | 282 | 417 | 0 | 35 | 400 | 29 | 1184 |
| Met Minimum Standards (attended oral boards) | | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 0 | 0 | 6 | 16 | 0 | 1 | 17 | 0 | 40 |
| Male | 0 | 2 | 42 | 99 | 0 | 6 | 78 | 0 | 227 |
| % | 0.0% | 13.3% | 17.0% | 27.6% | 0.0% | 20.0% | 23.8% | 0.0% | 22.6% |
| Failed Background | | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 0 | 0 | 5 | 12 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 0 | 29 |
| Male | 0 | 2 | 37 | 84 | 0 | 4 | 68 | 0 | 195 |
| % | 0.0% | 100.0% | 87.5% | 83.5% | 0.0% | 71.4% | 83.2% | 0.0% | 83.9% |
| % Hired* | 0% | 0% | 2.5% | 5.8% | 0% | 0% | 4.3% | 0% | 4.1% |

*some candidates hired began process in 2020.

In 2021, FLPD filled 48 police officer positions, while in 2020, 17 police officer positions were filled marking an increase of 182%. The following chart illustrates the comparison of race demographics of officers hired in 2020 and 2021.

| Sworn Officers Hired by Race 2020-2021 Comparison | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|
| RACE | 2020 | % of Hired | 2021 | % of Hired | % Change from 2020 |
| Asian | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | Not Calculable |
| Black* | 0 | 0% | 7 | 15% | Not Calculable |
| Hispanic | 7 | 41% | 24 | 50% | ↑ 243% |
| White | 10 | 59% | 17 | 35% | ↑ 70% |
| Total | 17 | 100% | 48 | 100% | ↑ 182% |

2021 YEAR-END SWORN STAFFING LEVELS

At the end of 2021, staffing levels were 2% higher than the sworn officer staffing levels from the previous year. The number of white officers decreased again from 333 to 324 (3%) by the end of 2021. White officers also decreased 5% by the end of 2020. The number of black officers increased from 75 to 78 (4%) and officers identifying as “other” races remained the same. Hispanic officers increased from 100 in 2020 to 115 (14%), the largest percentage change across all demographics. The increase in staffing was due to dedicated efforts to recruit police officers and the easing of restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

| Comparison of Year-End Sworn Staffing Levels by Race | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| RACE | 2020 | % of Staff | 2021 | % of Staff | % Change from 2020 |
| Asian | 2 | 0.4% | 2 | 0.4% | → 0% |
| Black | 75 | 14.6% | 78 | 15.0% | ↑ 4% |
| Hispanic | 101 | 19.7% | 115 | 22.1% | ↑ 14% |
| Other | 1 | 0.2% | 1 | 0.2% | → 0% |
| White | 333 | 65.0% | 324 | 62.3% | ↓ -3% |
| Total | 512 | | 520 | | ↑ 2% |

The number of female officers increased by 8 to 105 officers from 2020. In 2021, female officers made up 20% of sworn staff in our department, which is a higher representation of female officers when compared to the national⁴ percentage of 12.9% reported by FBI UCR data. Male officers made up 80% of the 2020 sworn staff; however, on a national level, male officers make up 87.1%. The difference between the national level and Fort Lauderdale Police Department’s reflects the Department’s efforts to have a more diverse force that is representative of the community it serves.

| Comparison of Year-End Sworn Staffing Levels by Gender | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| Gender | 2020 | % of Staff | 2021 | % of Staff | % Change from 2020 |
| Female | 97 | 19% | 105 | 20% | ↑ 8% |
| Male | 415 | 81% | 415 | 80% | → 0% |
| Total | 512 | | 520 | | ↑ 2% |

4 – Source – FBI: <https://crime-data-explorer.app.cloud.gov/pages/downloads>

2021 RECRUITMENT EFFORT

In 2021, the Fort Lauderdale Police Department recruitment efforts were still incredibly ambitious and substantial despite not only having to deal with the ongoing pandemic but also navigate through the new Covid-19 restrictions. FLPD recruitment teams attended 22 in-person expositions and career/ job fairs and administered over 150 basic motor skills tests and swim tests held at Broward College Institute of Public Safety.



Recruiters attended 14 virtual career fair expositions and formally presented at 13 in-state schools, one (1) military and one (1) veteran's recruiting event. They also attended various community events to include black, female and LGBTQ+ focused events and visited 19 in-state police academies. In addition to the traditional career fairs and recruiting visits, the team participated in 70 engagement events with direct contact to the public.

