

ORDINANCE 2000

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE 2026 PAY PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF MUNSTER, INDIANA (2026 SALARY ORDINANCE)

WHEREAS, The Munster Town Council must annually fix the compensation for all elected officials, and certify the Police Pension Base prior to January 1 of the ensuing year; and

WHEREAS, The annual salary ordinance must define the compensation, including fringe benefits, of all employees of the Town of Munster; now, therefore, be it

ORDAINED By the Munster Town Council that, the 2026 Salary and Pay Plan for all employees, appointed members of board and commissions, the 2026 Police Pension Base, and other compensation matters is hereby adopted as follows.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

Non-sworn, regular, full- and part-time employees will have their pay rates increased by 2.00% over their current 2025 pay rate. Exhibit A lists the Grades, number of Authorized Personnel, and the Minimum, Midpoint, and Maximum rates for each Grade. Each has been increased by 2.00%.

Sworn police officer rates are recited in Exhibit B. The pay rates have been increased by 2.00% over those in the 2025 Salary Ordinance and its amendments.

Elected officials will have their bi-weekly salary increased by 2.00%. Firefighters will have their hourly rates and stipends increased by 2.00%

SECTION II. ELECTED AND CERTAIN APPOINTED OFFICIALS

	<u>Number Authorized</u>	<u>Proposed Biweekly Salary</u>
President of Town Council	1	\$ 619.00
Members of Town Council	4	\$ 586.37
Clerk-Treasurer	1	\$ 4,690.58
Town Manager	1	\$ 5,884.61

For elected officials not already covered by the Indiana Public Retirement System (INPRS), the Town may contribute to one of the approved deferred compensation programs administered by the Town in an amount equal to the current actuarial assessment for the Town's INPRS contribution, plus the employee's contribution currently paid by the Town.

Although the Clerk-Treasurer is not required to report hours worked (IC 36-5-3-2), the Clerk-Treasurer may voluntarily report hours worked in order to qualify for and participate in the various employee benefits programs afforded regular full-time employees, as outlined in the *Town of Munster Employee Manual*, less mandated deductions and withholdings.

The Town Manager will be classified as a regular full-time Town employee and shall participate in all other aspects of the employee benefits programs, as outlined in the *Town of Munster Employee Manual*, less mandated deductions and withholdings.

SECTION III. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Members of the Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Park Board shall receive a stipend of \$600.00/year, payable quarterly in arrears.

Members of the Board of Safety shall receive a stipend of \$600.00/year, payable monthly in arrears.

Notes: Members of the Town Council are not entitled to receive additional compensation for service on boards or commissions.

The annual stipend will be prorated if the member's service does not total a full year.

SECTION IV. PENSION

Employer Payment of Employee Contribution

Employees participating in the Civilian INPRS shall have their employee contribution (3.00%) paid by the Town per Ordinance 863, adopted December 21, 1987.

Alternative Retirement Programs

Program Managers and other regular employees, including paid-on-call members of the fire department, not covered by INPRS or the 1925 or 1977 Police Pension Plans shall have an amount paid by the Town equal to:

1. The employer contribution rate (11.2%, effective January 1, 2026) as established by INPRS, plus
2. The employee contribution rate (3.00%).

These amounts shall be contributed to the MissionSquare Section 457 Deferred Compensation program as administered by the Town.

2026 Certified Police Pension Rate

The Certified Police Pension Base for 2026 is \$85,923.95 plus \$ 6,250.00 longevity, for an annual total of \$92,173.95.

Pension Board Secretary

The Police Pension Board Secretary shall receive an annual stipend of \$1,200.00, payable in equal monthly installments. This amount shall not be added to the employee's base salary for the purpose of calculating merit pay or leave.

SECTION V. BENEFITS

A. LONGEVITY

Longevity – General (Taxable Benefit)

Longevity amounts may be reviewed by the Town Council periodically and no more frequently than once per year. The Town Council shall determine if the amounts are to be modified, based on budget constraints, market forces, and cost of living since the last adjustment. The most recent adjustment was in 2024 under Ordinances 1940 and 1953.

