

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 – 46

TO AMEND THE POSITION CONTROL FOR THE CITY OF CULLMAN

WHEREAS, the Cullman City Council has determined that it would serve a public purpose to amend the position control of the City of Cullman to remove a community relations officer position and add one additional investigator position from the Cullman Police Department;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Cullman City Council that the position control of the City of Cullman is hereby amended to remove a community relations officer position and add one additional investigator position from the Cullman Police Department.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL, this the 15th day of December, 2025.

President of the City Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR, this the 15th day of December, 2025

Mayor

COUNCIL AGENDA REQUEST

Date: 12/04/2025

Department: Police

Name: Joey Duncan

Phone: 256-734-1434

Email: jduncan@cullmanal.gov

Type of request (select all that apply):

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol License | <input type="checkbox"/> Annexation | <input type="checkbox"/> Bid Award |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget Amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Change Order | <input type="checkbox"/> Codification Change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contract Approval | <input type="checkbox"/> Petition | <input type="checkbox"/> Proclamations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Comment | <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Rezoning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Event | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Abatement | <input type="checkbox"/> Variance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Position Request) | | |

Reason for Request:

This request in response to a staffing recommendation from Investigation Major Intae Suh regarding the need for one (1) additional Fraud Investigator. After reviewing the current investigative workload, I found that our assigned fraud investigator, Officer Cheatwood, currently has 55 open cases and has closed 46 cases as of December 1st.

A further review of national and industrial workload standards shows that fraud and financial-crime investigations typically require 40–150 hours per case, and white-collar theft and embezzlement cases routinely exceed 200–300 hours. These cases are complex, time-consuming, and require specialized investigative attention.

Based on this information, I believe assigning an additional investigator to fraud and financial-crime investigations will:

- Significantly reduce the current investigative backlog
- Improve the turnaround time for case completion
- Enhance victim services and communication
- Support stronger long-term investigative outcomes
- Increase case clearance rates and overall efficiency

For these reasons, I respectfully request the approval of one additional Fraud Investigator position.

Supporting Documentation:

Attach supporting documentation.

Signature: _____



Approval Sequence:

1. Administration – City Clerk’s Office

Verifies form is completed and proper documentation is attached.

Approved to Move Forward Return to Requestor Rejected

Comments: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

2. Council Committee Chairperson

Ensures necessity of the requested expense.

Approved to Move Forward Return to Admin Rejected

Comments: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

3. Council President

Approved for Council Agenda Return to Committee Rejected

Comments: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

4. Administration – City Clerk’s Office

Added to Council Agenda Date of Meeting: _____

Comments: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



Cullman Police Department

Background and Crime Trend Summary

Reported crime in the City of Cullman has increased in both volume and complexity. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), total index crimes in Cullman rose from 729 in 2021 to 792 in 2024, representing a 9% increase in reported incidents over a five-year period with some variation in between. During the same timeframe:

- Fraud crime incidents increased from 97 to 109 (a 12.4% increase)
- Theft crime incidents increased from 235 to 301 (an 28% increase)

Additionally, public FBI-derived data for the 2021–2025 period show that Cullman's average violent-crime rate is approximately 10% above the national average, and the average property-crime rate is approximately 30% above the national average. This sustained elevation drives increased investigative demands and longer case follow-up requirements.

More critically, the department has experienced a significant and continuing rise in fraud, identity-theft, and financial-crime reports. These cases are substantially more time-intensive than traditional offenses, often requiring:

- Detailed financial analysis and document review
- Coordination with banks and financial institutions
- Multi-jurisdictional investigative work
- Digital forensics, device analysis, and record subpoenas
- Extensive victim contact and reporting requirements

This shift toward fraud-based and technology-assisted crime has amplified the workload for each investigator while also lengthening case turnaround times.

Current Investigative Workload

The Investigations Division currently consists of five investigators. At the present workload, investigators are routinely forced to triage cases and prioritize only those with immediate solvability factors. Complex financial, fraud-related, and multi-victim cases frequently require extended follow-up and often exceed what a five-investigator division can sustain while maintaining best-practice investigative standards.