The Recruiting Team continued to partner with FLPD's Media Relations Team throughout 2021 to increase our presence in social media and placed advertisements in magazines and local newspaper outlets. Together FLPD has amassed approximately 57,547 followers across the social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). FLPD also advertised in Saludos Hispanos, Black College Today, South Florida Gay News, The Westside Gazette, NJ Cops magazine, The Chief NY Civil Service Newsletter, Police1.com, NAWLEE.org, The Big "O" Show, and the Equal Opportunity Employment and Education Journal.

A swim program was initiated to assist applicants with completing the swimming portion of the hiring process. FLPD hired one swim program graduate as a police officer and another as a PSA. Billboards were placed in Chicago and New York City which generated more interest than usual and produced a large number of applications from these areas. The efforts of FLPD's Recruiting team helped generate over 475 job interest cards and was successful in soliciting interested individuals amongst a very diverse group of people as evidenced by the high amount of applications received during 2021.

To increase and enhance our minority hiring to more closely reflect the diverse community that we serve, recruitment efforts geared towards minority hiring have remained strong. Recruitment attends career fairs and events at four Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in Florida and has relationships with the two largest, FAMU and Bethune Cookman. Networking continues with the BPOA and local high schools such as Dillard HS, Stranahan HS, Ft Lauderdale HS and Whiddon Rogers and work with NOBLE, YouthBTS and The Urban League of Broward County.



RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

One of the most notable challenges for recruitment stemmed from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic that began in early 2020. The pandemic limited hiring events and for safety and health reasons they were conducted virtually. Additionally, after a lengthy period without being able to conduct in-person oral boards, the Department utilized Zoom video conferencing but not without limitations. Due to IT concerns, the Department had to limit the number of candidates it could interview to account for technical difficulties. At times, candidates were unable to commit to Zoom oral boards. When the candidates score allowed them to proceed to the next step of conducting the background process, they became hesitant. This was extremely detrimental due to Personnel Rules, which states the Department can only hire individuals within “the rule of five”, creating cogs in the system. Other applicants from states like New York and Illinois simply couldn’t get time off work due to civil disturbances and Covid-19.

Additionally, due to the pandemic, required testing administered by the Academy such as the agility, CJBAT and swim were suspended for a large part of the year. The Department cannot hire until those requirements are completed. The same issue held true for the Social Security Administration as Backgrounds tried to verify job history or undocumented jobs that were not listed by an applicant.

Consistently throughout the year, the Department encountered Covid-19 infected staff and quarantines. This became an obstacle to workflow and increased the negative psychological effects of coming to work and possibly being infected. However, the Background Unit continued to work at full capacity throughout the pandemic.

Additional challenges were presented with the increased retirements and unexpected resignations due to a number of variables including the negative image of law enforcement. Internally, throughout 2021 the Department was led by an internal interim chief who was subsequently replaced by an external interim chief and finally a permanent chief. The multiple changes in leadership within 12 months, along with differing visions and thoughts, created multiple pivots and directions in hiring.

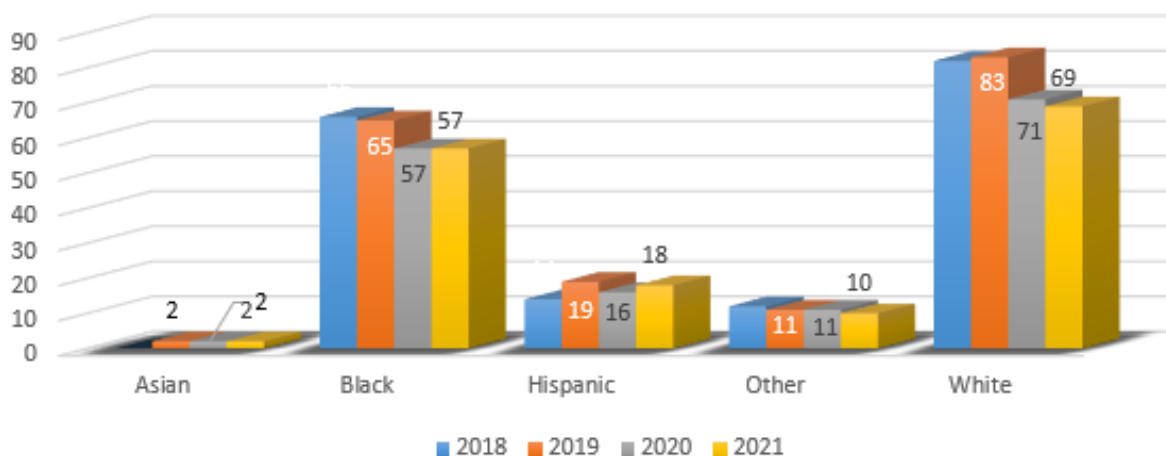
Finally, FLPD was tasked with conducting background investigations for the Fort Lauderdale Fire Department. In the beginning of the year, the Fire Department occupied the majority of the oral board time slots conducted by Human Resources for January, February and into March. The lack of availability to conduct oral boards yielded less applicants to work with. FLPD facilitated the hiring of over 25 firefighters in 2021, and a similar outcome is expected in 2022.

