



More hidden State Police pay surfaces. This time: millions in perks



JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

New disclosures show state troopers who worked out of Logan Airport get \$40 every day for driving their car to work.

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

GLOBE STAFF APRIL 18, 2018

Under fire for failing to disclose pay data, state officials last week quietly released new State Police figures, revealing more than \$3.4 million in additional payouts over four years.

Most, if not all, of the money appears tied to a single, generous perk: Troop F members got a \$40 per diem for driving their own cars to work.

Troopers cashed in on the opportunity, earning up to \$13,000 each year in per diems alone, and adding to salaries that included five- and six-figure overtime payouts.

ADVERTISEMENT



The latest disclosure marks the third time in a month that the Massachusetts Port Authority and State Police released new — and ever increasing — payroll data. The revised disclosures follow Globe reports on [hidden](#) and extraordinary overtime spending in Troop F, the Massport-funded unit that patrols Logan International Airport and the [Seaport area](#).

Get **Metro Headlines** in your inbox:

The 10 top local news stories from metro Boston and around New England delivered daily.

Sign Up

A handful of state lawmakers are now calling for a new line of investigations, alleging that Massport, State Police, and Governor Charlie Baker’s finance department broke a state transparency law.

“I would like to get the full story,”

said state Representative Denise

Provost. “Why did this happen?

How did this happen?”

Provost, a Somerville Democrat,

said she was frustrated that

records involving millions in public dollars appeared “screened and camouflaged.”

The state’s largest law enforcement agency has been mired in a series of scandals in recent months. The Globe reported in late March that payroll records for the entire 140-trooper State Police Troop F division had not been filed with the state comptroller since 2010. The records accounted for more than \$216

RELATED LINKS

What State Police in Troop F make

This table updates an earlier version state officials released that did not include per diem payments troopers received last year.

[Read: Troop F members rake in cash](#)

million in spending in an eight-year span.

ADVERTISEMENT



State Police officials laid blame on Massport, an independent public agency that pays for — but does not manage — Troop F. In the wake of public outcry, Colonel Kerry A. Gilpin, the head of the State Police, announced a 30-day review of troop staffing and a shift of payroll oversight to her agency.

Last week, new pay numbers — including per diems for driving personal cars to work — appeared on the comptroller’s [website](#).

State Police policy requires troopers to commute to work in their police cruisers, save for instances in which the vehicle is unavailable. The practice doesn’t apply to Troop F — where only command staff and troopers on special assignments get take-home cruisers — and a group in the Devens Barracks. The per diem, negotiated by the troopers’ union, is meant to make up for not having the option of a take-home car.

Records show about 100 Troop F members received per diem payouts each year between 2014 and 2017. Among troopers receiving the perk, the average annual payout came to about \$8,000.

The highest per diem earner, Sergeant David O’Leary, collected about \$13,000 last year, or the equivalent of 325 workday commutes. Overall, he earned \$276,939 last year, including \$103,965 in overtime, records show.

ADVERTISEMENT



Massport spokeswoman Jennifer Mehigan said the agency omitted the per diem data earlier because including it “would have slowed down” the disclosure process. She refused to comment further.

State Police spokesman David Procopio said that the release of trooper pay is an “ongoing process” and that Massport has rushed to upload missing records so they would become public. He confirmed that

most members of Troop F received the per diem for driving to work.

At work, they leave their personal vehicles in a lot outside the Logan airport station.

The department has dealt with a commuting pay controversy before. In 2007, public outcry over exorbitant spending prompted the agency to end the practice in Troop E, the unit that patrols the Massachusetts Turnpike. The Globe reported at the time that taxpayers shelled out \$1.4 million a year for troopers to travel to and from work.

The Boston Police Department doesn't reimburse officers for commuting, said Officer Rachel McGuire. Only a small number of on-call personnel are assigned take-home vehicles.

For State Police, the commuting perk is just one of a handful of benefits outlined in the State Police Association of Massachusetts contract, which covers most employees.

For example, staffers earn \$75 a week if they commute at least 75 miles each way to work. They get a monthly \$62.50 clothing stipend if they wear "civilian clothing" 10 days or more each month. And employees who work a five-day workweek get an extra 17 days off per year, in order to be fair to those who work four days on duty, then get two days off.

Union president Dana Pullman declined to comment on the new payroll revelations. He said in an e-mail he was "concerned that the men and women who work in Troop F at Logan Airport have been disparaged in the media."

Troop F is locked in public battle with Boston police over who patrols — and thus earns lucrative overtime and detail shifts — in the Seaport District. Troop E is at the center of an overtime scandal, in which at least 30 troopers allegedly put in for shifts they didn't work. Meanwhile, there have been a handful of other controversies and major turnover in the top ranks.

The payroll disclosure woes sparked a sharp rebuke last month from officials including Governor Charlie Baker, who called the actions "clearly deliberate." And state lawmakers have grown increasingly testy and pushed for greater oversight of State Police.

Attorney General Maura Healey called the failure to disclose records "concerning" but indicated her office has no plans to investigate.

"The Baker administration needs to take ownership of the problem," Healey said, reiterating previous [comments](#).

Meanwhile, a Baker spokeswoman maintained that "state agencies should fulfill their obligations to share data publicly."

Julie Mehegan, of the governor's Executive Office of Administration and Finance, acknowledged the law requires agencies, including Massport, to publicly release pay records. She said the law, however, doesn't give state officials the legal authority to force agencies to comply.

Massport's spokeswoman said her agency didn't believe it had violated the law. A State Police spokesman refused to address the matter.

Deirdre Cummings, of the consumer advocacy nonprofit Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group, wants a wide-scale payroll probe.

“I think they need to go back and review all the other agencies to make sure everything is accounted for and there’s not another Troop F out there,” she said.

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](https://twitter.com/mrochele).

Show 302 Comments

Top 10 Trending Articles

Viewed	Commented	Shared
--------	-----------	--------

- Ideas | Linda Rodriguez McRobbie: Too old to be president? Science says yes.
- Mass. authorities face steep hurdles in shutting down sex trafficking
- Road to Recovery: Drugs took their children, but not their hope that others might be saved
- The backyard mechanic who is taking on Tesla
- Julia Ruth Stevens, Babe Ruth’s last surviving child, dies at 102
- Six things to know about Michael Bennett, the newest Patriot
- ‘SNL’ tackles R. Kelly sex assault accusations with parody of CBS interview, Pete Davidson monologue
- Yvonne Abraham | Recycling can’t fix what really ails us
- Patriots could be diving into the quarterback market
- Can a former agent succeed in running the Mets?
- Why Trump lies, and why you should care
- In Boston, some specialized police units are more diverse than others
- Chart: The percentage of women and men in each profession
- School suspensions don’t work. It’s time for something better.
- Eduardo Nunez feels he has his legs under him again
- Munch Madness 2019: The top restaurants in Boston
- Greater Boston’s first recreational marijuana shop slated to open in Brookline soon
- The movie is called ‘The Post,’ but it was the Times that got the scoop on the Pentagon Papers
- 100 years ago, Boston welcomed Babe Ruth
- Millennials aren’t lazy, they’re workaholics
- Sex trafficking is in plain sight in Massachusetts communities
- Recycling can’t fix what really ails us
- First lady has a growing ease in her official role, but not politics
- At SXSW, Elizabeth Warren defends call for breaking up tech giants
- Tara Sullivan: Enough with the PED excuses
- New Orleans Saints fans need to get a grip
- As UMass makes a big bet on online education, rivals offer words of caution
- Drugs took their children but not their hope: That others might be saved
- Trump will seek more money for border wall

Kyrie Irving, Celtics finish off Lakers this time

Most Popular In Metro →

Subscribe Now

Digital Access

Home Delivery

Gift Subscriptions

My Account

Manage my Account

Mobile Customer Service

Sign Up For Newsletters

Contact

Help

FAQs

Globe newsroom

Advertise

Order back issues

Social

Facebook

Twitter

Google+

More

ePaper

News in Education

Archives

Privacy policy

Terms of service

Terms of purchase

Work at Boston Globe Media

© 2019 Boston Globe Media Partners, LLC