Industry workload analyses show that fraud and financial-crime investigations typically require between 40 and 150 man-hours per case, with white-collar theft and embezzlement cases routinely exceeding 200–300 hours. Given our current caseload and the increased complexity of

modern digital and financial fraud, the unit's existing staffing level is insufficient to maintain timely case completion.

divert the entire division's resources. While this only happens around 5-6 times per year, it is a consideration when analyzing investigator workload.

Without additional staffing, the division's ability to provide timely follow-up, maintain clearance rates, and ensure thorough investigative work will continue to be impacted.

Recommendation

To better align staffing with the documented growth in investigative workload and to provide the capacity necessary to address the rising number of fraud and financial-crime cases, it is recommended that the Investigations Division be expanded to include **one (1) additional Criminal Investigator**, bringing the total number of investigators to **six (6)**.

Adding a sixth investigator will:

- Reduce individual caseloads to a sustainable level
- Improve investigative completeness and turnaround time
- Increase victim services and follow-up capacity
- Enhance multi-agency coordination for fraud and identity-theft cases
- Support long-term investigative outcomes and clearance rates

This personnel increase is both operationally necessary and directly supported by recorded crime trends, documented growth in financial-crime reports, and recognized national workload standards.

The proposed Organizational Chart for the Investigations Division is as follows:

- **Investigations Major**
 - **Crimes Against Persons Sergeant**
 - **Property Crimes Sergeant (Crimes against persons)**
 - Property Crimes Investigator 1
 - Property Crimes Investigator 2
 - **Financial Crimes Sergeant**
 - **Financial Crimes Investigator 1 (Proposed Position)**

Conclusion

The measurable rise in reported crime, combined with the significant increase in complex fraud and financial-crime investigations, demonstrates a clear need to expand investigative staffing. Authorizing a **sixth Criminal Investigator** will provide the necessary capacity for the division to continue delivering timely, thorough, and effective investigative services to the citizens of Cullman.

2025 Individual Investigator Case Load

	Maj Suh	Cheatwood	Latham	Riddlesperger	Thomason	Watkins
January		7	3	6	4	6
February		13	4	11	7	9
March		7	3	12	5	7
April		9	5	8	5	10
May		10	5	7	7	6
June		9	7	7	5	9
July		6	3	6	5	5
August		11	7	11	5	13
September		9	6	6	9	6
October	5	13	5	10	6	14
November		7	6	7	5	12
Totals:	5	101	54	91	63	97
OPEN	1	55	17	11	9	17
closed	4	46	37	80	54	80

Part-time	Max	Min	Bentley
January	7	1	
February	10	2	
March	6	2	
April	9	2	
May	6	2	
June	9	2	
July	8	2	
August	9	2	
September	8	2	
October	11	2	
November	8	2	1
Totals:	84	29	4
OPEN	10	5	1
CLOSED	74	24	2

- Officer Tim Valley and Officer Jacob Bentley are on restricted duty and have been temporarily assigned to investigation to assist with the case load, but are limited in job performance due to medically restricted duty.

Investigation Stats Year to date as of 12/1/25

	Open	Inactive	Completed	Total	Open %	Inactive %	Completed %
Assault	6		13	19	32%		68%
Murder / Attempted Murder	1			1	100%		
Sex Crimes	9	2	8	19	47%	11%	42%
Theft of Property	52	66	128	246	21%	27%	52%
UBEMV / Unauthorized Use of MV	2	13	19	34	6%	38%	56%
Burglary	6	31	13	50	20%	37%	43%
Fraud	40	23	29	92	43%	25%	32%
Robbery		1		1		100%	
Kidnapping			1	1			100%
Terrorist Threat/ Bomb Threat	1			1	100%		
False Reporting/ Criminal Impersonation	2		2	4	50%		50%
Drugs	1		7	8	13%		87%
Criminal Mischief/ Criminal Tampering	9	12	14	35	26%	34%	40%
Harassment/Harassing Communication	1	9	8	18	6%	50%	44%
Aggravated Criminal Surv. / Stalking		1	4	5		20%	80%

