

Request for Additional Staffing

To: Town Manager

From: Assistant Chief Heinrich

Date: October 10, 2025

Subject: Request for 8 Firefighters in FY 2027 Budget

1. Position Requested

- **Title of Position:** Firefighter
 - **FTE (Full-Time Equivalent):** 8.0 FTE
 - **Department/Division:** Fire Department – Operations Division
 - **Proposed Start Date:** July 1, 2026
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2. Fiscal Impact (Full-Year Cost Analysis)

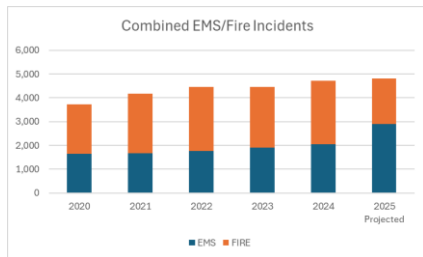
Cost Component	Annual Cost	Notes
Salary (Grade/Step)	\$ 54,447.01	Step 2 firefighter
Holiday Wages (if not part of base)	\$ 2,400.00	
Health Insurance	\$ 47,506.12	Family
Dental Insurance	\$ 2,196.84	Family
Short-Term Disability	\$ 219.00	
Long-Term Disability/Life Insurance	\$ 205.00	
Retirement Contribution	\$ 15,871.30	Employer % of salary - (Fire - 29.15%)
Payroll Taxes (FICA, etc.)	\$ 789.48	1.45% for Group II employees
Other Benefits (if applicable)	\$ 3,000.00	Uniform Stipend, Certifications, stipends
Initial Uniform Cost		
Initial Equipment Cost	\$ 14,000.00	
Required Training Costs	\$ 3,141.18	three week orientation
Additional department specific expenses	\$ 3,000.00	onboarding - background/physicals/testing
Total Annual Cost per firefighter	\$ 146,775.94	
Total Annual Cost for eight firefighter	\$ 1,174,207.48	

Note: If the officer begins mid-year, FY 2027 costs would be prorated to \$679,668.46. Full costs begin FY 2028.

3. Justification and Value of Position

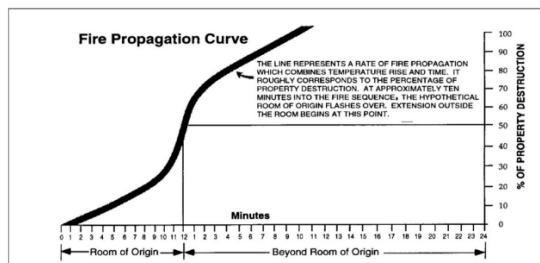
Service Demand:

The Department has seen a 26% increase in call volume over the last five years. The increase in incidents has resulted in us requesting mutual aid 217 times in 2024. Our first ambulance is cross-staffed by two firefighters at Central Station who also staff the tanker and rescue, every additional ambulance request requires a neighborhood fire station to close and that manpower is used to staff the ambulance. We currently allow two fire stations to close in order to cover ambulance responses. Mutual aid received in 2025 is projected to be 250 times.



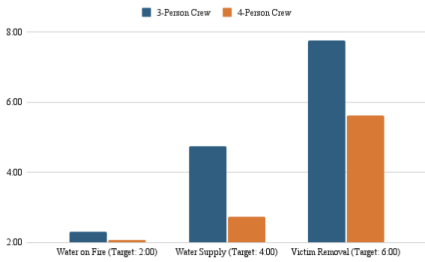
Operational Capacity:

Currently we cross-staff one ambulance with a tanker or rescue, and the other ambulances are cross-staffed by engine companies. With forty-three percent simultaneous calls the likelihood of having a neighborhood fire station is very likely to occur multiple times a day. The longer it takes to respond to a fire the larger the fire grows before firefighters arrive, as a result the risk to the occupants and firefighters increase. The Fire propagation curve below explains this.



Efficiency Gains:

By hiring eight firefighters we will be able to dedicate a crew to an ambulance. The second crew will continue to cross-staff the ambulance, rescue and tanker. The third ambulance will then result in a fire station closing. By not cross staffing ambulance and fire engine we will have more fire engines available in their stations. This will help meet The National Fire Protection Associations, Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations (NFPA 1710) response time of 4 minutes or less for the first due engine company and 8 minutes or less for the entire assignment for a low hazard occupancy single family residence. The additional 2 firefighters can join with existing fire engines and become a 4 person crew. A four person crew will establish a water supply 74% faster, put water on a fire 11% faster, and rescue a victim 27% faster.



Cost Savings or Avoidance:

When multiple incidents occur a firefighter recall is requested and off duty firefighters respond back on overtime, this will decrease with a dedicated ambulance. Every mutual aid ambulance that transports a patient result in approximately \$1,200 in lost revenue to Londonderry. In FY25 mutual aid ambulance transported 111 times. Based on an ambulance bill of \$1,200 the lost revenue would be \$133,200.00 a year.

Performance Improvement:

The use of a mutual aid ambulance increases the time it takes for a patient to be transported to the hospital and cause engine companies to remain out of service while waiting for that ambulance. Not all mutual aid ambulances are staffed at the paramedic level and as a result a Londonderry paramedic may still be needed for the treatment of the patient if one is available. If one is not available, then the patient receives a lower level of care. The addition of these two firefighters per shift brings the department's staffing level to 15 members. NFPA 1710 recommends that for a low hazard single-family house we should have an initial response of 17 firefighters. We currently rely on mutual aid for the additional firefighters which causes a delay in response.

4. Alternatives Considered

- **Increase overtime:** To increase overtime to staff an ambulance during peak hours, Monday thru Friday 08:00 to 16:00. Cost would be \$261,293.76 a year.
- **Nothing:** We will continue to close stations to cross-staff ambulances.
- **Only provide two cross-staffed ambulances:** Increase in mutual aid requested and increase delay in patient transport time.

5. Alignment with Strategic Goals

This staffing request supports the Focused Fire Service Risk Analysis Twelve Greatest Risks and Challenges #3 Cross-staffing two ambulances thus removing an engine from service. Our current staffing level is 13 firefighters. This request moves the department closer to achieving the NFPA 1710, 2020 edition, standard of 17 firefighters on scene of a low-hazard structure fire, single family dwellings.

Recommendation:

- Authorize the Department to apply for a Staffing For Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, SAFER, grant. The last Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Fiscal Year 2024 SAFER grant required the fire departments to cost-share 25% for the first two years and 65% for the third year. As a result, if the grant is awarded the cost for the first three years would be approximately \$1,318,138. To allocate \$286,554.87 towards the first-year costs in the FY2027.

Assistant Chief Fred Heinrich**Acting Fire Chief**