



KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

ERIK KULLESEID
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: New York State Park Police Members
FROM: Commissioner Erik Kulleseid
DATE: January 21, 2022
SUBJECT: New York State Park Police Update

Over the past two years it has been my goal to stabilize and find a path forward for our New York State Park Police force. I have been greatly encouraged by numerous discussions over the last five months with Governor Hochul's team regarding the delivery of public safety at our parks and historic sites.

Under State Police leadership, Park Police and State Police have developed and will continue their crucial partnership to coordinate and maximize resources to provide the highest level of safety possible to the 78 million visitors enjoying New York's parks and historic sites and the events held there each year.

I am pleased that while staffing and operations across the entire agency have been challenging over the past few years, the Governor's proposed Executive Budget gives us relief, including in the ranks of the Park Police.

Provided the funding and staffing as proposed is included in the enacted FY 2023 Budget, we will take immediate efforts to build up and stabilize the Park Police force and improve the recruitment and retention of Park Police officers. Some of the welcome news includes:

Recruitment

- I will immediately direct the Agency to begin planning for a Park Police Academy beginning in Fall 2022, with new members expected to join the force upon graduation in Spring 2023.

Retention

- Even now, active discussions are underway to address recruitment and retention challenges, particularly in downstate regions.

Equipment

- The first round of new vehicle purchases has been approved and is awaiting delivery.
- Additional equipment requests including utility terrain vehicles (UTV), drones, etc. will be advanced.

In addition, over the course of the next year we will continue to work with State Police to develop and implement a longer term public safety strategy for our parks and sites.

I will continue to provide updates on the above items and more as they progress.

In the meantime, thank you as always for your professionalism, steadfast commitment, and hard work on behalf of the agency. Your dedication and many efforts are greatly appreciated.

cc: NYSP Superintendent Bruen, Regional Directors, Bureau Directors, Regional Commission Chairs