

Public safety workforce needs assessment for Placer County and Sierra College

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Prepared by the Center of Excellence for the Greater Sacramento region
Los Rios Community College District

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CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH



Summary of findings

No comprehensive public safety training center serves Placer County. Local, state, and federal law enforcement and fire agencies have been working with Sierra College to support establishment of such a center. County stakeholders and Sierra College asked the Center of Excellence to provide research and labor market information to inform the center's planning. The research resulted in the following key findings:

The county's public safety agencies include local, state, and federal entities that serve a diverse urban and rural region that has grown faster than the region or the state.

Law enforcement agencies include city police departments, county sheriff's offices and jails, highway patrols, an office of state corrections, and a field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Fire departments include city agencies, a half dozen special districts, and a multisite partnership between Placer County and CALFIRE. The county's population has grown significantly faster than the population of the region and the population of the state, resulting in the need for additional services.

Fire and police agencies note existing and projected staffing shortages, especially for entry-level and experienced law enforcement and firefighting positions.

Fire and law enforcement agencies universally cite staffing shortages and worsening recruitment and hiring challenges. Firefighter, police officer and sheriff's deputy, and correctional officer positions make up large shares of the public agency workforce and represent the most significant hiring challenges. Dispatcher, legal and records clerk, and probation officer positions are also hard to fill positions.

Occupation and awards data indicate a need to build additional local training capacity to expand a hiring pool of new candidates.

The number of awards from police and fire academies is far smaller than the number of projected occupation openings for firefighters and police and sheriff's patrol officers in the Greater Sacramento region. During the most recent three academic years, the average number awards from fire academies was 109, nearly half the five-year projection of annual openings for firefighters: 212. Police academies produced 146 awards on average annually, nearly a quarter of the five-year projection of annual openings for police and sheriff's patrol officers: 596.

First responder (EMT and paramedic) medical training represents a major staffing and recruitment challenge for local firefighting agencies.

First responder medical qualifications, including EMT and paramedic credentials, represent particular pain points for city and county firefighting agencies. Finding candidates who possess both the entry-level firefighting requirements (Firefighter 1 and 2) and the first responder EMT and paramedic requirements, has proven vexing.

Hiring challenges at the middle and senior ranks and a preference for lateral hires also point to a need for building additional local training capacity.

More senior positions in law enforcement and firefighting, including police sergeants and captains, correctional sergeants, fire captains and battalion chiefs, and fire marshals, represent hiring challenges. Whenever possible, agencies make lateral hires from regional urban agencies and from other regions and states because the new hires onboard faster and are more likely to complete training, but this practice does not expand a local pool of candidates and new entrants to the field.

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Placer County Sheriff's Office

Introduction

Placer County has no comprehensive public safety training center, making it difficult for law enforcement and fire agencies to (1) schedule and coordinate training for police officers, correctional officers, and firefighters, (2) backfill staff who travel regionally and statewide for training, (3) coordinate training and education to meet local needs, and (4) recruit entry-level candidates for local operations.

Working with Sierra College, local, state, and federal agencies with operations in Placer County identified needs for additional training sites and facilities. In 2018, county voters approved a \$350 million facilities bond that included a public safety training center to support local fire and law enforcement agencies in partnership with community colleges' public safety programs. Agency and community college partners engaged ICS communications to begin a multi-year planning process to assess the need, identify a site, and begin design and environmental scoping.

As part of first phase of planning, the partners asked the Center of Excellence for the Greater Sacramento region to provide labor market information to assess the local labor market for public safety employment. The research focuses on baseline occupation data for the county and the Greater Sacramento region for relevant police and fire activities. A questionnaire was distributed to participating agencies to gather information about demand for public safety officers, the hardest-to-fill positions, recruitment sources, and training partners.

The research primarily covered baseline occupation and training measures and entry-level demand. The planning conversations revealed significant need for training activities for incumbent workers. Fire and police require frequent training to maintain credentials and obtain additional credentials.

Overview and methodology

The research included an overview of facility and station locations and industry staffing; population trends in the county, the region, and the state; an occupation analysis for the size of and demand in the labor market; a review of jobs postings data for job titles and hiring trends; a summary of hiring and training feedback from stakeholder agencies; and an overview of training and education programs and awards trends.

Agency and staffing overview

To describe the public safety agency landscape in Placer County, the analysis used data on public safety sites, including headquarters, stations and substations, and special districts, from EconoVue/Dun & Bradstreet. It also used data provided by meeting feedback, web searches, and a questionnaire completed by the public safety agencies participating in the training center planning. Responses yielded data on agency staffing patterns, or the number of employees by position. The analysis includes a general range to reflect variations in available data.

Population data

The analysis compared population totals for Placer County, the seven-county Sacramento region, and California. The data includes a 10-year trend and a 5-year projection from the California Department of Finance. Public safety employment is by definition locally serving and as such is directly correlated to population trends in a service territory.

Occupation data

On the basis of a synthesis of studies from the Center of Excellence and a reading of the data in the context of materials and feedback from stakeholder agencies, the analysis combined related occupations into four categories: law enforcement/policing, corrections, firefighting, and EMT/paramedic. These categories are defined in this report's appendix.

Occupation data and trends provide baselines and performance measures. Standard industry data collection does not specify public safety beyond the broad category of Government and Public Administration. The data include baseline total, historical trends, and five-year projections for the occupation groups and key frontline and entry-level occupations.

Jobs postings data

The research analyzed jobs postings from Lightcast, using the occupations cited in the appendix for each of the major occupation categories: law enforcement and policing, corrections, firefighting, and EMT/paramedic. The data include results by job title and employer for jobs postings in Placer County and the Greater Sacramento region.

Two analyses are offered for each major occupation category: a sample of jobs postings in Placer County for the three-year period between May 2020 and April 2023 and an annual trend analysis in the seven-county Greater Sacramento region for top job titles and category totals for the 12-month periods between January and December 2020 to 2022. The samples from Placer County were too small for trend analysis.

Hiring, retention, and recruitment

A questionnaire completed by the public safety agencies participating in the planning process offers an additional source for identifying current and projected hiring demand. The questionnaire covered existing openings, current hiring challenges, expected hiring in the next 12–24 months, and retention challenges. It also contained questions on recruitment activities and hiring sources. The questionnaire is included in the appendix.

