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OVER 100 PALM BEACH SHERIFF OFFICERS COLLECT MILLION-DOLLAR PENSION BONUSES — FOUR COLLECT OVER \$2 MILLION

PALM BEACH COUNTY, FL — A forensic fiscal audit released today by government accountability watchdog TripleDippers.org reveals that 243 retirement-eligible participants at the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO) have accumulated \$227,847,928 in lump-sum pension cash bonuses through the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP).

The analysis exposes an extraordinary concentration of public wealth: 104 PBSO employees are set to receive individual pension bonuses exceeding \$1.0 million—representing 42.8% of the entire pension bonus group. The average individual pension bonus payout across the agency reaches \$937,646, with the highest single payout to Robert Allen, Chief Deputy, topping \$2.3 million.

Greed, Gluttony, and the 8-Year Pension Bonus Expansion

Many Palm Beach County Sheriff employees were not satisfied with a standard 5-year pension bonus and demanded and received an expanded 8-year pension bonus window—all paid for by local property taxes. This legislative expansion allowed accumulated pension payouts to swell into multi-million-dollar windfalls.

“Public employees who take Million Dollar plus Pension bonuses are greedy,” observed Dave Jaye, Lead Researcher, TripleDippers.org. “Gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins: how many luxury cars, condos, and lavish meals can one person actually use? These exorbitant pension bonuses take vital funding away from active road patrols, community safety resources, and meaningful property tax cuts for hard-working residents.”

Post-Pension Bonus Rehiring Loophole: Returning to Old Job or as Contractors

Adding to the fiscal abuse, official Sheriff records reveal a persistent pattern of public employees collecting their million-dollar-plus pension bonuses and returning to public payrolls. After cashing out their DROP pension lump sums, some officers wait out the mandatory six-month separation period and return directly to their old jobs—or newly created civilian positions—allowing them to triple-dip by collecting both a full public salary and a lifetime monthly pension check while continuing to skip paying the standard 3% salary contribution to the Retirement System. Meanwhile, other high-ranking retirees are hired back almost immediately as 1099 contract employees or special advisors by the Sheriff, effectively bypassing standard personnel contribution rules while continuing to siphon taxpayer funds.

Driving Up Local Property Taxes & Unfunded Liabilities

Under Florida's public pension funding structure, local property taxpayers are forced to contribute 22.02% of contracted salaries directly toward retirement costs. At PBSO, this property tax burden totals \$8,435,585 annually for this 243-member cohort alone.

Adding insult to injury, while active public employees are required to contribute 3% of their salaries toward their pensions, employees participating in DROP pension bonus programs are exempt from paying the standard 3% employee contribution, saving this group \$1,149,262 annually and shifting the full financial burden directly onto local property taxes.

“By enforcing a strict 60-hour cap on banked leave—aligning government operations with modern private-sector standards—we force personnel to take routine days off to prevent burnout and protect public safety,” stated Dave Jaye, Chairman of the Lee County Taxpayers Association and Lead Researcher at TripleDippers.org. “In high-stakes law enforcement, refusing to take time off leads to extreme fatigue, split-second errors, and mental exhaustion among deputies. Capping leave balances at 60 hours safeguards our communities, protects co-workers, and stops the outrageous practice of cashing out multi-thousand-hour leave stockpiles at inflated final-year salaries.”

“This taxpayer burden is compounded by a stark economic disparity: 85% of private-sector workers do not have a traditional pension, yet local property taxpayers are forced to finance guaranteed multi-million-dollar pension bonuses and lifelong pensions that contribute to a \$43 billion unfunded state liability,” added Jaye.

Palm Beach Sheriff Leads Statewide Pension Bonuses

PBSO routinely commands the top spots for the largest pension cash bonuses across Florida. In statewide comparisons, PBSO personnel hold three of the top thirteen spots on Florida's 'Baker's Dozen' list of the largest individual pension cash payouts.

