

PBSO retirees returned to work with even higher salaries | Exclusive

PBSO Sheriff Bradshaw said in a statement that "effective October 15, 2026, employees who retire or resign from the Agency will no longer be eligible for rehire."



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- The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office has rehired dozens of retired employees, often at higher salaries.
- The rehiring controversy comes as the sheriff's office budget has grown 216% since 2007, far outpacing inflation.

Imagine retiring from a job that pays more than \$220,000 a year, collecting a \$1.7 million pension payout as a lump sum or a monthly payout and then returning to the same position six months later earning \$283,000 a year.

That's what happened with Ron Mattino, 69, who retired as a major from the [Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office](#) on Dec. 31, 2025, after a 39-year career. On July 27 of this year, however, Mattino was rehired by PBSO at the same rank but making close to 30% more in annual salary than when he retired.

Mattino has plenty of company in the ranks of PBSO unretired and rehired. He is just one of 38 former employees who have rejoined PBSO, according to records provided by PBSO to [The Palm Beach Post](#).

Some of those rehired had new positions created for them. Like Mattino, though, they were often rehired at salaries higher than those they had earned before retiring.



PBSO: Practice of retire and rehire to end next month

Asked to respond to the practice of rehiring employees, Sheriff Ric Bradshaw said that "effective October 15, 2026, employees who retire or resign from the Agency will no longer be eligible for rehire."

His spokesperson, Theresa Barbera, provided The Post with the following statement:

"First and foremost, personnel decisions are based on the operational needs of the Agency. In the absence of a formal policy regarding reemployment, employees who previously retired or resigned from the Agency remained eligible for rehire. However, following prior and ongoing discussions with my executive staff, I have determined that a formal policy regarding reemployment is necessary."

That new formal policy will end the practice of rehiring employees after they opted to retire.

More: [PBSO told to reveal budget details, return \\$16M from current plan](#)

PBSO budget increases draws scrutiny, criticism from county

Mattino's rehiring this summer came as county commissioners pressed [Bradshaw](#) for greater detail about a budget that has grown far faster than inflation and spending increases in county departments overseen by the county commission.

Since 2007, PBSO's budget has increased 216%, compared with 67% growth for county departments, roughly matching inflation.

PBSO's budget increases in recent years has strained county budgets. This year, the ask was particularly glaring as county spending has come under scrutiny by state officials and could be significantly pressured going forward by a proposed constitutional amendment that would drastically cut property taxes.

As a separately elected constitutional officer, Bradshaw is funded by the county. The budget has to be approved by the commission. In the past, that was a mere formality.

Usually there was little discussion before the commission voted unanimously to approve his spending plan. But that all changed this year with the county trying to cut its budget under pressure from the state. The commission has called on constitutional officers to cut their budgets as well. They recently questioned why the sheriff's annual spending plans have grown far faster than the rate of inflation.

Watchdog: Rehiring retired employees legal but costly

David Jaye of [TripleDippers.org](#), a group that monitors excessive payouts to public employees, said the retire and rehire practice is legal, but the practice is costly, unusual and unfair to taxpayers.

"This is an abuse of taxpayer money," said Jaye. "Rehiring high-salary employees is also unfair to other PBSO employees who are denied advancement opportunities."



Rehiring retirees drives up personnel costs, Jaye said, noting PBSO is going to pay them so much more than they would have if they had promoted from within.

“Why would you bring back all these people?” Jaye asked. “Aren’t there qualified people already at PBSO that could replace them?”

Other rehired employees, according to records provided to The Post, include:

- Alfonso Starling Jr., initially hired in 1992, retired in 2023, and rehired on Sept. 9, 2023, as a colonel in corrections, the same position he held when he retired. He currently earns \$323,016 a year, considerably higher than before he retired.
- Monica L. Diberardino, initially hired in 1988, retired in 2024, and rehired June 12, 2024. She is now the agency historian earning \$126,468 a year, more than \$25,000 from when she previously worked in the photography lab.
- Robert G. Brown, initially hired in 1987, retired in June 2016, and rehired on Jan. 1, 2017. He serves as Homeland Security Programs Coordinator and earns a

yearly salary of \$237,312. Brown's previous salary was not disclosed in the documents.

Many of the rehired employees are eligible for longevity pay since they have worked so many years for the sheriff, resulting in an even greater impact on personnel costs. Longevity pay rewards employees for years of service.

Some of the rehired employees qualify for a longevity bonus of 10%, according to the contract negotiated with the Police Benevolent Association. That means a \$200,000-a-year employee will receive an annual bonus of \$20,000.

Jaye at the watchdog group noted that promoting from within rather than rehiring a retired former employee would result in a new captain or major with a salary much below those of someone rehired.

“This (PBSO) is a budget that can clearly be cut,” said Jaye. “Who knows how much could be saved if these rehires were not happening. What makes this outrageous is that they are coming back at ridiculously high salaries. What business would operate this way?”



What The Post reported two years ago about PBSO retirement payouts

PBSO's executive compensation has come under scrutiny before.

In 2024, a [Palm Beach Post investigation](#) found that Bradshaw awarded top executives hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional retirement payouts through a little-known leave program with no apparent counterpart elsewhere in county government.

Top executives received hundreds of hours of extra paid time off instead of cash — leave they could later convert into payouts worth hundreds of thousands of dollars when they left the agency.

For deputies with at least 20 years at the agency, the bonus would amount to 2¾ weeks of pay for every year served. Bradshaw's former chief deputy, Frank DeMario, walked out the door in 2024 with an extra \$412,000 for unused extra time off. DeMario is not among those rehired.

Top PBSO executives are also entitled to substantial pension payouts through the statewide DROP program, which allows eligible public employees to retire on paper while continuing to work for a limited period.

More: [POST INVESTIGATION: Palm Beach County sheriff lavishes retiring execs with \\$400K bonuses](#)

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