

Police Overtime Trends: Examining the Relationship Between Tenure & Overtime Hours Worked

New York City
Independent
Budget Office



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Introduction

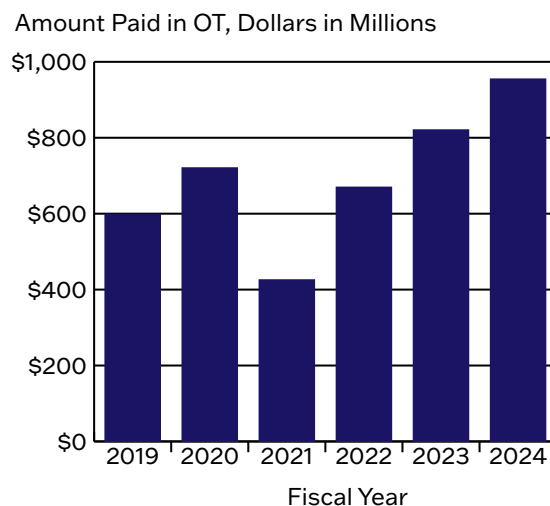
Following the Independent Budget Office (IBO)'s publication on New York City Police Department (NYPD) [overnight policing on the subways](#), IBO continues to examine police overtime (OT) spending. In fiscal year 2024, the Police Department spent \$955 million on uniformed overtime, representing 16% of the total Department spending on personnel. There has been interest in understanding the drivers of OT spending at the NYPD for many years, including by Mayor Adams in directives he issued in [September 2023](#) and [December 2024](#). In November 2024, Jessica Tisch was appointed as the 48th NYPD Commissioner. Commissioner Tisch has committed to enhanced oversight of all OT at each rank and tenure, including implementing an OT management plan.

For historical context, the City has perennially had to add more funds to the NYPD's budget to fund this need—an issue that IBO has analyzed in many budget cycles including the [2024](#) and [2025](#) Executive Budgets. The amount of OT paid for uniformed NYPD personnel from 2019 through 2024 has increased overall—from about \$600 million in 2019 to \$955 million in 2024. Despite a dip during the pandemic, there have been steady increases since 2021 (see Figure 1). The [City Comptroller](#) has also analyzed police OT in a recent report and dashboard, and the Police Department itself has begun publishing [quarterly aggregated data](#) on OT spending by unit, precinct, rank, and general reason for OT (including arrests, investigations, and planned/unplanned events). None of these reports have directly examined the link between overtime and years worked at the Police Department, referred to in this report as tenure.

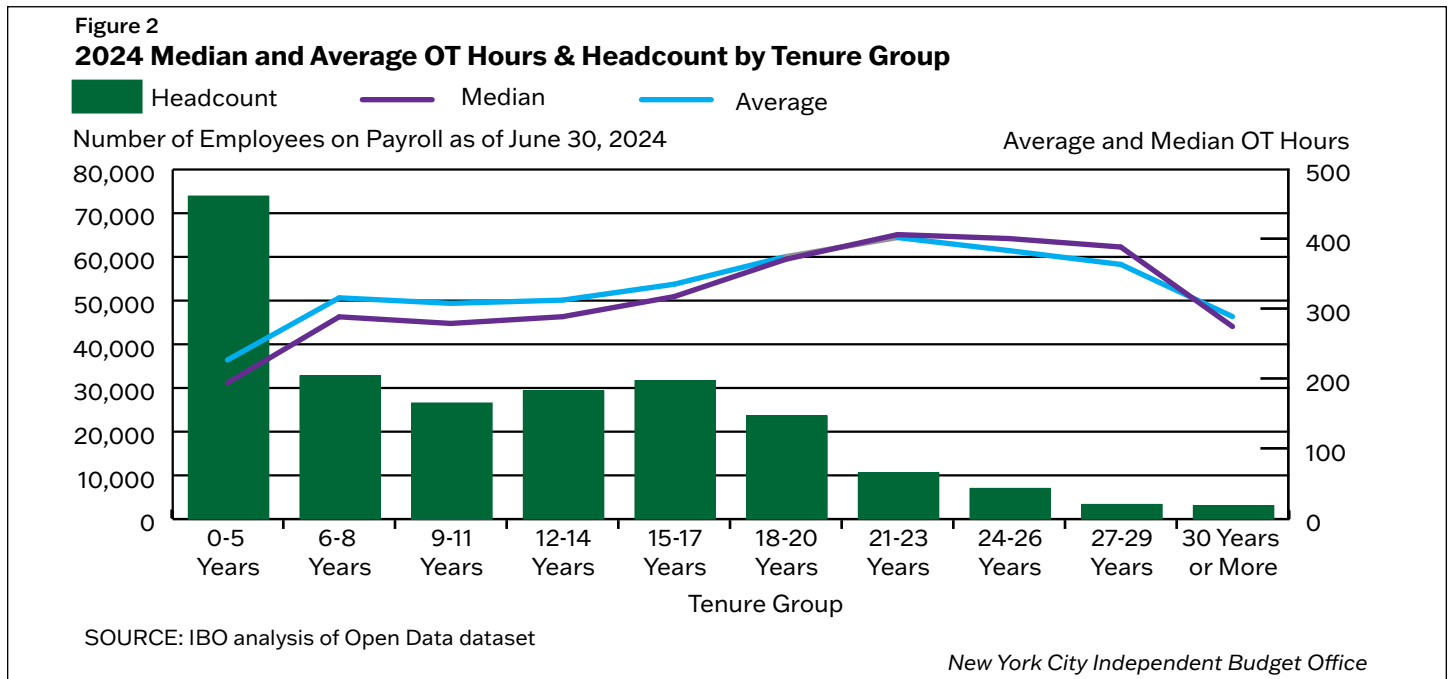
IBO examined the relationship between tenure and hours of OT usage of uniformed NYPD personnel in fiscal year 2024.¹ IBO analyzed the trends associated with how much OT uniformed personnel work in the years immediately preceding and following 20 years of service—when uniformed NYPD personnel typically retire from the force. According to the [New York City Police Pension Fund Summary Plan Description](#), pensionable earnings of NYPD uniformed personnel are based on the last one to three years of earnings (depending on the start date) and include base salary and OT. OT is the portion of earnings over which an individual has the greatest ability to control—which incentivizes increased use of OT leading up to retirement.

