

Public Safety Committee Presentation

June 25, 2025



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

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Introduction to the Saint Paul Fire Department

Mission: We protect the people of Saint Paul with public education, fire suppression, rescue, and emergency medical services. We partner with the community to mitigate risks, and respond to all calls for service with skill, dedication, and compassion.

Core Values:

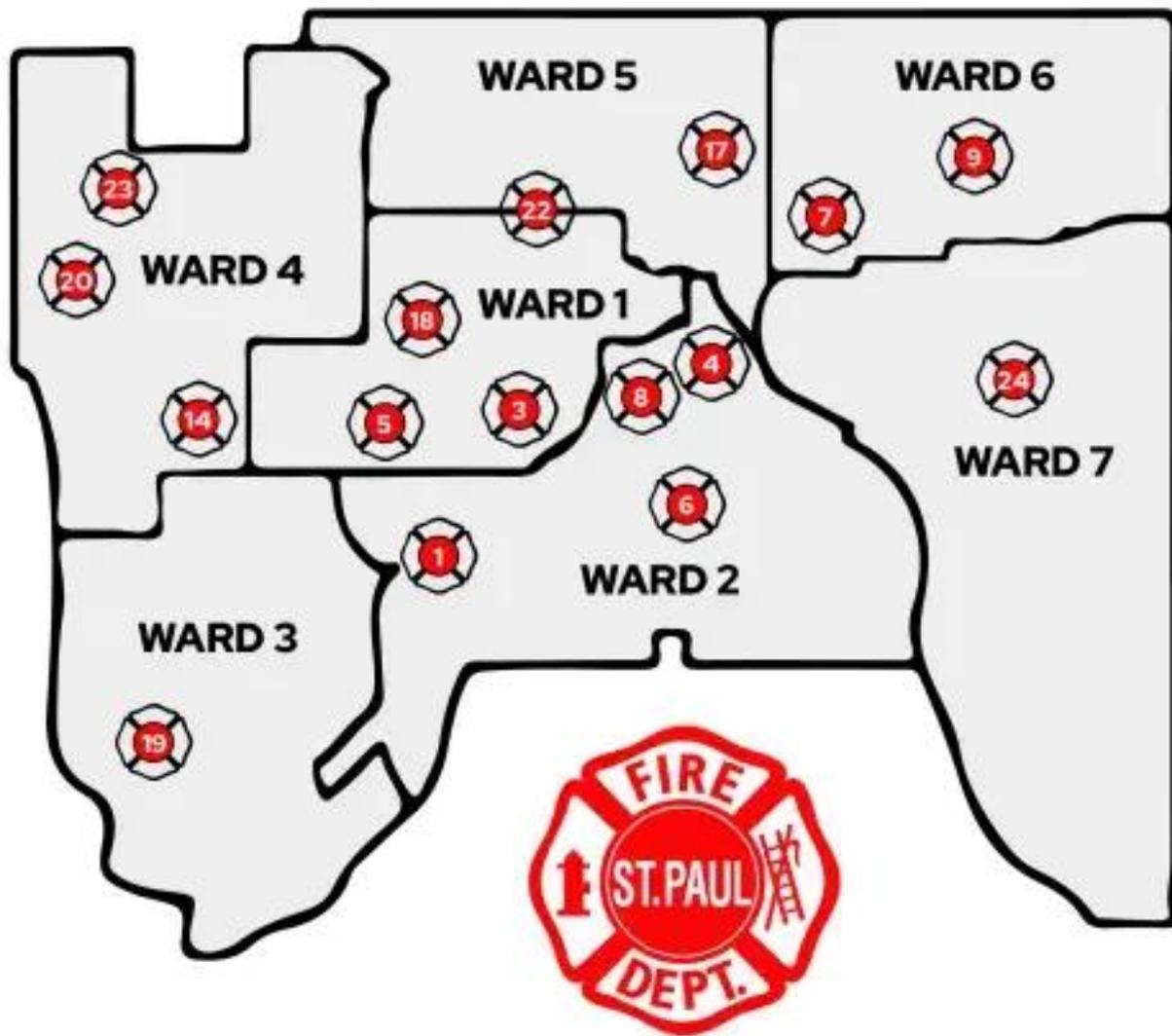
Professionalism leads us to continuously improve our knowledge and skills, always striving to be “first in” with excellent service.

Respect guides every interaction, honoring the dignity of all persons.

Integrity demands that we do the right thing, no matter what. We are accountable for our commitments and our actions.

Duty calls us to selfless service in all our communities.

Equity is our call to uphold principles of fairness and justice, building a Saint Paul that works for everyone.





Why Recruitment & Retention Matter

- Aging workforce & rising call volume
- SPFD Fire and EMS incidents increase by 5%-7% annually
- 2014 EMS incidents 31,583 compared to 2024 EMS incidents of 52,353
- EMT call growth up 65% over 10 years
- Diverse, reflective workforce critical to service delivery





SPFD Academy Overview

- **Length**
 - 14 weeks (standard academy)
 - 8 weeks (lateral transfer academy)
- **Curriculum**
 - Classroom training
 - Technical skills
 - Physical training
- **Certifications**
 - Firefighter I & II
 - Hazmat Ops





Graduation Success & Improvements

- 94% graduation rate
- Bi-weekly pre-academy fitness sessions
- Support from affinity groups
 - TCF3
 - Firefighters United
 - Los Bomberos





Recruitment & Academy Cost

- Advertising/Outreach: \$15,000
- Application/Assessment: \$250,000
- **Onboarding (gear, medicals, admin): \$2,300 per person (class of 20 = \$46,000)**





Academy Operating Costs

- 5:1 student-to-instructor ratio
- Training staff wear multiple hats: curriculum, mentorship, records
- Reliance on overtime to backfill instructors from operations

- Academy payroll (cadets + instructors): \$220,000
- Materials & equipment: \$15,000
- 35% of training division's annual load



Outreach & Community Recruitment

- EMS Academy
- Fire Explorers
- TCF3
- Los Bomberos
- Firefighters United
- Partnerships
 - Saint Paul Public Schools
 - KOM
 - HAP
 - Urban Village
 - Local Colleges
 - Partnerships
- Social Media campaigns





Streamlining the Hiring Process

- Barriers: Hiring process
- Goals:
 - Reduce time-to-hire
 - Improve diversity
- Lateral hire strategy and training our own paramedics

**NEW
JOB OPENING**

• FIREFIGHTER/EMT
• SAINT PAUL FIRE DEPARTMENT

- APPLY BY JUNE 30, 2023 BY 11:59 PM CENTRAL -

WOMEN IN FIRE



Recruitment Wins- BLS

- Expansion of BLS Division to support operational needs
- 24/7 response to Alpha and some Bravo incidents
- Power Rigs
- Interfacility transports
- CARES incidents

Coming Soon

Emergency Medical Technician

Work as an EMT in the Saint Paul Fire Department, responding to 9-1-1 Basic Life Support (BLS) emergency calls

Application Period Scheduled to Open November 14, 2022

SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA

FIRE DEPT. ST. PAUL

ST. PAUL BLS UNIT



Recruitment Wins –Pathways

- 68 hired from pathways programs as Firefighter
- EMS Academy: 370 graduates, 31 hired as Firefighter
- EMS Academies
 - SPPS
 - Right Track
 - Ramsey County
- Clear pathways program
 - Fire Explorer
 - EMS Academy
 - BLS Division
 - Firefighter





Strategic Over-Hiring Model

Hired 12-20 above FTE cap

Reduced OT by \$1 million/year

Fills gaps from attrition, military leave, parental leave, long term leaves



Annual Staffing and OT Data

- 2018 – 435 authorized staffing - \$2,910,775.96 OT – Average daily staffing of 113
- 2019 – 447 authorized staffing – \$3,076, 847.51 OT – 112 ADS
- **2020 – 446 authorized staffing - \$1,940,270.85 OT – 115 ADS**
- 2021 – 442 authorized staffing - \$3,940,270.85 OT –114 ADS
- 2022 – 441 authorized staffing - \$2,883,786.93 OT –109 ADS
- 2023 – 443 authorized staffing - \$2,833,858,65 OT –114 ADS
- 2024 – 448 authorized staffing - \$2,906,330.61 OT –113 ADS
- 2025 – 457 authorized staffing - \$1,574,801.67 OT – 110 ADS (through 6/13/25)



D Shift

- Hired 2 Captains and 1 District Chief
- Started March 8, 2025
- Saved \$114,000 of OT in 3 months with 3 D shift employees





Next Academy & Applicant Growth

- Fall 2025 Academy (Lateral Transfer Academy)
- Spring 2026 Academy (Open List)
- Recruitment has started
 - Expanded workouts
 - Support groups

Saint Paul Fire is hiring full-time lateral transfers for Firefighter-Paramedic/EMT

Requirements
Currently employed as a full-time Firefighter by a public agency having a merit system; OR hold a certified Federal, State or Tribal Firefighter License
Nationally certified Paramedic or EMT
High School diploma/GED
At least 18 years of age
Valid Class D Driver's License
Pass physical exam and complete an interview

Benefits
Base salary is \$69,218 - \$96,125
EMTs receive an additional 8.24% premium
Paramedics receive an additional 11.4% premium
Great benefits and pension plan

[Click here to apply](#)

Application period extended to June 6, 2025

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Capital City Fire Photography



Key Challenges

- EMT shortage statewide
- Paramedic shortage statewide
- Competition for talent
- Infrastructure needs
 - Training center
 - Gender-inclusive stations
- Pay scale





Opportunities Ahead

- Expanded pathways programs
- Relaunch of Fire Explorer Program
- Career Ladders
- Training center as a state hub
- Continued support Leadership opportunities/training
- Continued support of emotional and physical health of our workforce



Conclusion – Support Needed

- Approve strategic over-hiring
- Fund outreach and pathways expansion
- Invest in facilities