Inclusion of Longevity in Police Pension

For Police Pension purposes, the twenty-five-year level shall be used to determine the longevity portion of the Police Pension certified salary.

Longevity Payment Non-Fire Personnel

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees will begin earning longevity at the rate of \$250.00/year at the start of their employment. Longevity is capped once an employee reaches twenty-five years of service as illustrated below.

Start of Service Year	Annual Longevity Benefit		Start of Service Year	Annual Longevity Benefit
1	\$ 250.00		14	\$3,500.00
2	\$ 500.00		15	\$3,750.00
3	\$ 750.00		16	\$4,000.00
4	\$ 1,000.00		17	\$4,250.00
5	\$ 1,250.00		18	\$4,500.00
6	\$ 1,500.00		19	\$4,750.00
7	\$ 1,750.00		20	\$5,000.00
8	\$ 2,000.00		21	\$5,250.00
9	\$ 2,250.00		22	\$5,500.00
10	\$ 2,500.00		23	\$5,750.00
11	\$ 2,750.00		24	\$6,000.00
12	\$ 3,000.00		25	\$6,250.00
13	\$ 3,250.00			

Longevity for Paid-on-Call Fire Personnel

Paid-on-call members of the Fire Department shall be eligible for longevity bonuses based on a pro-rata number of hours worked on fire department-related activities, when compared to the normal 2,080-hour work-year. Employees of the Town who are members of the Fire Department shall be also given credit for the hours they respond to fire calls during regular work hours. This shall be in addition to their regular longevity accrual. This longevity payment will be made with the February 10, 2026, payroll.

B. MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS & PROVISIONS

Health Insurance – Employees will contribute 10% of the total premium cost for medical and 100% of dependent dental insurance costs. The Town will contribute 100% of the premium cost for vision insurance and for the employee only coverage of dental insurance. Employees have the option to contribute the additional premium cost for the employee’s spouse and/or children for dental insurance.

Life Insurance – The Town will provide life insurance for all regular, full-time employees at 1.5 times the annual salary amount of the employee to a maximum of \$125,000.00 in coverage. This benefit is reduced to 67% at age 70 and to 50% at age 75. Coverage ends at termination of employment or retirement.

The Town will provide life insurance for members of the Town Council at the fixed amount of \$30,000.00. This benefit is reduced to 67% at age 70 and to 50% at age 75. Coverage ends at termination of employment or retirement.

Retirement Health Savings- Contributions to a retirement health savings account will be made based on the Retiree Welfare Benefit Plan adopted separately.

Holiday Bonus (Taxable Benefit) – The Clerk-Treasurer and all other eligible Town employees shall receive a holiday bonus in the form of a single payment of \$225.00, less mandated deductions and withholdings. The bonus will be paid with the first payroll in December and will be prorated for those eligible employees whose employment began during 2026. Town Council members are exempt from the holiday bonus.

Uniforms & Clothing Allowance (Taxable Benefit) – The Town provides certain employees with an initial complement of uniforms, specialty work clothes, and items with the Town or departmental logos. These employees are awarded an annual clothing allowance for the purpose of clothing maintenance beginning in the year after receiving the initial complement of clothing. The first year of the clothing allowance will be pro-rated based on full months of service in the previous year. Clothing allowances and the value of certain uniforms and clothing provided by the Town shall be subject to taxes and other deductions as established by law. Those receiving a clothing allowance are:

1. **Police Department** – Clothing for a newly hired police officer shall be provided by the Town at the Town's expense, one time, at the time of initial appointment. This initial complement must be purchased within 12 months of hire. After the first year of service, an annual payment of \$1,700.00 shall be provided to each sworn officer, payable during February.
2. **Fire Department** – Clothing for a newly hired firefighter shall be provided by the Town at the Town's expense, one time, at the time of initial appointment. This initial complement must be purchased within 12 months of hire. This does not include "Class A" uniforms. After one year of service, an annual payment of \$450.00 shall be provided to the firefighter, payable during February.
3. **Public Works/Parks Maintenance/Community Service Officer Multi-Disciplined Inspectors** – Clothing for initial appointments shall be provided to regular, full-time employees by the Town at its expense. This initial complement must be purchased within 12 months of hire. After the first year of service, an annual payment of \$800.00 shall be provided, payable during February.
4. **Chief Building Inspector and Zoning Enforcement Inspector** – Clothing for initial appointments shall be provided to regular, full-time employees by the Town at its expense. This initial complement must be purchased within 12 months of hire. After the first year of service, an annual payment of \$200.00 shall be provided, payable during February.
5. **Other Staff not otherwise listed** – All other regular full-time and regular part-time employees will receive an annual payment of \$75.00 for the purchase of Town of Munster branded apparel, payable during February. For new employees, the first payment will be made in the February following their date of hire.

Automobile (Taxable Benefit) – The Town provides active and participating members of the Munster Fire Department a vehicle allowance (see Fuel Stipend, below). This allowance is paid in arrears based upon participation of the member. Certain employees are provided vehicles in accordance with the Town's vehicle policy. All employees provided allowances or the use of Town-owned vehicles are subject to reporting requirements, taxes, and other deductions as established by law.

Police officers will receive the use of a take home vehicle as outlined in Munster Police Department General Order #11.7: Take Home Vehicle Program. Take home vehicles are subject to IRS regulations and are considered a Working Condition Benefit. Per IRS Publications 15 and 15-B, “A qualified nonpersonal use vehicle is any vehicle the employee isn’t likely to use more than minimally for personal purposes because of its design.” Marked public safety vehicles are generally included in this category. As such, any personal use is to be at a de minimis level.

Mileage Reimbursement Rate – Employee use of a privately owned vehicle driven on official Town business shall be reimbursed at the standard mileage rate established by the latest Internal Revenue Service determination for business miles driven.

Park Membership and Programming Discounts (Taxable Benefit)

- *Golf:*
 - Elected officials, members of Boards and Commissions, regular full-time employees, and non-probationary members of the Fire Department in good standing that are current with their service hours may elect to receive a free individual-rate golf membership and a free individual-rate golf cart pass. Elected officials, members of Boards and Commissions, regular full-time employees, and non-probationary members of the Fire Department in good standing that are current with their service hours desiring a couple- or family-rate for the golf cart and/or golf fees may elect to have the individual-rate golf cart and/or golf fee deducted from the couple- or family-rate fees
 - Elected officials, members of Boards and Commissions, full-time and part-time employees, and non-probationary members of the Fire Department in good standing that are current with their service hours may elect to receive a free driving range membership
- *Swimming Pool:*
 - Elected officials, members of Boards and Commissions, and regular full-time employees may elect to receive a free individual-rate pool pass. Elected officials, members of Boards and Commissions, and regular full-time employees desiring a multiple-person rate for the pool pass may elect to have the individual rate deducted from the multiple-person rate
 - Part-time and paid-on-call Fire Department employees may elect to receive a 50% discount off the individual-rate pool pass
 - Part-time employees who work at the swimming pool may elect to receive a free individual-rate pool pass
 - Only one pool discount per employee is allowed. Pool discounts only apply to members of the employee’s immediate family
- *Dog Park:*
 - Elected officials, members of Boards and Commissions, regular full-time and part-time employees, and paid-on-call Fire Department employees may elect to receive free dog park pass(es)
- *Parking at Centennial Park:*
 - Regular full-time and part-time employees and paid-on-call Fire Department employees are eligible to register for two free parking passes at Centennial Park.
- *Contractual Programs and Trips*