This project relies on data from two sources: 1) a Citywide Payroll [Open Data dataset](#) published by the Office of Payroll Administration with title description, OT hours worked, and agency start date by individual; and 2) uniformed title descriptions provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Figure 1
**Amount of NYPD Uniformed OT Paid
From 2019 Through 2024**



SOURCE: IBO analysis of Financial Management System data
New York City Independent Budget Office



Findings

Figure 2 shows the number of uniformed officers (headcount) on payroll as of June 30, 2024 and the number of OT hours grouped by years of tenure.²

- The number of officers is much lower in the groups of people who have worked more than 20 years in the Department. For example, there are 55% fewer officers in the 21-23 year group compared with the 18-20 year group.
- There is a positive statistical relationship between tenure and OT hours worked, particularly between the officers with 12-14 years of tenure through 21-23 years of tenure.³
- The average and median number of OT hours worked increases starting with the 12-14 year group, before peaking at the 21-23 and 24-26 year groups.
- The average number of hours of OT is higher than the median for newer officers, but that trend reverses with the 21-23 year group when the median is higher. This suggests that the highest OT earners may be staying with the Department past 20 years at a higher rate—although this report does not look at causality.

Data Limitations

- Throughout the process of analyzing the Open Data dataset, IBO found that there is no identifier for uniformed title codes (as opposed to civilian title codes) in the dataset, making it difficult to identify uniformed employees. Title descriptions do not directly match the uniformed title descriptions in the City’s payroll system. The dataset also does not contain employee identification numbers, which would allow IBO to tie uniformed titles to the City’s payroll system and identify uniformed employees.
- IBO used title descriptions from OMB to identify as many of the titles as possible as “uniformed,” but cannot determine the ultimate accuracy of this effort. For context, of all NYPD employees who received OT in 2024 (civilian and uniformed), IBO was able to identify 74% of the Open Data employees as uniformed, compared with 77% from IBO’s access to the City’s Payroll Management System.⁴

Report created by Valerie Gudino

Endnotes

¹IBO also did this analysis for the five previous fiscal years, from 2018 through 2023, as those data are also available on Open Data. All of the trends presented here were also true in other years, this report just presents 2024 for simplicity.

²Officers' tenure is determined by their start date, rounded down to the number of full years of service completed.

³The correlation coefficient between tenure group and OT hours is: 0.74 for average OT hours and 0.84 for median OT hours. Both represent relatively stronger relationships, meaning that as tenure group increases, the average and median OT hours increases.

⁴Included in the comparison are employees who were not active as of June 30, 2024 so that the numbers could be compared with the Payroll Management System.