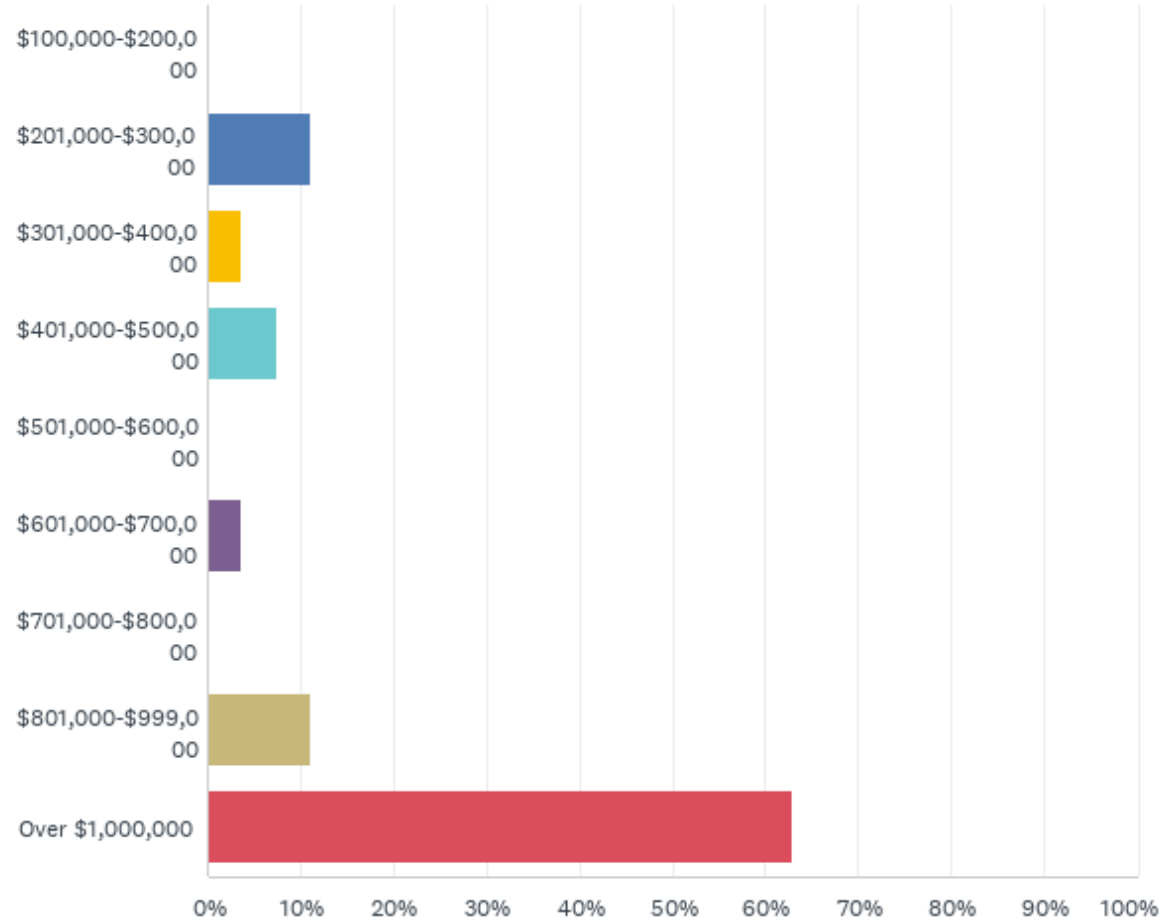
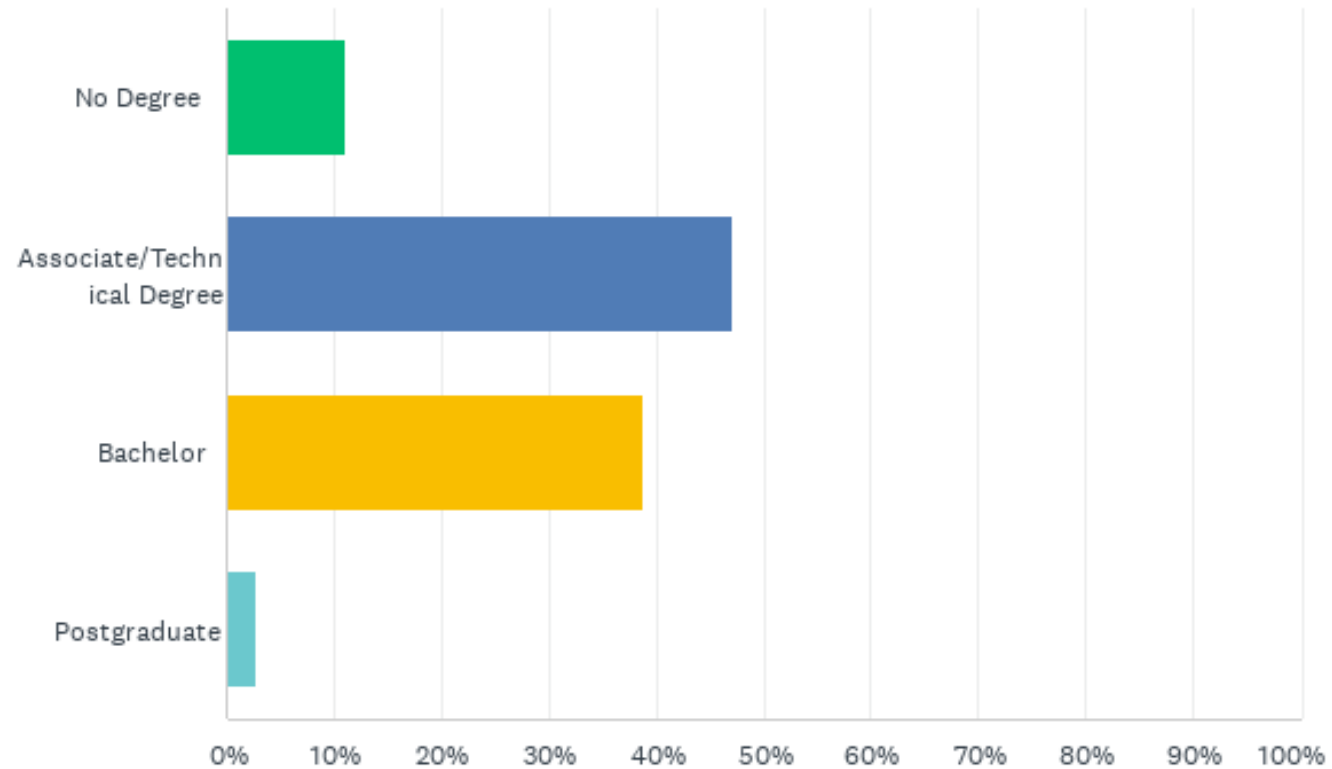