Top Personnel Not Satisfied With 5-Year Pension Bonuses Demanded—and Received—Approval from the Palm Beach Sheriff for Expanded 8-Year Pension Bonuses

Name	Contracted Salary	8-Year Pension Bonus	5-Year Pension Bonus	Taxpayers Pay 22.02% Prop. Taxes	Employee Saved (3% Not Paid)	Taxpayers Pay 7.65% Social Sec.
Robert L. Allen	\$352,752	\$2,308,780	—	\$77,676	\$10,583	\$26,986
Mark B. Alexander	\$283,032	\$2,121,912	\$148,638	\$62,324	\$8,491	\$21,652
Talal S. Masri	\$309,096	\$2,063,259	—	\$68,063	\$9,273	\$23,646
William R. Brannin	\$295,776	\$2,044,248	—	\$65,130	\$8,873	\$22,627
Brenda J. McWilliams	\$146,184	\$1,994,212	—	\$32,190	\$4,386	\$11,183
Sean P.	\$283,032	\$1,844,342	\$1,002,042	\$62,324	\$8,491	\$21,652

Murray

Michael L. Kirschner	\$237,312	\$1,785,988	—	\$52,256	\$7,119	\$18,154
Robert J. Tutko	\$237,312	\$1,782,910	—	\$52,256	\$7,119	\$18,154
Laurence F. Poston	\$259,176	\$1,777,891	\$787,684	\$57,071	\$7,775	\$19,827
Pedro L. Palenzuela	\$259,176	\$1,751,649	—	\$57,071	\$7,775	\$19,827
Vincent F. Spierto	\$227,088	\$1,742,619	—	\$50,005	\$6,813	\$17,372
Michael J. Kletzky	\$237,312	\$1,727,409	—	\$52,256	\$7,119	\$18,154
Carlos L. Ugalde	\$182,196	\$1,685,080	—	\$40,120	\$5,466	\$13,938

(Note: Figures are as of August 2026, rounded to the nearest dollar, and do not include additional final-year banked leave cash-outs, supplemental pay, or shift premiums.)

Burnout, 'Golden Handcuffs,' and Two Mandatory Fiscal Reforms

In addition to base salary spikes, investigative reporting by the Palm Beach Post (July 31, 2022) revealed how extra pay streams and administrative perks artificially inflate final average salaries, compounding pension calculations.

This dynamic creates severe operational and safety consequences:

- **Public Safety Risks:** Unchecked leave hoarding and prolonged careers in high-stress roles increase fatigue among senior personnel, risking split-second decision-making errors on duty.
- **Golden Handcuffs:** The massive multi-million-dollar payouts encourage fatigued, senior officers to remain on the payroll solely to maximize cash bonuses.
- **Blocked Career Advancement:** Over-tenured staff block promotional pathways, preventing younger, healthier, and more recently educated officers from advancing within the Sheriff's Department.

To restore fiscal responsibility, protect deputy mental health, and safeguard the public, TripleDippers.org is proposing two critical structural reforms:

- 1. Enforce a Strict 60-Hour Cap on Banked Leave:** Mirroring modern private-sector standards (where companies enforce modest carryover limits of 40 to 80 hours), this reform requires personnel to take off time to prevent fatigue, mitigate public safety risks, and reduce municipal liabilities.
- 2. Mandate Original Salary Rate Payouts:** Require all banked leave to be paid out at the salary rate in effect when the hours were earned, eliminating the practice of cashing out accumulated time at inflated, final-year career salaries.

Taxpayer Guidance & Public Records Requests

TripleDippers.org urges citizens to hold local officials accountable by taking direct oversight action:

- File Public Records Requests (PRR) for W-2 Box 1 Forms: Standard base salary figures understate actual earnings. Citizens should request IRS W-2 Box 1 forms to review true taxable compensation.
- Request Bi-Weekly Payroll Registers: Filing PRRs for current payroll runs exposes hidden overtime, premium payouts, and stipends in real time.

“Vote yes on Proposal 3 Property Tax Cut, November 4, 2026 to force local governments to end the pension bonus and banked hour abuses,” urged Dave Jaye.

Full sortable datasets, statewide rankings, and investigative reports are available at www.TripleDippers.org.

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