



# BARBALUNGA FOR SHERIFF

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**“Time For Change – Justice That Works”**

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## **BARBALUNGA SAYS THE SHERIFF MUST BE USING FUZZY MATH TO CONFUSE BERKSHIRE VOTERS ON BUDGET ISSUE**

Berkshire County—Alf Barbalunga, a Democratic candidate for Berkshire County Sheriff, would like to quickly respond to the current Sheriff’s letter to the Berkshire Eagle on 8/3/2022.

“Sheriff Bowler has misled the public when he claims in a letter **‘the most important fact: I do not set salaries at the jail.’**” Barbalunga states, “In fact: Pay parameters are for unions and union contracts. The sheriff actually has a wide range of discretion with administrators—who are not union employees— including which grade and which step he places them at. The sheriff is trying to confuse voters by suggesting he has no control over salaries by referring to unionized workers.”

In fact, in his letter Bowler admits, he has control *“to compensate staff based on their time, experience, training and other areas of expertise they bring to the jail. I have the ability to promote staff or move them to a higher-paying step within their current grade, just like all executives.”* Yes, he certainly does.

For example, the Superintendent position has eight steps ranging from \$123,000 to \$148,000. That’s a 20% pay range. The Asst. Superintendent ranges from \$107,000 to \$132,000. The Asst. Deputy Superintendent is \$92,000 to \$115,000.

In addition, when the Sheriff hires or promotes someone, he has the discretion whether he makes them an Assistant Superintendent, or an Assistant Deputy Superintendent. The Sheriff also has discretion as to which step he places them on, choosing from eight available steps. The range between the bottom of an Assistant Deputy Superintendent and the top of an Assistant Superintendent is \$40,000 (\$92,000-\$132,000).

That’s a lot of latitude! The Sheriff only has to stay within established grades and steps—but as the ranges illustrate, there is lots of room in there to set salaries even higher.

His top paid Assistant Superintendent 1’s base salary is \$173,195 and his Superintendent’s base salary is \$168,198, **not including bonuses, overtime, buy-out, or “other pay”**. See **2022 Base Salaries\***:

Assistant Deputy Superintendent	\$110,867	Assistant Superintendent II	\$125,298
Assistant Deputy Superintendent	\$124,649	Assistant Superintendent IV	\$145,354
Assistant Deputy Superintendent	\$124,649	Assistant Deputy Superintendent I	\$130,800
Assistant Deputy Superintendent II	\$131,992	Assistant Deputy Superintendent	\$106,626
Superintendent	\$168,198	Assistant Deputy Superintendent I	\$173,195

<https://cthrupayroll.mass.gov/#/year/2022/> \*Does not include overtime, bonuses, or “other pay”

Over the past 12 years, the Sheriff has hired on extra “Captains” from the Pittsfield Police Department, instead of promoting internally; every single one has been a Caucasian male. Bowler is paying very high salaries to his Executive Leadership Team, plus he added new positions, paid them for other “special” work, and has continued to give them wasteful access to state cars and gas cards for their private use—like commuting back and forth from work. The backdrop is a huge drop in inmates while he’s been Sheriff, from well over 300 inmates to around 159 [as of July 18](#). Also, the last state audit for the jail [mentioned by the Sheriff](#) was more than 4 years ago and did not cover payroll expenses; it was for non-payroll expenses and overtime calculations.

In conclusion, as the [Berkshire Eagle reported in 2010](#), “Bowler supports a sheriff's right to allocate available funds as he sees fit.”

"The sheriffs are given a budget that's allotted to different programs," [Bowler] said. "I believe it should be at the sheriff's discretion as to how it's spent, as long as the sheriff's department can show it's complying with state regulations and standards." When asked by the Eagle if the current level of state oversight "would prevent abuse of power or excessive power," Bowler said, **"It would not necessarily deter abuse."**

Barabalunga agrees, “The Sheriff alone is accountable for all the administrative bloat in his budget, with very wide latitude to set six figure salaries that are out of proportion to other public and private salaries in Berkshire County. He’s trying to say it’s the state’s fault—but the Sheriff has only himself to blame for this continually growing administrative empire.”

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