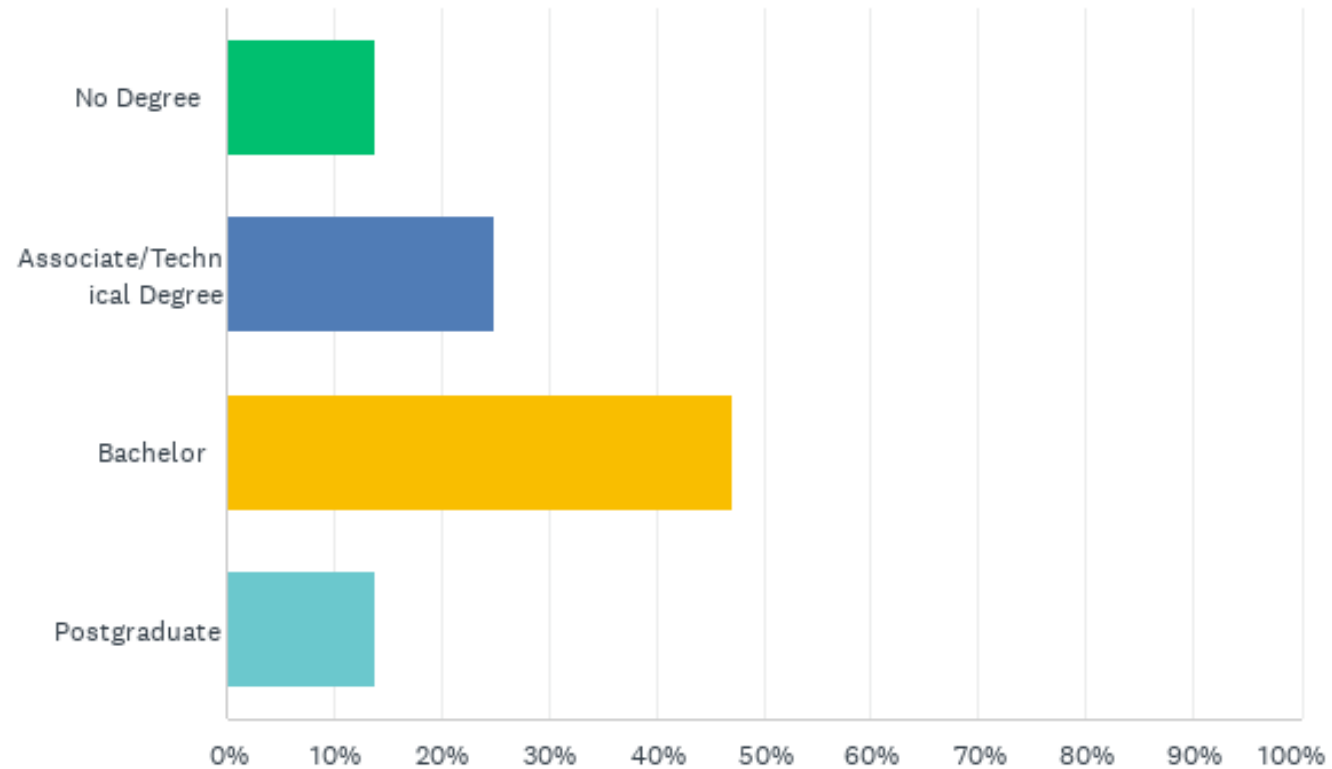
Q2 What is your annual operating budget? (Choose from range)



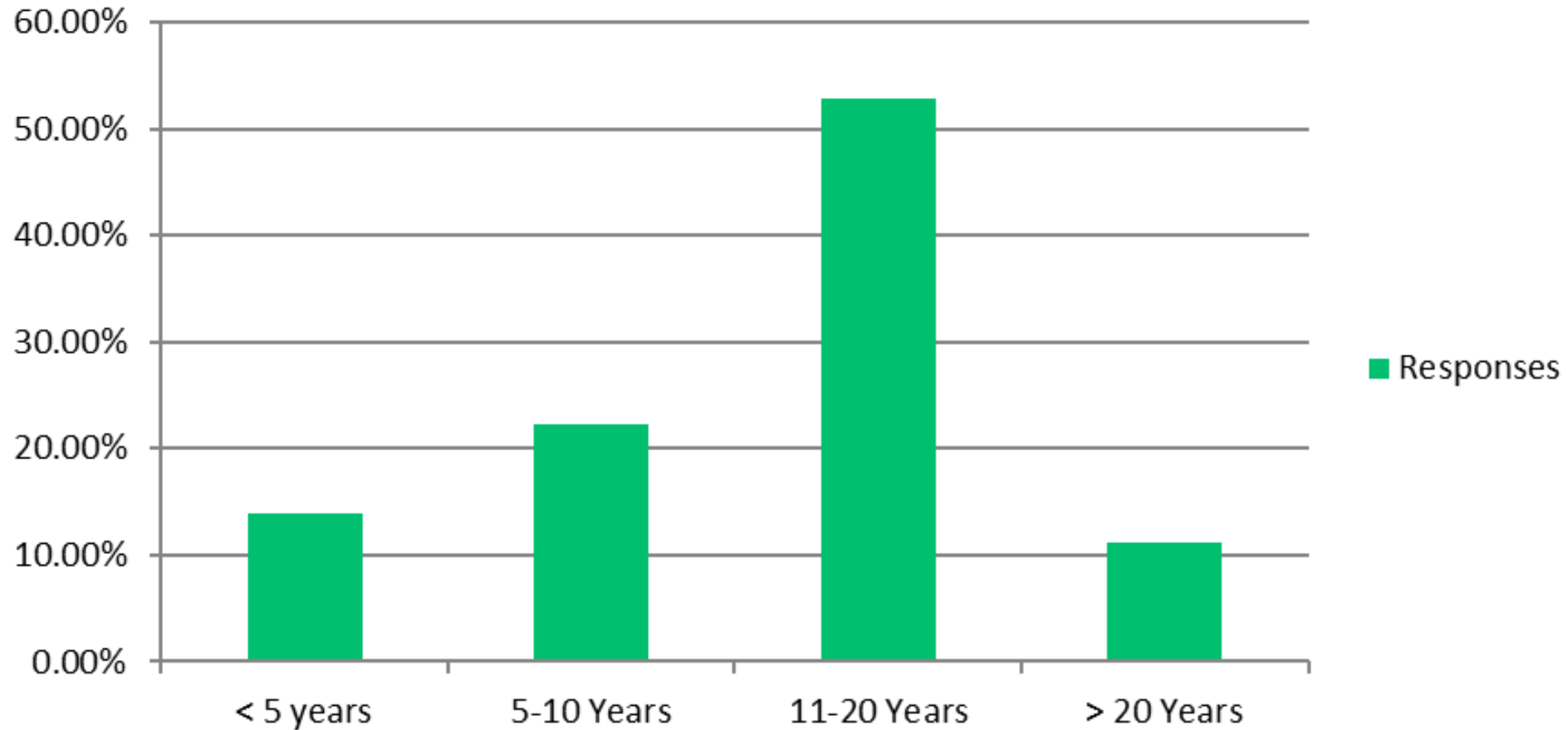
Q25 What is the average education level of your patrol officers?



