FISCAL SNAPSHOT

MICHIGAN STATE POLICE TROOPER STRENGTH

Date: February 2026 **Analyst: Aaron A. Meek**

Summary

Michigan State Police (MSP) troopers are responsible for criminal law enforcement and investigation, traffic and motor carrier safety, emergency response, and homeland security throughout the state. While the department has conducted multiple recruit schools in recent fiscal years to shore up trooper strength after several years of decline, the number of enlisted separations continues to exceed the volume of recruits.

Background

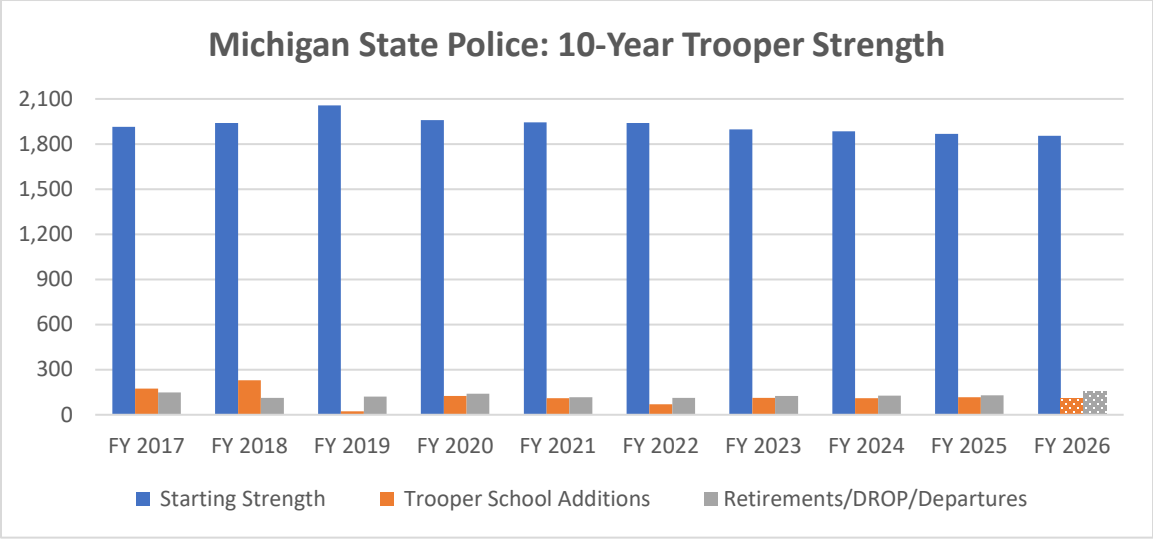
Law enforcement agencies provide valuable public services, but the provision of those services depends on maintaining adequate staffing levels. The most valuable metric for analyzing staffing within MSP is enlisted strength, which is a count of the total number of enlisted personnel employed by the department at a given point in time (here, the strength on October 1). Enlisted personnel are defined by the department as MSP trooper recruit school graduates who are certified by the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), which includes troopers and other enlisted ranks. Enlisted separations from the department are most often due to regular retirements, mandatory Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) exits, and early DROP exits, but also include disability-related retirements, resignations, and dismissals.

Recent Activity

At the beginning of FY 2025-26, MSP enlisted strength stood at 1,855. From FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25, there were a total of 609 enlisted separations and 520 trooper recruit school additions–a net five-year loss of 89 enlisted personnel. The department graduated at least two trooper recruit schools per fiscal year during this period, yielding an average of 49 graduates per class. From FY 2021-22 to FY 2024-25, one-time funding totaling $20.6 million was appropriated to support MSP's recruitment, onboarding, and training efforts. The FY 2025-26 budget, 2025 PA 22, includes a $1.0 million appropriation to support start-up costs for the recruit schools.

The Bottom Line

MSP's trooper strength has improved significantly since the period of decline from FY 2000-01 to FY 2011-12. Since FY 2016-17, enlisted levels have fluctuated between 1,800 and 2,100 troopers, with an average of 129 enlisted separations each year. In recent fiscal years, COVID-19 and other social changes have presented recruiting challenges for MSP and law enforcement agencies in general as they work to meet strength objectives and achieve goals related to diversifying the enlisted ranks.



Note: FY 2025-26 additions and departures projections are as of 12/19/2025.