Training and education

The analysis describes relevant education and training programs at community colleges in the Greater Sacramento region. It identified the number of awards issued on average annually during the most recent three academic years.

Agency and staffing overview

The analysis provides data on the number of sites and approximate employment levels for public safety agencies, including law enforcement/policing, firefighting, and corrections, in Placer County. It also presents a general breakdown of staffing by position for fire and law enforcement agencies.¹ The occupation analysis below presents a complementary description of staffing patterns.

Law enforcement/policing and corrections

Exhibit 1 describes the sites and employment for four city police departments; the Placer County Sheriff’s Office, which includes units and offices covering jails and courts; a major Sacramento field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and local offices of the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation and the California Highway Patrol.

Exhibit 1. Law enforcement/policing and corrections agency offices and substations and approximate employment counts, Placer County

Agency	Sites	Staff count
Auburn Police Department	• 1 HQ	25–50
California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation	• 1 Office	*
California Highway Patrol, Placer County office	• 1 Office	<100
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Sacramento field office	• 1 HQ	200–400
Lincoln Police Department	• 1 HQ	<50
Placer County Sheriff's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 HQ • 4 Substations • 1 Coroner's office • 2 Jails • 2 Court Security Units 	500–700
Rocklin Police Department	• 1 HQ	75–100
Roseville Police Department	• 1 HQ	200–300

Source: EconoVue Dun & Bradstreet; ICS/COE Questionnaire; web searches

*Data not available

Responses to a survey of the law enforcement and corrections agencies in Placer County provide some indication of the distribution of staff according to position (Exhibit 2). An effort was made to combine city police and the Sheriff’s Office staff. On average, the senior leadership — the chiefs and sheriffs — account for 1% of the positions. Lieutenants and captains make up 3% of staff. Sergeants and detectives comprise 12%. The largest category, police officers and sheriff’s deputies, make up about half of the

¹ The staffing analysis does not include maintenance and repair, building and facilities, or information technology positions. Because city police have no significant corrections activities, those activities are separated out and described in the text.

positions. Reserve and community officers make up another 9%. Dispatchers account for 11% of the staff; professional, technical, and administrative staff positions make up 19%.

The exhibit does not include correctional officers or staff. Data from the county indicate that perhaps 18% of the Placer County Sheriff’s Department are correctional officers.

Exhibit 2. Staffing pattern for law enforcement/policing agencies, Placer County

Position(s)	Average share of staff
Chief/sheriff (assist/deputy)	1%
Lieutenant/captain	3%
Sergeant	8%
Detective	3%
Police officers/sheriff's deputies	50%
Reserve officers	5%
Community officers	4%
Dispatchers	11%
Professional and technical (evidence, records) staff	8%
Administrative staff	10%

Source: ICS/COE Questionnaire

Firefighting

The fire agencies in Placer County fall into three main categories. City fire agencies include Auburn Fire, Rocklin Fire, and Roseville Fire. Placer County, in partnership with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, has several stations in the county, including volunteer-run stations. Lastly, special districts are located throughout the county, often covering rural and suburban areas. Exhibit 3 presents data on each agency, the sites located in Placer County, and an estimate of employment totals based on several sources.

Exhibit 3. Firefighting agency offices and stations and approximate employment counts, Placer County

Agency	Sites	Staff count
Alpine Meadows Fire Department (part of North Tahoe Fire Protection District)	• 1 HQ	<25
Auburn Fire Department	• 1 HQ • 3 Stations	<25
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE)/Placer County Fire Department	• 1 HQ • 7 Stations	200–400 (some volunteer stations)
Foresthill Fire Protection District	• 1 HQ	<25
Lincoln Fire Department	• 1 HQ	30
Newcastle Fire Protection District	*	*
Northstar Fire Department	• 2 Stations	<25
Olympic Valley Fire Department	• 1 HQ	<50
Penryn Fire Protection District	• 1 Station	<10
Placer Hills Fire Protection District	• 3 Stations	<50
Rocklin Fire Department	• 1 HQ • 3 Stations	25–75
Roseville Fire Department	• 1 HQ • 9 Stations • 1 Training Center	100–150
South Placer Fire Protection District (includes Loomis)	• 6 Stations	<50

Source: EconoVue Dun & Bradstreet; ICS/COE Questionnaire; web searches

*Data not available

Responses to a survey of fire agencies in Placer County provides some indication of the distribution of staff according to position (Exhibit 4). On average, senior leadership — the chief, deputy chiefs, and battalion chiefs — make up about 12% of the fire agency workforce. Captains and engineers each represent about 22% of the staff, or 44% of the total. Firefighters are the largest category at 32%. Fire inspectors and examiners, GIS analysts, and coordination staff comprise 6% of staff. Administrative support staff make up another 6%. Staffing patterns for stations in the county may differ from those in special district stations or state agencies.

Exhibit 4. Staffing pattern for firefighting agencies, Placer County

Position(s)	Average share
Chief, deputy chief, battalion chief	12%
Captain	22%
Engineer	22%
Firefighter	32%
Fire inspector/examiner; GIS analyst	6%
Administrative support	6%