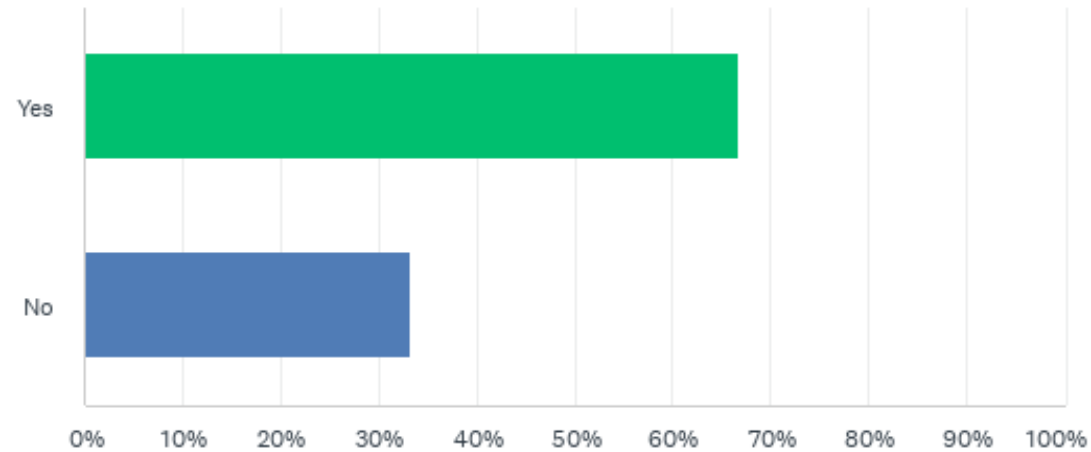
Q26 What is average education level of your Senior Staff/Leadership?



What is the average length of service for your department?



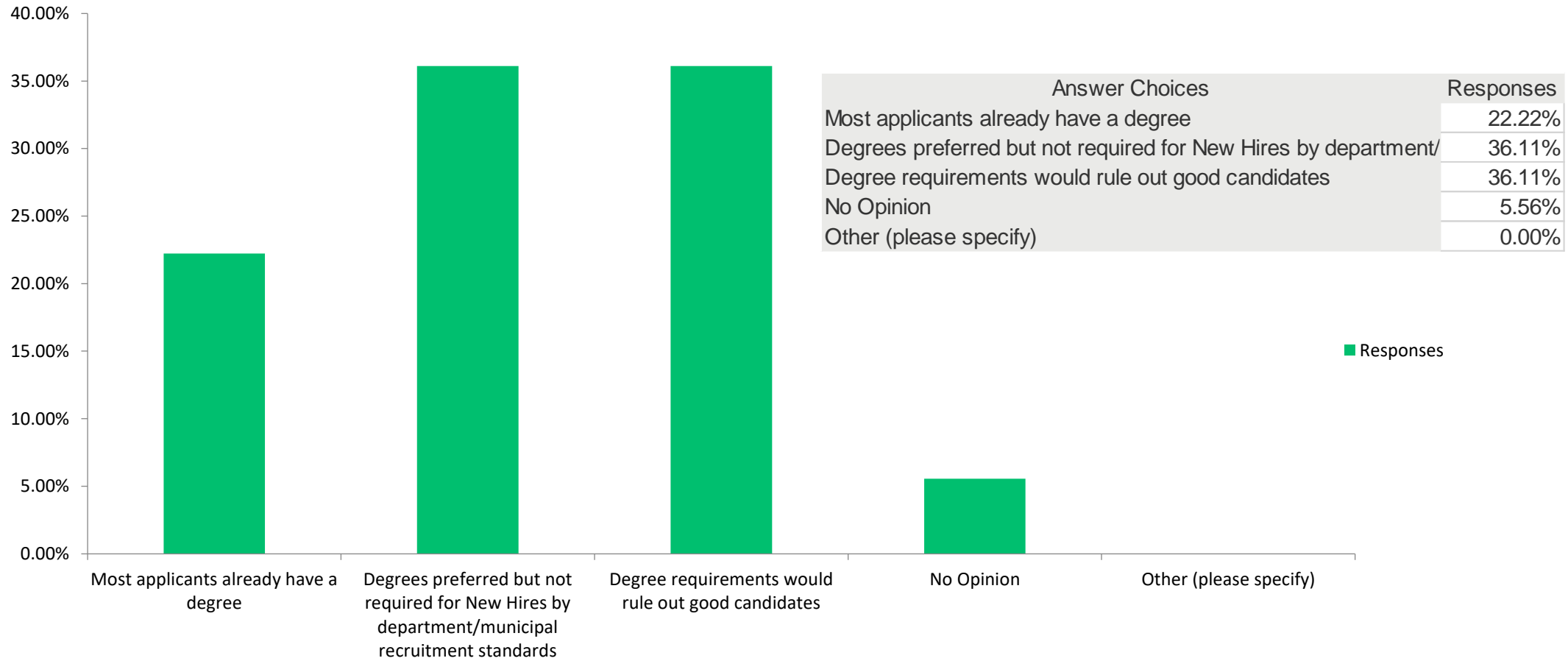
Q28 Does your municipality/department provide educational incentives for employees?



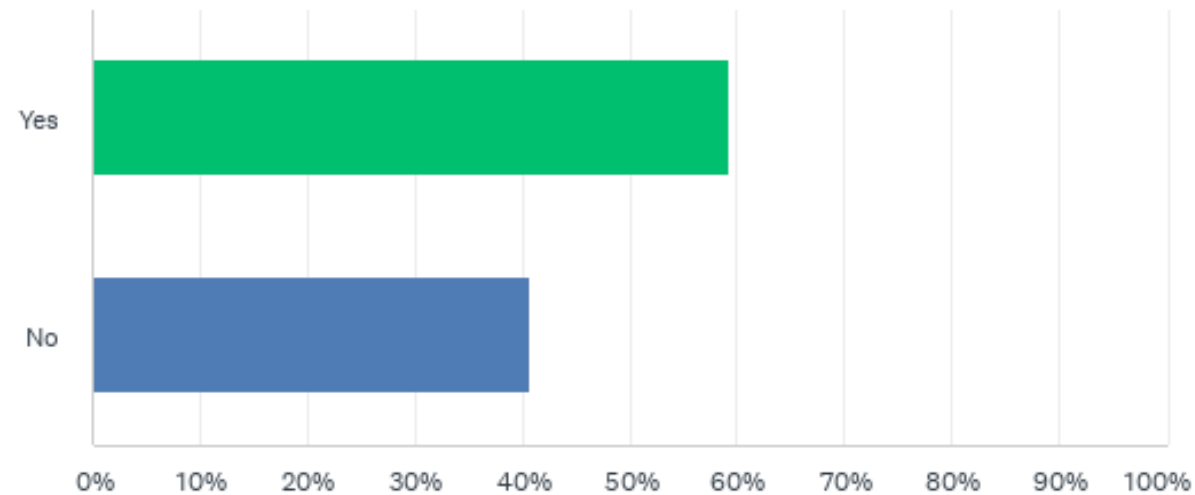
What are the Educational Incentive Programs

- Annual wage increase 3% for associates degree - 5% bachelors additional to base pay.
- Hourly increases based on degree (.25 for Assoc. .50 Bachelors, .75 Grad) or Pay steps that incorporate each.
- Flat rate stipends ranging from \$350-\$500 or an annual lump sum.
- Full class reimbursement for classes sought going forward.
- Percentage reimbursement based on achieved grades and prior approval (budget).
- Full payment of two college classes or set credit hours per year.
- Some offer 100% actual cost as educational reimbursement that includes books.
- Others offer reimbursement for partial costs based on \$ of Umaine credit hours.
- Some also place limits on classes type such as tuition reimbursement for LE related classes with \$3k cap per year.

Would minimum education requirements for certified officers be a barrier for department recruitment/retention or would it improve the quality of your applicants?



Q36 Does your department provide instructors to the Maine Criminal Justice Academy routinely?



Rebecca Graham
Maine Municipal Association

To: Sen. Dechambault, Rep. Warren & members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

Fr: Rebecca Graham, Legislative Advocate, State and Federal Relations

Re: LD 1447 Work Session Additional Information

Date: January 18, 2022

MMA wanted to provide additional information for the work session on LD 1447 to help inform the committee discussion with some Maine specific information. SFR staff worked with Maine Chiefs of Police Association to collect information from municipal and some county law enforcement with a goal of helping to shape policy changes with data from the Maine context. I have provided the results of those questions as they pertain to this issue with this additional submission.

MMA asked all Maine police agencies, that are funded by municipal property tax assessment, a significant list of questions including the current education levels of their staff, barriers to recruitment, and any educational incentives along with barriers for staff to using them. That survey uncovered that an estimated 88% of municipal police are hired with an associate degree or greater. In fact, new hires are slightly more likely than long term leadership to already have a degree. This illustrates the natural shift that has occurred over time for a very professional career. Municipal police leadership had higher levels of educational attainment and the greatest level of master's degrees among department staff.

The educational incentives offered by departments is vast in construction, but nearly universal in availability. While the department may only be responsible for some of those offerings, nearly all municipalities provided a universal benefit to employees. For police, incentives range from lump sum annual stipends and hourly increases based on degrees held, to full tuition reimbursement including books and course material. These incentives are often a better way of addressing educational attainment than requirements.

The barriers for individuals to access educational incentives are embedded in the very nature of law enforcement positions. Police often work long hours, rotating shifts, and are frequently ordered to work to fill vacancies. It is the length of hours worked and exhaustion that has been shown to establish a direct causal link to adverse police interaction, not the study subject or level of their college credentials. Placing additional credentialing barriers to recruiting or recertifying police candidates will exacerbate a looming crisis and is a policy responding to a perceived symptom and not the root problems facing Maine law enforcement.

Additionally, more than 60% of municipal agencies provide the volunteer staff to deliver education at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. This fact is important to keep in mind for a variety of reasons. First, as municipal agencies face challenges to recruitment, they will be increasingly unable to supply these volunteers, who continue to be paid by their local agency to deliver programs at the academy. The trickle-down effect of local, county and state recruitment will impact the current underfunded and volunteer-dependent model of police instruction. Other states invest in their police education system by staffing them to a level that allows them to become an accredited institution alone. There are multiple models for this domestically and internationally.

Secondly, the education level of municipal police illustrates an increasingly specialized field that provides a direct benefit to the state that is not reimbursed or supported but provided out of a sense of belief that sharing their experience with their peers is just another level of providing services beyond their own communities. The women and men serving our communities are natural problem solvers seeking to better themselves personally and professionally and need support not barriers. This is why municipalities have offered these incentives for decades.

Understanding the system of any educational provision is vital to making policy that achieves the intent of expanding or improving its delivery. MMA understands that the MCJA has five fewer employees dedicated to providing education to law enforcement, corrections, and emergency communications than when it existed in a much smaller and less complex training center at its Silver Street Waterville location in 2001. Since then, the legislature has increasingly created additional educational requirements while not investing in the delivery of the system.

MMA asks that if the committee chooses to move ahead with any provisions proposed in LD 1447 that members consider how to invest in what the legislature desires from our law enforcement officers by understanding where the current educational delivery is, and work towards improving the system instead of creating a requirement for candidates to assume student loan debt before being allowed to serve their communities. Law enforcement leaders and municipal government want to recruit from all communities and specifically the most economically challenged communities most likely to interact with law enforcement. Educational requirements will work counter to recruiting from some communities that are financially disadvantaged like new Mainers, and those with direct experience of parental of family substance use disorder and incarceration who would be able to use the municipal educational reimbursement programs to acquire a degree without cost.

Lastly, we ask that committee keep in mind the property taxpayers who supply their officers free of charge to help MCJA meet these training needs and instead commit to helping the academy deliver deeper education by providing appropriate permanent staffing.

Rebecca J. Graham
Legislative Advocate
State & Federal Relations Department
Maine Municipal Association
60 Community Drive
Augusta, ME 04330
1-800-452-8786 ext. 2201
(207) 623-8428
FAX (207) 624-0129
www.memun.org

E-mail correspondence and attachments sent by or to the Maine Municipal Association – with certain exceptions – may be “public records” that are subject to inspection if such a request is made, according to Maine’s Freedom of Access law.

Confidentiality Statement: This message is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by telephone, e-mail, or in writing at the above address. Thank you.