Despite the challenges that were presented, the unit was able to identify areas of improvement to streamline the process. As a result, 48 sworn candidates were hired in 2021, the most candidates hired since 2007. Additionally, factoring in the number of professional candidates, FLPD’s recruitment and hiring resulted in a total of over 100 new hires for the Department .

PROFESSIONAL STAFFING AND RECRUITING

The Recruiting and Background Units tracked professional personnel and recruitment efforts as well. The figures below are representative of staffing between 2018 and 2021. Professional staff decreased by 1% in 2021 when compared to 2020. When broken down by race, white staff made up 44%, while black staff made up 37%. Hispanic staff increased from 16 to 18 employees and made up 13% of professional staff in 2021. Staff identifying as Asian remained at 2 and made up 1% of professional staff.

Year-End Professional Staffing By Race 2018-2021



In 2019, female professional staff remained at 72% in 2021 while male professional staff remained at 28%. Compared to national statistics⁴ of professional employees working in law enforcement agencies, female professional staff make up 60.4% while male professional staff make up 39.6%. This reflects an over-representation of female staff and under-representation of male staff when compared to national totals.

The Recruiting and Background Units continued their roles in finding and processing qualified professional personnel. While there was a large increase in the hiring of professional staff, there was also a large increase of professional staff turnover in the department. The recruiting and hiring efforts managed to keep the Department's professional staffing at a similar level from the previous year, however, there are currently 23 vacancies which are on track to be filled within the first half of 2021.

| Comparison of Professional Employees Hired by Race 2020/2021 | | | |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Race | 2020 | 2021 | % Difference |
| Black | 6 | 16 | ↑ 167% |
| Hispanic | 0 | 5 | - |
| Other | 0 | 1 | - |
| White | 1 | 10 | ↑ 900% |
| Total | 7 | 32 | ↑ 357% |

| Comparison of Professional Employees Hired by Gender 2020/2021 | | | |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Gender | 2020 | 2021 | % Difference |
| Female | 4 | 22 | ↑ 450% |
| Male | 3 | 10 | ↑ 233% |
| Total | 7 | 32 | ↑ 357% |

A total of 8 promotions or transfers of professional staff took place during 2021. In 2021 there were four black professionals, one Hispanic professional and one professional that identified as “other” that were promoted/transferred.

| Professional Promotions/Transfers | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Race | 2020 | 2021 |
| Black | 5 | 4 |
| Hispanic | 0 | 1 |
| Other | 0 | 1 |
| White | 2 | 2 |
| Total | 7 | 8 |

| Professional Promotions/Transfers | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|
| Gender | 2020 | 2021 |
| Female | 4 | 6 |
| Male | 3 | 2 |

SWORN ATTRITION RATE

The attrition rate for sworn staff during 2021 was 7.7%, an increase of 4% from 2020. This attrition rate is based on sworn employees that have separated from employment (retirement, termination, etc.). A total of 14 retirements were set to occur in 2022, however, 10 of those took place in 2021. In 2023 there are 9 officers set to retire, however, two have already left. Sixteen (16) sworn employees that were set to retire between 2024 and 2029 have retired early. Additionally, it should be noted that over 20% of FLPD’s sworn staff have been employed by the Department for over 20 years and could retire at any time.

| Projected DROP Mandated Retirements | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 |
| 7 | 14 | 9 | 10 | 13 | 14 |

CONCLUSION

There were significant challenges during 2021 including the ongoing global pandemic. However, the easing of restrictions cleared the way to more robust recruiting efforts and hires. Frequent changes in leadership in 2021 along with outside challenges (negative perceptions of police, ongoing pandemic, etc.) negatively impacted morale among staff, both professional and sworn, which led to early retirements and resignations. Focus has shifted to recruiting efforts and hiring after a permanent chief was put in place.

The Fort Lauderdale Police Department continues to emphasize the recruitment of qualified police and professional applicants in order to maintain a diverse work force which reflects the racial, ethnic, gender and diversity composition of the City of Fort Lauderdale. The Department continues its minority and diversity recruiting efforts through advertisement, college visits, recruiting events and community engagement. To address our college education or military experience requirement for application, we furthered our qualified applicant pool by substantial outreach at academic institutions and military events within and outside our area.

The City of Fort Lauderdale is an equal opportunity employer.