- Full-time employee and immediate family members pay cost for all contractual programs. For instance, Karate class costs \$70 per person, but instructor gets paid \$40 per person; employee would pay \$40 instead of \$70.
- Full-time employee and immediate family members pay expenses (price of show ticket, lunch if included in fee, etc.)
- *Non-contractual Programs*
 - Full-time employee and immediate family members receive free non-contractual recreation programs (camps are included, but employee pays for field trips)
 - If a class is full, then full-time employees and family members will be bumped, but will first be given the option to pay full price.
- *Notes to the above Discounts:*
 - Immediate family members are defined as spouse, children, siblings, parents, in-laws, other blood relatives, and dependent children permanently residing in the same household as the employee
 - All employees are eligible for a 10% discount off room and facility rentals
 - The Town Manager and Clerk-Treasurer are authorized to establish procedures for payment of annual passes and facility/room charges by payroll deduction
 - Employees choosing to utilize these benefits shall have the value of the discount included as imputed income stated on annual W-2 income tax forms, and when required by IRS regulations

SECTION VI. FIRE DEPARTMENT

Authorized Personnel – There are authorized sixty (60) paid-on-call fire personnel. This does not include Town employees.

Compensation – The compensation schedule for the Fire Department shall be approved as listed below. The monthly or annual stipends are in addition to the regular hourly rate.

Daytime Firefighter Stipend – Those employees who serve the Munster Fire Department in addition to their designated position shall receive a stipend to be paid along with any other departmental compensation for Firefighter response(s) throughout the month. This stipend shall be provided to any employee who serves the Fire Department consistent with the essential duties and responsibilities of the Daytime Firefighters. The stipend payment shall be graduated to reflect the experience of the Firefighter.

DAYTIME FIREFIGHTER STIPEND

Probationary Status Firefighter I/II Certification	\$142.22/month
Firefighter I/II Certification	\$221.27/month
Firefighter I/II plus one or more years of experience	\$255.86/month

HOURLY PAY SCALES

Deputy Chief	\$35.27
Battalion Chiefs	\$32.34
Captains	\$29.63
Lieutenants	\$25.50

Hourly pay scales listed below apply to Fire personnel of the Department.

1. Emergency Response	\$20.85
2. Training/Drills	\$20.85
3. Specials/Building, Vehicle Maintenance, Fire Prevention, Training, Planning	\$20.85
4. Inspections	\$20.85
5. Stand-by for Emergency Conditions	\$20.85
6. Probationary Firefighter	\$20.85
7. EMT Basic	\$21.55
8. EMT Paramedic	\$22.41

Town employees shall be paid their normal compensation during regular scheduled work periods.

Fuel Stipend – An annual stipend of \$500.00 shall be paid to each firefighter in February for fuel expenses incurred by individuals responding to emergencies. This stipend is provided for the previous year's fuel expenses. Public Works employees who respond to calls during regular, daytime working hours are not eligible for this stipend. A Public Works employee is eligible for the stipend if the employee responds outside regular, daytime working hours. Employees without a full year of service as of January 1, 2026, shall receive a pro-rated fuel stipend based on full months of service.

SECTION VII. SEASONAL EMPLOYEES – RECREATION

The Park Board shall adopt the compensation ranges for all recreational instructors, counselors, pool, and other non-maintenance employees. Recreational employees may be compensated by the hour, per class, or per game. These rates are attached as Exhibit C.

SECTION VIII. SEASONAL & NON-RECREATIONAL EMPLOYEES

Employees not listed below and not accounted for elsewhere in this ordinance who are appointed shall be paid based upon the market demand for the type of work being performed. Employees shall be paid at least the existing federal minimum wage. The maximum rate shall not exceed 150% of the lowest paid regular employee in the job classification.

Maintenance Laborers	\$14.00-\$18.00/hour
Office	\$14.00-\$16.00/hour
Emergency Snow Removal, Sandbagging, and other Public Works-related work activities	Current Grade 2

Paid-on-call firefighters in good standing who assist Public Works in emergency or weather-related events (i.e. snow plowing, sandbagging) will be paid the standard hourly rate for Firefighter Emergency Responses regardless of rank.

SECTION IX. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

- Job titles, pay ranges, and number of authorized positions for all regular and classified employees are contained in the pay matrix attached as Exhibits A and B.