Source: ICS/COE Questionnaire

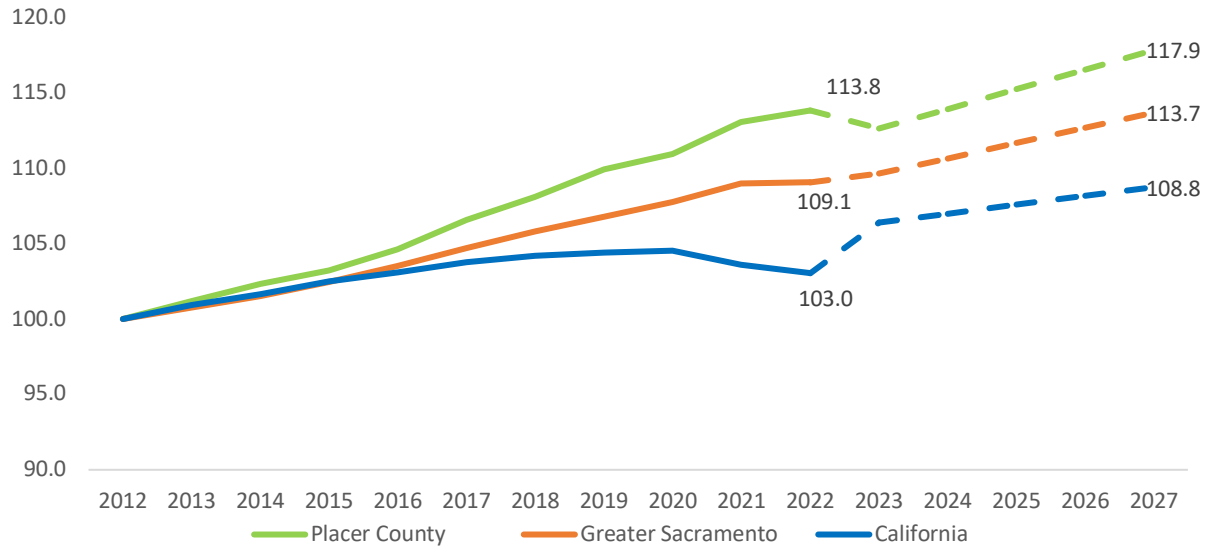
Population

Population growth in Placer County (13.8%) and in the Greater Sacramento region (9.1%) exceeded that in the state (3%) between 2012 and 2022 (Exhibit 5). Placer County’s population continued to increase during the pandemic, whereas the region’s population flattened, and California’s population declined.

Much of the county’s growth is attributable to the exceptional growth of its largest cities. Rocklin grew by 11.5% between 2017 and 2022. Roseville grew by 11.9% during the same period. Auburn’s population declined by 4.0% (Exhibit 6).

Placer County’s population is projected to grow more slowly than the population of the region and that of the state over the next five years. The five-year population growth forecast for Placer County is 3.5% compared to 4.3% for the region and 5.5% for the state.

Exhibit 5: Population trends and projections, Placer County, Greater Sacramento, and California, 2017–2027



Source: California Department of Finance, Population Report P2A

Exhibit 6: Population trends and projections, major cities, Placer County, Greater Sacramento, and California, 2017–2027

	2017	2022	2027*	2017–2022 % Change	2022–2027 % Change
City of Auburn	14,162	13,596	N/A	-4.0%	N/a
City of Rocklin	64,274	71,655	N/A	11.5%	N/a
City of Roseville	135,300	151,450	N/A	11.9%	N/a
Placer County	383,258	409,441	423,871	6.8%	3.5%
Greater Sacramento	2,569,771	2,676,518	2,790,281	4.2%	4.3%
California	39,352,398	39,078,674	41,245,009	-0.7%	5.5%

Source: California Department of Finance, Population Reports E-4 and P2A

Occupation data

Exhibit 7 displays a baseline of jobs and projected annual openings for major occupation categories in the seven-county Sacramento region and Placer County. The groups include senior, supervisory, and support roles. (Appendix A describes the occupations included in the categories.) Placer County represents between 11% and 16% of regional employment and annual openings in firefighting, EMT/paramedic, and law enforcement categories, but just 2% to 3% in the corrections category.

Law enforcement represents the largest category for jobs in the county and the region. There are 9,707 jobs in law enforcement occupations in the region and 977 in the county. There are far more jobs in the corrections category in the region (4,411) than in the county (98). Firefighting had 2,876 jobs in the region and 384 in the county. There are 1,564 EMT and paramedic jobs in the region and 384 in the county. Employment counts and demand for EMTs and paramedics is at least partly reflected in the firefighting category, in which allied health qualifications are a significant requirement.

Over the next five years in Placer County, there will be, on average annually, 45 firefighting job openings, 17 EMT/paramedic openings, 110 law enforcement openings, and 13 corrections openings.

Exhibit 7. Jobs and projected average annual openings in major occupation categories, Greater Sacramento region and Placer County, 2021–2026

Category	Greater Sacramento		Placer County	
	2021 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings	2021 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings
Firefighting	2,876	295	384	45
EMT, paramedic	1,564	147	258	17
Law enforcement, policing	9,707	1,013	977	110
Corrections	4,411	472	98	13

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Exhibit 8 displays jobs and projected average annual openings (five-year projection through 2026) for major frontline and entry-level public safety occupations in the seven-county Sacramento region and Placer County. The county’s employment and openings for firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, and police and sheriff’s patrol officers represent between 11% and 17% of the region’s total. The county’s employment and openings for correctional officers and jailers represent 2% and 3% of the region’s total.

Firefighting and law enforcement/policing occupations comprise a large majority of the total employment in frontline and entry-level public safety occupations. At the regional level, firefighters represent about 73% of fire-related occupational employment overall. Police and sheriff’s patrol officers make up about 64% of total employment in the law enforcement category.

Over the next five years in Placer County, there will be, on average annually, 31 openings for firefighters, 14 openings for EMTs; 3 openings for paramedics, 69 openings for police and sheriff’s officers, and 8 openings for correctional officers. Again, demand for EMTs and paramedics is also reflected in demand for firefighters.

Exhibit 8. Jobs and projected average annual openings, frontline and entry-level public safety occupations, Greater Sacramento region and Placer County, 2021–2026

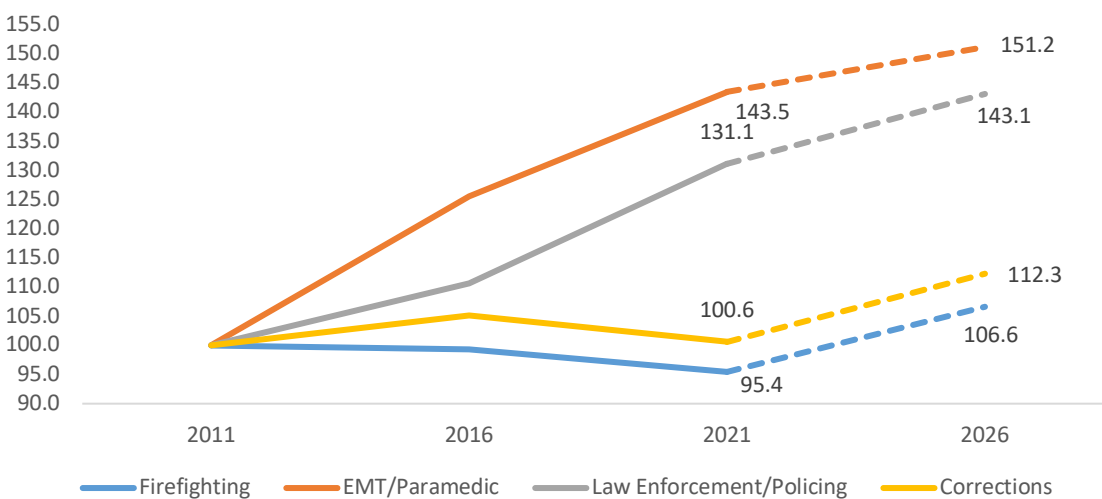
SOC	Description	Greater Sacramento		Placer County	
		2021 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings	2021 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings
33-2011	Firefighters	2,104	212	292	31
29-2042	Emergency medical technicians	1,150	115	194	14
29-2043	Paramedics	414	33	64	3
33-3051	Police and sheriff's patrol officers	6,114	596	670	69
33-3012	Correctional officers and jailers	2,293	261	54	8

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Law enforcement/policing employment grew 43.5% between 2011 and 2021 in the Greater Sacramento region (Exhibit 9 and Exhibit 10). EMT/paramedic employment grew by 31.1%. Firefighting employment declined by 4.6% between 2011 and 2021. Corrections employment declined after 2016 and in 2021 had about the same number of jobs as in 2011.

Firefighting and corrections are expected to grow by nearly 12% between 2021 and 2026. Law enforcement/policing is expected to grow by 9.1%. EMT/paramedic is expected to grow by 5.3%.

Exhibit 9. Historical and projected occupational employment, major public safety categories, Greater Sacramento region, 2011–2026 (2021 baseline, indexed to 2011)



Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Exhibit 10. Historical and projected occupational employment, major public safety categories, Greater Sacramento region, 2011–2026 (2021 baseline)

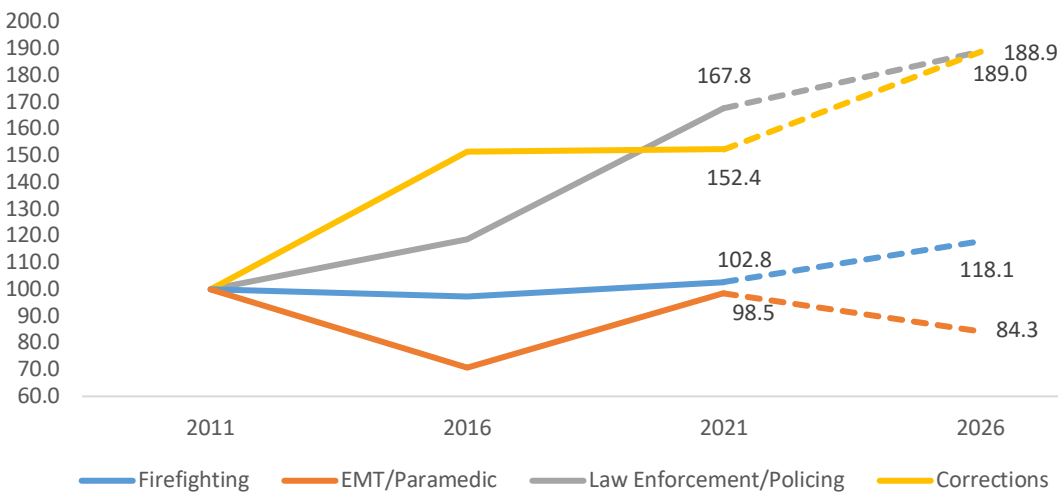
	2011	2016	2021	2026	% change	
					2011 2021	% change 2021 2026
Firefighting	3,013	2,993	2,876	3,212	-4.6%	11.7%
EMT/paramedic	1,090	1,368	1,564	1,648	43.5%	5.3%
Law enforcement/policing	7,403	8,189	9,707	10,594	31.1%	9.1%
Corrections	4,386	4,610	4,411	4,925	0.6%	11.6%

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Compared with the region, Placer County has experienced a larger increase in law enforcement/policing employment: 67.8% between 2011 and 2021 (Exhibit 11 and Exhibit 12). During that period, corrections employment remained flat in the region but increased by 52.4% in Placer County. Between 2021 and 2026, law enforcement/policing employment is expected to grow 12.6% and corrections, 24%.

In Placer County, firefighting employment and EMT/paramedic employment have remained flat in the 10-year study period. In 2021, firefighting employment was just 2.8% higher than in 2011. EMT/paramedic employment was 2.5% lower, after having recovered from a significant decline just prior to the first years of the pandemic.

Exhibit 11. Historical and projected occupational employment, major public safety categories, Placer County, 2011–2026 (2021 baseline, indexed to 2011)



Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Exhibit 12. Historical and projected occupational employment, major public safety categories, Placer County, 2011–2026 (2021 baseline)

	2011	2016	2021	2026	% change 2011 2021	% change 2021 2026
Firefighting	374	365	385	442	2.8%	14.8%
EMT/paramedic	262	185	258	221	-1.5%	-14.4%
Law enforcement/policing	582	691	977	1,100	67.8%	12.6%
Corrections	64	98	98	122	52.4%	24.0%

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Jobs postings

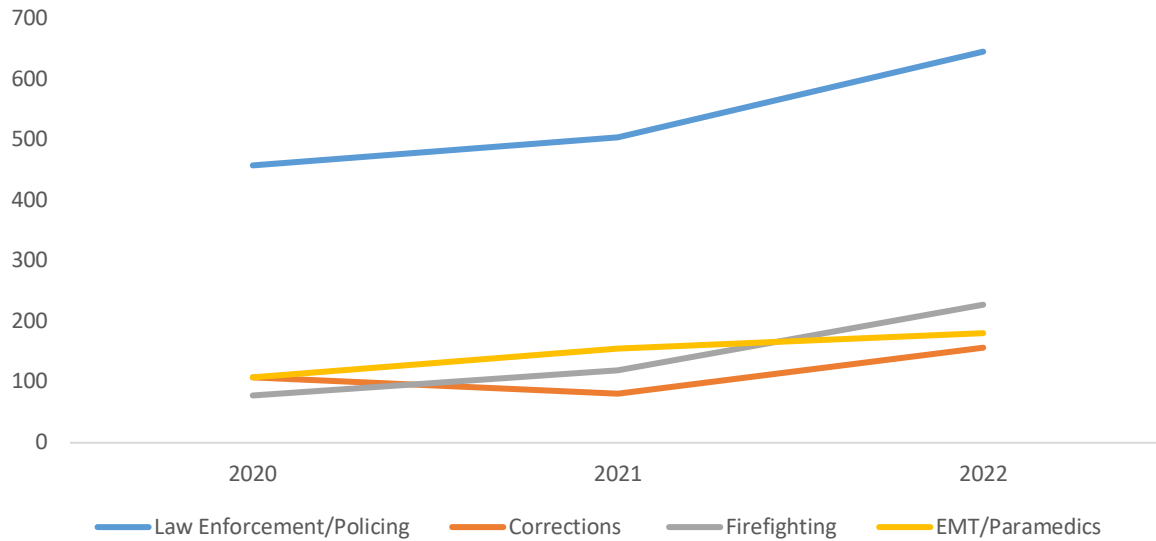
The jobs postings analysis focuses on hiring trends in Placer County’s public safety agencies and describes job titles that represent hiring needs. Where sample size is limited, the analysis uses trends for the Sacramento region.

The analysis reflects the overall volume of jobs postings in the four major occupation categories for the calendar years between 2020 and 2022. It includes a detailed analysis of a sample of jobs postings in Placer County, providing an indication of the types of positions for which local public safety agencies have recently recruited. Finally, the analysis disaggregates the postings and shows annual trends for the top job titles at the regional level.²

Jobs postings volumes increased markedly in every major category for the 12-month calendar years between 2020 and 2022 in the Greater Sacramento region (Exhibit 13 and Exhibit 14). Jobs postings in the firefighting category increased the most, 192% (78 unique postings to 228 postings). Jobs postings in the EMT/paramedic category increased by 68% (108 unique postings to 181 postings). Jobs postings in corrections increased 45% (108 unique postings to 157 postings). Law Enforcement/Policing postings increased 41% (458 unique postings to 646 postings).

² Detailed analysis of the EMT/paramedic category is not included. Detailed analysis of jobs postings in firefighting includes EMTs and paramedics in positions requiring first-responder credentials. A separate analysis of EMTs and paramedics in Placer County revealed a small number of positions in healthcare, ambulance, casino, and staffing companies.

Exhibit 13. Job posting volumes in major public safety categories in the seven-county Greater Sacramento region, January to December annual trends, 2020–2022



Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Exhibit 14. Job posting volumes and percent change in major public safety categories in the seven-county Greater Sacramento region, January to December annual trends, 2020–2022

	2020	2021	2022	% Change 2020 2022
Law enforcement/policing	458	504	646	41%
Corrections	108	81	157	45%
Firefighting	78	120	228	192%
EMT/paramedics	108	156	181	68%

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Law Enforcement/Policing

The detailed analysis of jobs postings in the law enforcement/policing category provides an indication of hiring in local agencies. Postings in Placer County suggest continual recruitment for police officers and sheriff’s deputies, reserve officers, and dispatchers (Exhibit 15).

Exhibit 15. Sample job postings, job titles by employer for law enforcement/policing, Placer County, May 2020–April 2023

City of Roseville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve police officers • Police cadets • Dispatchers • Police officers • Police sergeants • Evidence technicians • Police academy instructor
Placer County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public safety dispatchers • Sheriff's deputies
City of Auburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve police officers
Federal Bureau of Investigation in Sacramento	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special agents • Law enforcement specialists

Source: Lightcast, 2023.1

Jobs postings in law enforcement at the regional scale provide a larger sample of hiring trends. Dispatchers, deputy sheriffs, and police officers consistently had the most postings between 2020 and 2022 in the Sacramento region. Various titles show that dispatchers represent a persistent need. Variations of job titles in Exhibit 16 indicate that collective hiring for many position categories is larger than each job title suggests.

Exhibit 16. Unique jobs postings, top job titles and category totals, law enforcement/policing, Greater Sacramento region, January to December annual trends, 2020–2022

Job Title	2020	2021	2022
Dispatchers	53	51	66
Deputy sheriffs	53	40	53
Police officers	24	33	43
Public safety dispatchers	25	34	41
Criminalists	16	8	21
Special agents	12	6	20
Community service officers	12	19	19
Criminal investigator special agents	3	11	17
Police recruits	21	17	16
Police cadets	1	5	13
Dispatch supervisors	4	6	13
Police academy instructors	8	10	12
Criminal investigators	15	16	12
Lateral police officers	19	22	11
Sheriff's deputies	7	13	11
Special police officers	1	2	11
Public safety officers	7	5	10
Police captains	4	8	10
Courtroom deputies	4	4	10
Police dispatchers	3	12	10
Police sergeants	5	7	10
Total Across All Job Titles	458	504	646

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Firefighting

The detailed analysis of jobs postings in the firefighting category provides an indication of hiring in Placer County’s public safety agencies. There were few postings during the three-year study period. The data suggest there are needs for firefighters with paramedic credentials across agencies (Exhibit 17). Local agencies also had postings for battalion chiefs, fire captains, and other leadership positions.

Exhibit 17. Sample job postings, job titles by employer for firefighting, Placer County, May 2020–April 2023

Employer	Job Title(s)
CALFIRE (Auburn)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire battalion chief • Relief battalion chief
City of Roseville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighter/paramedic I/II • Fire battalion chief • Firefighter/EMT • Fire captain • Division chief
City of Auburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighter • Fire captain
South Placer Fire Protection District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry-level firefighter/paramedic
North Tahoe Fire Protection District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lateral firefighter/paramedic • Fire marshal
Olympic Valley Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry-level firefighter/paramedic
Foresthill Fire Protection District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire captain

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

The jobs postings analysis in firefighting also examined regional trends (Exhibit 18). Wildland firefighters saw a rapid uptick in postings. As in Placer County, firefighters with paramedic credentials are in demand. The regional postings also underscore needs for firefighters in leadership roles (crew chief, battalion chief, fire marshal).

Exhibit 18. Unique jobs postings, top job titles and category totals, firefighting, Greater Sacramento region, January to December annual trends, 2020–2022

Job Title	2020	2021	2022
Wildland firefighters	8	28	53
Firefighters	11	25	37
Battalion chiefs	9	7	26
Fire captains	8	10	25
Firefighters/paramedics	7	16	19
Deputy state fire marshals	6	1	12
Fire chiefs	8	8	9
Fire marshals	1	6	7
Deputy fire marshals	3	3	6
Section leaders	0	0	6
Planning section chiefs	0	0	6
Fire battalion chiefs	1	2	6
Fire protection specialists	0	0	4
Fire prevention officers	0	3	4
Assistant fire marshals	0	0	3
Reserve firefighters	6	6	3
Crew chiefs	5	5	2
Total Across All Job Titles	78	120	228

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Corrections

The jobs postings analysis broke out hiring trends in corrections. The jobs postings from the Placer County Sheriff’s Department indicates hiring needs for probation officers and correctional officers (Exhibit 19).

Exhibit 19. Sample job postings, job titles by employer for corrections, Placer County, May 2020–April 2023

Employer	Job Title(s)
Placer County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervising probation officer • Deputy probation officer • Correctional sergeant • Correctional officer

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Hiring needs for probation officers and correctional officers are similar at the regional level, but the jobs postings indicate a broader need, including for correctional sergeants and lieutenants, detention specialists, juvenile justice agents, and parole agents (Exhibit 20).

Exhibit 20. Unique jobs postings, top job titles and category totals, corrections, Greater Sacramento region, January to December annual trends, 2020–2022

Job Title	2020	2021	2022
Deputy probation officers	13	17	34
Correctional officers	23	10	27
Correctional sergeants	9	5	14
Parole agents	7	6	14
Correctional lieutenants	12	2	13
Protective services officers	4	4	11
Community service officers	6	13	6
Captains	7	1	6
Sheriff's deputies	3	6	6
Service officers	2	0	6
Detention specialists	4	1	5
Probation officers	0	4	5
Corrections shift supervisors	0	0	2
Juvenile correctional officers	0	0	2
Probation agents	7	3	2
Detention officers	4	6	2
Juvenile justice specialists	7	2	1
Deputy commanders	0	0	1
Supervising deputy probation Officers	0	1	0
Total Across All Job Titles	108	81	157

Source: Lightcast, 2023.2

Hiring, retention, and recruitment

A questionnaire was completed by public safety agencies engaged in the planning process for Sierra College’s training center. To address current and anticipated hiring needs, the questionnaire covered existing openings, current hiring challenges, expected hiring in the next 12–24 months, and retention challenges. The questionnaire also covered recruitment activities and sources of hiring.

Hiring, Retention, and Recruitment in Law Enforcement/Policing and Corrections

The law enforcement agencies responding to the questionnaire generally described hiring challenges. Police officers, sheriff’s deputies, dispatchers, and correctional officers represent the most significant hiring and retention challenges in terms of total numbers of current vacancies and projected hiring over the next 12 to 24 months. Population growth, which increases service needs, and vacancies due to turnover influence current and projected demand.

“Laterals,” law enforcement officers and sheriff’s deputies from other agencies, represent a major source of recruitment and hiring. These candidates take less time to onboard (3–6 months) than new recruits from the academy (12–18 months). Academy recruits may pose an additional risk for agencies because they may not meet the demands of local field training.

For in-demand frontline law enforcement and corrections positions, turnover presents a significant challenge. Survey respondents cited burnout, stress, and injury as factors contributing to early retirement and transfers to other fields. Rural and urban agencies alike said that higher-paying agencies inside the county and the region and in distant regions can lure away officers, sheriff’s deputies, and dispatchers. Low pay and scheduling issues contribute to retention challenges for dispatchers.

Other positions represent hiring challenges. These positions include community officers, records clerks, and legal clerks. Workers in professional and administrative positions are promoted to higher positions, leaving vacancies. Low rates of pay also pose challenges for retaining workers in these positions.

Exhibit 21. Questionnaire responses, law enforcement/policing and corrections, current hiring challenges, projected 12- to 24-month demand, retention challenges

Most in demand positions	Retention issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officers • Sheriff's deputies • Correctional officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnout, stress, injury cause early retirement or transfer to another field • Higher pay in other departments • Promotion creates vacancy • General retirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispatchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rates of pay • Schedule or other working conditions
Other in demand positions	Retention issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records clerks • Legal clerks • Evidence technicians • Crime analysts • Community service officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion creates vacancies • Low rates of pay cause workers to leave for another field, creating vacancies

Source: ICS/COE Questionnaire

Exhibit 22 summarizes responses from Placer County’s law enforcement agencies to questions regarding recruitment sources and challenges. The agencies report recruitment from regional schools and agency academies, lateral hires, and pipeline programs such as internships and explorer programs. They promote from within and generally described preferences for lateral hires.

In the questionnaire and partner meetings, the stakeholder agencies universally underscored the challenge to recruitment resulting from poor public perception of policing and emerging job

requirements. They discussed the difficulties that new recruits face in completing the academy and field training once on the job with the host agency. They indicated that Placer County’s quality of life encourages lateral recruitment both within and outside the region.

Exhibit 22. Summary of questionnaire responses, law enforcement/policing and corrections, recruitment sources and issues

Recruitment sources	Recruitment issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community college academies • Four-year universities • Within-region agencies (including of dispatchers) • Large city agencies • Training programs (through which some recruits are sponsored by agencies) • Student intern and explorer programs • Armed services channels, including ROTC • Outside-region agencies • Correctional officer ranks • Reserve officer and community service officer promotions to full-time officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor public perception of policing • Small academy classes, especially in urban agency academies, restrict downstream pipelines for smaller agencies • Host agencies get first pick of recruits from large agency academies • Academy recruits may not complete field training • Academy recruits take up to 18 months to onboard • Academy recruits may not pass background checks • Lateral hires are desirable for onboarding speed, 3–6 months • Reductions in health benefits discourages lateral hires • Out-of-state lateral hires must meet California’s Peace Officer Standards and Training requirements • Placer County agencies are attractive due to quality of life and working conditions in the county

Source: ICS/COE Questionnaire

Hiring, Retention, and Recruitment in Firefighting

Fire agencies responding to the questionnaire cited a particular challenge finding candidates who possess both Firefighter 1 credentials and paramedic qualifications (Exhibit 23). These candidates are in high demand owed to regulatory requirements and immediate hiring needs. One new station is creating a near-term hiring need for firefighter/paramedics.

