



CITY OF SAINT PAUL  
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TO: Saint Paul City Council

FROM: Fire Chief Tim Butler

SUBJECT: Residency Points

I urge the Saint Paul City Council to amend the Civil Service Rules and raise the residency preference points for entrance examinations from 5 to 10 points. As the leader of one of the major public service departments for the City, I feel that resident candidates for employment offer significant advantages over other candidates. These include:

- Greater familiarity with our neighborhoods, business locations, schools, places of worship and community gathering, and the various infrastructure of our City. Possession of this "local knowledge" is important when Firefighters and Paramedics are trying to locate emergency scenes quickly, or when they're trying to preplan emergency events and incidents in our city. In general, people who grew up and live in Saint Paul have much better local knowledge than people who simply work here or who reside outside the City.
- EMS comprises about 75 to 80% of our job in the Fire Department. Cultural competence is particularly important in EMS where close personal contact with patients is required for superior patient care. Improved patient care results when Firefighters/paramedics understand the particular social and economic conditions, cultural background, and language of the people they are called to assist. Residents of the City are more likely to have this cultural understanding because they've lived in or come from the neighborhoods, cultural backgrounds and economic conditions. Having a workforce that's reflective of the community we serve results in better service delivery and improved customer satisfaction. It's just good for business.
- One of the Fire Department's ongoing challenges is to build a closer connection with the community that we serve. A workforce that comes from the community has closer ties with the business, social, religious, and civic institutions that are the center points of our neighborhoods. Hiring people who live in Saint Paul and who grew up in our neighborhoods helps achieve a closer connection with other city residents. Where there's residency, there's investment, and where there is investment, there's ownership.

For these reasons, I support raising the residency points to 10; I hope you will support that increase as well.