- Salary ranges do not include overtime compensation, holiday bonus, deferred compensation, longevity, cash bonuses, insurance and retirement contributions paid by the Town, tax liability added for personal use of Town vehicles, compensation for accrued vacation liability, reimbursement for business related expenses, and imputed income derived from employee discounts and other benefits.
- When employees are promoted to higher job grade, they shall be placed at the higher grade that provides a minimum percentage increase of five percent (5.00%). Employees may receive greater than a 5.00% increase in salary if promoted multiple grades.
- Pay rates for classified employees on Exhibit A must be paid at least the minimum of that pay grade. Employees at or above the maximum of the range of the current pay grade for their position shall not suffer reductions in pay. However, they shall not be eligible for an increase in their current base wage until subsequent adjustments to the pay scale cause their salary or hourly wages to fall within the range for their job grade.
- Employees at or above the maximum shall be eligible for an annual percentage lump-sum bonus of 2.00%. The lump-sum bonus shall be based on the employee's ensuing rate of pay. These lump-sum bonuses shall not be included in the base rate of pay. Employees will receive these payments in equal installments each pay period beginning with the second payroll of January. The payments will continue through the last payroll of 2026 or upon separation with the Town. If the employee leaves prior to receiving the full amount, the employee forfeits the remainder.
- To reach the appropriate equity position within their respective Grade, regular, full-time employees will have their hourly wage or bi-weekly salary set in accordance with the Compensation & Salary Structure Policy for Non-Sworn Personnel adopted November 18, 2024.
- An active sworn law enforcement officer within the Town of Munster of a higher rank shall not make less than \$1,000 in base annual wages or salary than an officer of the next lower rank.
- When a Classified Employee on Exhibit A performs the duties of a higher job grade for an expected period of twenty or more working days, the employee shall be compensated at the minimum of the higher job grade, or 5% more than the employee's current hourly compensation, whichever is greater. Advancements through the grade subsequent to the promotion will be based on the Compensation and Salary Structure for non-Sworn Personnel Policy. If after performing the duties of a higher job grade at a higher rate, the employee returns to his or her previous duties, he or she will return to the previous pay rate.
- When a Sworn Police Officer performs the duties of a higher job grade for an expected period of twenty or more working days, the employee shall be compensated at the higher job grade. If after performing the duties of a higher job grade at a higher rate, the employee returns to his or her previous duties, he or she will return to the previous pay rate.
- All regular full-time employees as of January 1, 2026, will be granted two (2) personal days to be used by December 31, 2026. The days will be available to use at the start of the year and will be shown on the employee paystub. If not used by the deadline, the days will be removed from the leave bank. These days do not carry forward into the new year and there is no buy out. There is no cash value associated with these days. The time must be taken in full days, not hourly and the time off must be scheduled through the normal request process within the employee's department.

- Salaried employees who work in excess of 50 hours per work-week during a severe weather-related event shall receive a flat \$250.00 stipend if and only if at least 10 of the hours in excess of 40 hours were in direct response to the severe weather-related event.
- Pay rate increases for elected employees and firefighters, will be effective January 1, 2026. Pay rate increases for all other biweekly paid employees will be effective beginning with the second payroll of 2026.
- In cases when the current salary ordinance is silent, the adopted personnel rules, as amended, shall prevail.
- If a conflict exists between the current salary ordinance, including any amendment or amendments, and the adopted personnel rules as amended, then the salary ordinance and its amendment or amendments shall prevail.
- The Town of Munster Employee Manual, as amended, is hereby incorporated into and made a part of this annual salary ordinance by reference.

SECTION X. LISTING OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit A – 2026 Pay Ranges for Classified Employees

Exhibit B – Pay Step and Grade for Sworn Police Officers

Exhibit C – Munster Parks & Recreation Salary/Wage Schedule – Part-time Employees

Exhibit D – 2026 Distribution of Payroll by Fund

Exhibit E – Understanding of Elected Officials' Compensation

Exhibit F – Clarifying Language for Grade and Longevity Implementation

Exhibit G - Stipends

ORDAINED and ADOPTED by the Town Council of the Town of Munster, Indiana, on the 17th day of November 2025, by a vote of ____ in favor and ____ opposed.

**TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MUNSTER,
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA**

George Shinkan, President

ATTEST:

Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer