

PROPOSAL: Western Michigan University Police Officer's Association (POA) Wage Agreement

Background

On September 17, 2025, the Western Michigan University Police Officer's Association (POA), ratified a letter of understanding offered by Western Michigan University. The Association represents all regular full and part-time sworn police officers and detectives in the University's Department of Public Safety. Sergeants, lieutenants, captains, deputy chiefs, chiefs, and other non-sworn officer positions are excluded from the Association. Our officers perform their duties throughout the City and County when there is a need for collaborative policing.

Ratification of this letter of understanding is the culmination of a 10-month effort between the University and POA leadership team. The University has begun to experience a higher level of officer turnover due to retirements and other opportunities chosen by our officers. Due to the scarcity of officers and existing public sentiment, it has become difficult for any police agency to hire. As a result, almost all of the police agencies in the Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids area, as well as Michigan's State Police have significantly escalated wages and benefits, including such items as signing bonuses and recruitment bonuses. The University's wage scale has fallen significantly behind which exacerbates our difficulty to hire.

Recognizing that current wages were contributing to the inability to hire and after several conversations with POA leadership, the University engaged Segal to perform a market review for our police officers. We used the same process which has been in place for many years and used for non-bargaining staff compensation reviews.

Representatives of Business and Finance met with POA leadership and shared Segal's results. We also reviewed wage data collected for multiple Michigan police agencies by the POA leadership.

The POA ratified the market rate driven wage changes on September 17, 2025. With approval from the Board of Trustees, the wage changes become effective November 10, 2025. The pay changes are prospective. In accordance with the contract, the 2% pay increase effective in the first full pay period of July 2026 remains in force. The following chart depicts the proposed wage rates that have been approved through the POA ratification vote.

Effective Pay Period BW2524 (11/10/25 -11/23/25; paycheck date 12/2/25) the Pay Schedule set forth in Appendix A, Section 1 for July 2025 shall be changed to the following wage rates:

Start	Year 1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Years
\$29.55	\$31.53	\$33.67	\$35.97	\$38.40	\$41.01

Effective Pay Period BW2524 (11/10/25 -11/23/25; paycheck date 12/2/25) the Pay Schedule set forth in Appendix A, Section 1 for July 2026 shall be changed to the following wage rates to reflect previously negotiated pay increases for FY26-27:

Start	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Years
\$30.14	\$32.16	\$34.34	\$36.69	\$39.17	\$41.83

Recommended Action

It is recommended the Board of Trustees approve the wage rates reflected in the attached chart for POA members to be effective November 10, 2025.