

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

April 3, 2020

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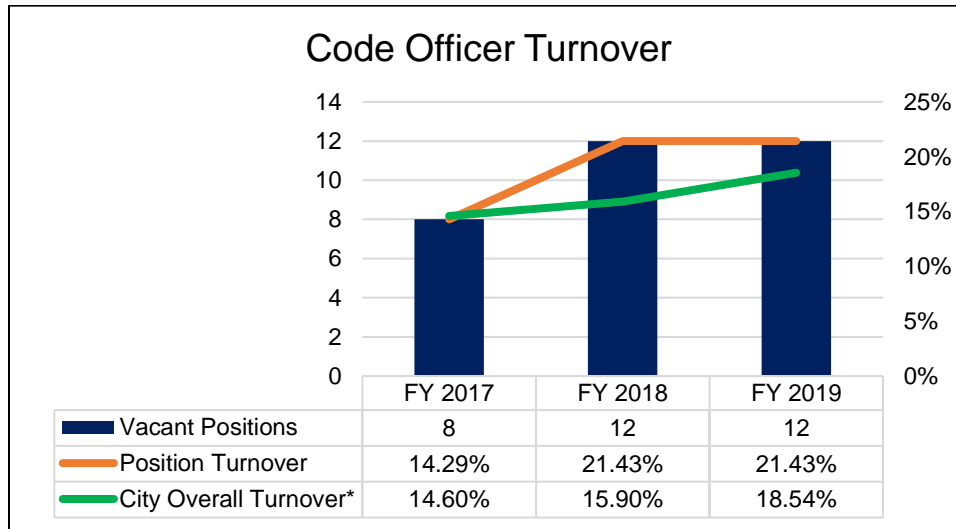
SUBJECT: CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER TURNOVER

Issue

The City Council requested information on the turnover rate of Code Enforcement Officers.

Turnover Trends

Over the past three years, the Code Officer position had a turnover rate 0% to 5% higher than the City’s overall turnover rate. When analyzing turnover, only vacancies created by employees separating from the City are included. Therefore, internal promotions are not included. A review of Code Officer turnover revealed the following data:



*City overall turnover does not include sworn Police or Fire

Turnover metrics are often a complex interaction of many different variables. During the past three years, Code Officer vacancies occurred for the following reasons:

Code Officer Turnover				
Reason	2017	2018	2019	Total
Promotion*	4	2	0	6
Retirement	4	4	2	10
Voluntary Termination	1	7	9	17
Involuntary Termination	3	1	1	5
Total	12	14	12	38

*Internal promotions are not considered turnover, but play a key role in vacancies

An aging workforce contributed to 15 (39%) of the vacancies. Ten Code Officers retired. An additional three Supervisors and two Senior Code Officers also retired giving Code Officers the opportunity to

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promote. Another vacancy was created when a Senior Code Officer voluntarily terminated and a Code Officer promoted into the vacant position.

Involuntary terminations were the result of behavior and performance issues that were not corrected by the employee. Seven (41%) of the 17 voluntary terminations occurred within the first nine months of employment. This caused the Code Enforcement Division to tighten hiring and testing processes to reduce probationary failures. According to information gathered during exit interviews with employees who voluntarily terminated, they often moved their careers to smaller cities with a similar rate of pay but a reduced workload. Given the City's efforts to maximize economies of scale, retention requires a workforce that is engaged in community issues, have leadership initiative to solve problems, and can prioritize different competing issues. These are job traits that do not always align with technical skills.

Recruitment Trends

Over the past three years when Code Officer positions became vacant, the average time from posting to offering applicants a position went from a high of 52 days to 32 days in 2019. Code Compliance worked closely with Human Resources to continuously post the Code Officer position so a pool of applicants was available when vacancies occurred. This reduced the vacancy time by at least two weeks.

Posting Title	2017 Average Days to Offer	2018 Average Days to Offer	2019 Average Days to Offer
Code Officer	47	52	32
Senior Code Officer	38	43	32
Code Supervisor	34	42	38

Low unemployment rates caused multiple postings to fill vacant positions when applicants did not meet minimum qualifications or did not do well during the interview process. Code Compliance recently revised the screening questions to place more qualified applicants with desired preferences at the top of the referral list. The hiring managers have seen improvement in the quality of applicants being interviewed which should reduce the probationary failure rate.

Coverage & Training

While Code Officer positions are vacant, other officers assume the responsibility for the vacant patrol areas. During this time, officers focus on citizen-initiated complaints, health hazards, and other high priority violations.

Newly hired officers receive six weeks of training in the Code Academy. Training consists of classroom lessons for ordinance, policy, and procedure review. Up to an additional six weeks is spent with a training officer conducting ride-outs and hands-on training in the field reviewing and implementing what was learned in the Code Academy. After training is complete, officers are assigned individual patrol beats and caseloads. Before initial probation ends, officers have at least three months of closely supervised assessments of their productivity and ability to perform on their own.

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**SUBJECT: CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER TURNOVER**Summary

Retirements and promotions have played a key role in Code Officer turnover. Vacancies are being filled quicker than in the past with improved screening questions. The interview process was also improved with reading, ordinance interpretation, writing, and presentation skills assessments along with the typical interview-style questions. Although existing officers must cover vacant areas for a limited time until vacancies are filled and new hires are trained, improved processes should help with retention of newly hired employees.

For questions regarding this information, please contact Brandon Bennett, Code Compliance Director, at 817-391-6322 or Brian Dickerson, Human Resources Director, at 817-392-7783.

David Cooke
City Manager