Like police offers, firefighters with basic qualifications (Firefighter 1) are generally in demand due to churn in the field. One local agency indicated that a lack of a local fire academy inhibited recruitment for entry-level firefighters.

One respondent cited turnover challenges for senior management hiring due to retirements. Fire inspector was cited as a hard-to-fill position.

Exhibit 23. Questionnaire responses, firefighting, current hiring challenges and projected 12- to 24-month demand, retention challenges

Most in demand positions	Retention issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighter/paramedic • Firefighter I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retirements • None cited or similar
Other in demand positions	Retention issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire prevention inspector • Fire inspector • Fire chief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior management retirements

Source: ICS/COE Questionnaire

Exhibit 24 describes the responses to the questionnaire regarding recruitment. Like law enforcement agencies, fire agencies rely heavily on lateral hires. In addition, they recruit from community college fire academies and promote from within their own ranks. New recruits get qualifications from multiple sources beyond the academy.

One respondent cited the lack of a local academy as a challenge for recruitment.

Exhibit 24. Summary of questionnaire responses, firefighting, recruitment sources and issues

Recruitment sources	Recruitment issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local agencies (from which lateral hires are the largest source of recruits) • Community college fire academies • Private career technical education schools • Internal promotions (a source for sworn positions) • National recruitments (for senior management positions) • Agencies all over the state (source of lateral hires) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency growth • Combination of firefighter and paramedic credentials is hard to find • Lack of local agency academy

Source: ICS/COE Questionnaire

Education and training programs

This analysis identifies the education and training requirements for frontline, entry-level law enforcement and firefighting positions. It includes an overview of the education and training program at regional community colleges, and it provides data on the number of awards issued on average over the last three academic years.

Law enforcement and corrections education and training requirements, programs, and awards

The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) establishes standards and training protocols for law enforcement agencies and officers in California.

There are different requirements for officers working in courts, corrections, and local police agencies. Each track requires a set curriculum and number of hours to meet basic qualifications.

The Regular Basic Course is the track for sheriff's deputies and police officers. The course can be offered in regular, full-day sequences or evenings and weekend formats. The course can be offered in a three-module format, according to requirements for different levels of peace officers. This is the typical format for community college academies. The first two modules qualify trainees to serve as reserve peace officers. Depending on the format, the basic course academy can take 6 to 12 months.

Many police academies go beyond the minimum hourly requirement. Some urban law enforcement agencies are large enough to run their own academies. Local agencies establish additional field trainings once an officer completes the basic academy requirements. The field trainings last from four to six months.

Exhibit 25 outlines the programs in the Sacramento region's community colleges.

American River College houses a large regional public safety training center that includes a police academy, fire academy, Administration of Justice program, Homeland Security program, and an array of specific topics for routine training and advancement.

Cosumnes River College does not offer programs related to law enforcement. Folsom Lake College has transfer and general Administration of Justice programs.

Lake Tahoe Community College has a program in Administration of Justice, and it provides onsite and distance learning that serves multiple agencies throughout the state through a partnership with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

Sacramento City College offers an Administration of Justice program and legal studies (not listed in the exhibit below). Like Woodland Community College's Administration of Justice program, Sacramento City College's program meets some qualifications for roles in corrections.

Sierra College offers the first two modules of police academy, and it acts as a primary feeder to American River College and Yuba College, which offer Module I, the third module in the sequence Regular Basic Course. Sierra College also has a program that targets correctional officers.

Yuba College also has an Administration of Justice program that meets requirements for correctional officers and probation officers. Again Yuba College has a police academy and offers all three modules of the Regular Basic Course.

Exhibit 25. Community college programs in Administration of Justice, law enforcement, and corrections, Greater Sacramento region

Administration of Justice (criminal justice) — transfer	x	x	x	x	x	x
Corrections			x	x	x	x
Police academy	x				x	x

Source: California Community Colleges’ Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI)

Exhibit 26 displays the three-year average annual awards, including associate degrees, certificates, and other awards for the programs included in the inventory above.

Administration of Justice programs have the strongest award production of any law enforcement-related program area. Award numbers have remained remarkably consistent in the last three academic years. Sierra College and Sacramento City College lead award production in the subject.

Yuba College and American River College lead awards production for the Police Academy program. The data suggest police academy and corrections programs may be counted under other TOP codes, including Administration of Justice.

Exhibit 26. Three-year average annual awards, community college programs in Administration of Justice, law enforcement, and corrections, Greater Sacramento region, 2019–2020 to 2021–2022 academic years

TOP Code	Program description	Associate degree	Certificate	Other awards	Total awards
2105.00	Administration of Justice	520	5	0	525
2105.50	Police Academy	4	69	73	146
2105.10	Corrections	9	0	0	9
2199.00	Other Public and Protective Services	1	0	0	1

Source: California Community Colleges’ Chancellor’s Office DataMart

Firefighting education and training requirements, programs, and awards

The state Fire Marshal of CALFIRE oversees the training, education, and experience requirements for firefighters. Entry-level firefighters at local agencies must obtain Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 credentials to meet minimum qualifications. Agencies typically require experience as well as fire

academy certifications. Some fire agencies like Sac Metro are large enough to offer their own fire academies.

Local fire agencies typically require more hours of experience and more credentials than CALFIRE requires for entry-level firefighters. The U.S. Forest Service and National Parks Service have the fewest hourly requirements of all public agencies.

First-responder medical training (emergency medical technician and paramedic credentials) is usually essential for entry-level firefighters, though finding the right combination of credentials presents a hiring challenge. Increasingly, paramedic credentials are requirements for entry-level firefighters. Completing training, obtaining credentials, and meeting other requirements to get on with a local fire agency can take up to two years.

Like law enforcement officers, firefighters are constantly retraining and gaining new certifications. Getting skill enhancements and add-on credentials are typical for incumbent firefighters. In local agencies, formal college credentials and additional training are preferred or required for higher positions such as engineer, company officer, and chief officer.

Agencies maintain formal relationships with community college fire academies and fire programs. Exhibit 27 outlines fire academies, fire science and technology, and emergency medical services programs at the eight community colleges in the Sacramento region. There are fire academies at American River College, Lake Tahoe Community College, Sierra College, and Yuba College. Cosumnes River College offers wildland firefighting, fire technology, fire science, and EMT programs. Sierra College and American River College offer paramedic programs. Woodland Community College and Sacramento City College have no fire programs.

Exhibit 27. Community college programs related to firefighting and emergency medical services, Greater Sacramento region

Program	ARC	CRC	FLC	LTCC	SCC	Sierra	WCC	Yuba
Fire Technology (various)	x	x				x		x
Fire Academy	x			x		x		x
Fire Officer				x		x		
Fire Science				x				
Wildland Fire Technology		x						
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)		x	x			x		
Paramedic	x					x		

Source: California Community Colleges’ Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI)

Exhibit 28 displays the three-year average annual awards, including associate degrees, certificates, and other awards for the programs included in the inventory above.

The fire academies at American River, Lake Tahoe, Sierra, and Yuba have all increased award production in the last three years. These schools on average annually produce 109 awards.

American River, Sierra, and Yuba account for the majority of EMT certificates. Regional community colleges produce on average annually 45 EMT awards. Paramedic awards have decreased. On average annually, the region has produced 16 paramedic awards. No awards were recorded in the TOP codes

related to wildland firefighting or forestry. It is possible programs by similar names are listed under other TOP codes.

Exhibit 28. Three-year average annual awards, community college fire programs, Greater Sacramento region, 2019–2020 to 2021–2022 academic years

TOP Code	Program Description	Associate degree	Certificate	Other awards	Total awards
2133.00	Fire Technology	96	77	0	173
2133.50	Fire Academy	8	102	0	109
1250.00	Emergency Medical Services	2	34	9	45
1251.00	Paramedic	7	9	0	16
0114.00	Forestry	0	0	0	0
2133.10	Wildland Fire Technology	0	0	0	0

Source: California Community Colleges' Chancellor's Office DataMart

Appendix A. Occupation analysis

The occupation analysis provides a labor market baseline for the total size and performance of the labor market in firefighting, emergency medical services, law enforcement, and corrections. The COE reviewed past COE reports and worked with stakeholders to refine the analysis definition presented below. This report summarized the data in the major categories included below for current employment, and it projected annual openings over the next five years. It assessed the employment and demand for the occupations most closely associated with entry-level positions. Those positions are noted below with an asterisk (Exhibit A1).

Exhibit A1. Detailed occupations and major categories of analysis

Category	SOC	Description
Firefighting	33-2011	Firefighters*
	33-1021	First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers
	33-1099	First-Line Supervisors of Protective Service Workers, All Other
	33-2021	Fire Inspectors and Investigators
	33-2022	Forest Fire Inspectors and Prevention Specialists
EMT, Paramedics		Emergency Medical Technicians*
EMT, Paramedics		Paramedics*
Law enforcement, policing	33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers*
Law enforcement, policing	33-3021	Detectives and Criminal Investigators
Law enforcement, policing	33-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives
Law enforcement, policing	33-9021	Private Detectives and Investigators
Law enforcement, policing	33-3011	Bailiffs
Law enforcement, policing	19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians
Law enforcement, policing	33-9031	Gambling Surveillance Officers and Gambling Investigators
Law enforcement, policing	43-5031	Public Safety Telecommunicators
Corrections		Correctional Officers and Jailers*
Corrections		Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists
Corrections		First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers

Appendix B: Employer workforce questionnaire

In April 2023, the COE and ICS Communications distributed a questionnaire to the public safety agencies participating in the planning process for a regional public safety training center. The COE presented the findings and received additional feedback in a subsequent planning session. The results were anonymized and are included in this report. The instructions and contents are presented below (Exhibit B1).

Exhibit B1. Public safety training center employer workforce questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to gather data about public safety occupations in Placer County from law enforcement and fire agencies operating there. The results will help our research team produce data about regional workforce needs, where public safety agencies currently hire/recruit employees, and how educational/training programs are helping to produce job-ready candidates. This information you provide us is fundamental to the future design and plans for the Regional Public Safety Training Center.

1. Please list the location addresses of your Placer County offices and facilities. Please include headquarters and branch offices/stations. (We will use this information to look up site-based employment data.)
2. What percentage of your workforce are Placer County residents? How has this changed (or not) over time?
3. Please list your employee classification/job titles and the number of employees you have in each of these classifications/titles. Please delineate your sworn public safety positions from other staff (admin, logistics, etc.). If possible, please include this data for each location you listed in response to Question #1.
4. Considering those core public safety categories you told us about...what are your hiring pain points? What positions represent your biggest hiring challenges today? What positions do you expect to represent hiring challenges in the next 12–24 months?
5. Can you share with us the projected number of future hires you are planning for by job category, and the time frame you have set for filling the position (i.e., next three months, six months, or 12 months, etc.)? To the extent you are able, please note the job title and/or classification.
6. What job titles represent the biggest retention challenges? What are the primary causes?
7. Does your agency have a list of open positions that is publicly available? Can you tell us how you advertise open positions (please list the name of the website or publication)?
8. Where do your job applicants come from? Please list the educational or training programs that your job applicants (or new hires) have attended. If possible, please provide numbers or rough percentages for these educational/training sources. (Examples: community college, university,

public agency training programs, private training companies.) If possible, please separate these sources by job classification.

9. Please list any organizations that are sources for lateral hiring. Describe the classifications/job titles and any other information about increasing/decreasing sources of transfers.
10. Are there other sources for hiring new entrants to those core public safety jobs that are more informal (where they might be getting education or training hour requirements through volunteer work) or training organizations that we have not been mentioned yet? Again, we would like to know how many qualified candidates you get from these sources for each job category that you specified.
11. We are seeking data sources to count existing public safety workers and new entrants based on credentials (licenses/certificates) or registries. Do you have any of this data or is it captured by a state organization?



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The Centers of Excellence Initiative is funded in part by the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges, Economic and Workforce Development Program. The centers aspire to be the leading source of regional workforce information and insight for California community colleges. More information about the Centers of Excellence is available at www.coecc.net.

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All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research, secondary review of publicly and privately available data, and research reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the reported findings. The Centers of Excellence, the COE host district, and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are not responsible for applications or decisions made by recipient community colleges or their representatives on the basis of this study.

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