

# Fire Department Hiring Practices

City of Denton

Nov 14, 2017



# Objectives:

1. Provide a **high-level overview of Denton Fire Department Hiring Practices.** We will discuss how they relate to Civil Service 143 and the Meet and Confer Agreement.
2. Address Council's question regarding scholarships and discuss other possible steps to try to increase diversity.

# Regulatory Matrix:

- ▶ Fire Department Hiring Practices are regulated by 3 primary bodies:
  - ▶ **Texas Local Government Code 143 (Civil Service)**
    - ▶ The purpose of Civil Service is to secure efficient fire and police departments composed of capable personnel who are free from political influence and who have permanent employment tenure as public servants.
    - ▶ Outlines general hiring practices.
  - ▶ **City of Denton Rules and Regulations of the Civil Service Commission**
    - ▶ Establishes some clarity, how testing, and hiring is handled by the City of Denton for Civil Service Employees.
    - ▶ Primarily focuses on the procedures on how Chapter 143 is implemented locally in Denton.
    - ▶ This document is updated as needed by Human Resources with input from Police and Fire Department Administrations.
  - ▶ **Fire Department Meet and Confer Agreement**
    - ▶ Mutually agreed upon agreement between the City of Denton and the Firefighters' Association (Police have a separate agreement).
    - ▶ Can allow for changes in some hiring practices if mutually agreed upon.
    - ▶ In the event that either side terminates the agreement (or does not renew), then everything would go back to Civil Service 143 requirements
    - ▶ Original Meet and Confer Agreement went into effect in 2006.

# Basic Hiring Process:

1. Candidates take the annual written entrance examination.
2. Scores are tabulated and any tie-breakers are determined.
3. Background investigations are conducted.
4. Polygraph exam.
5. Physical agility test is administered.
6. Oral Interviews are conducted.
7. New ranking of candidates is formulated based on Oral Interview scores.
8. Conditional Job Offers are given as positions open up.
9. Psychological testing.
10. Physical examination and drug screening.
11. Candidates can then start!

# Hiring Requirements:

## Minimum Qualifications

1. Must have a High School Diploma or GED
2. Must be a United States Citizen
3. Must be a Certified Texas Fire Fighter
4. Must be have a Texas Paramedic Certification
5. Must be at least 18 years old
6. Can have not reach your 36<sup>th</sup> birthday on the date the examination is administered
7. Must have no felony convictions or numerous misdemeanor convictions
8. Must have a valid driver's license and be able to obtain a class B license within 1 year of employment
9. Must pass a physical agility test
10. Must pass a medical examination
11. Vision must be correctable to 20/20 and have normal color vision
12. Must pass a psychological examination
13. Must pass a polygraph examination
14. Must pass a drug screen

# Hiring Differences between FD and PD

## Fire Department

Age: Must be between 18 and 36

Education: GED or HS Diploma

DWI is not an absolute failure

Misdemeanors: Class A within 5yrs, B within 1 year

Physical, Physical Agility, and Drug Screen

**Firefighter and Paramedic Certification**

## Police Department

Age: Between 18 and 45

Education: GED or HS Diploma AND 60 College Hours with at least a 2.0gpa (or active duty for 3 yrs)

No DWI in the past 10 years

Misdemeanors: Class A None, B within 10 years

Physical with Drug Screen

**No Police Officer Certification**

# Where Do We Recruit?

## Advertising

Texas Commission on Fire Protection  
International Association of Black Firefighters  
International Association of Women in the Fire Service  
International Association of Firefighters  
National Association of Hispanic Firefighters  
North Texas Women Firefighters  
EMSI  
Fire Rescue I  
Fire Recruit.com  
City of Denton Website  
Denton Fire Department Website and Facebook

## Local Schools

DISD Career Fairs (Multiple Events)  
DISD Careers on Wheels (Multiple Events)  
TWU Kinship fair  
UNT Emergency Management Program

## Special Events

Juneteenth  
Cinco de Mayo  
Denton Blues Festival  
Day of the Dead Festival  
Denton Public Safety Day  
Denton Heart Walk  
Denton Arts and Jazz Festival  
Arts, Antiques, and Autos  
Turkey Trot

# Where Do We Recruit (cont)?

## Fire Academies

North Texas Fire Academy

Collin College

Navarro College

Tarrant County College

Weatherford College

McLennan College

Vernon College

Tyler Junior College

Fire Texas A&M Extension Services

Desoto Fire Academy

North Central Texas College

## Paramedic Schools

El Centro College

Collin College

Weatherford College

Blinn College

Tarrant County College

Grayson College

Hill College



# How Do We Advertise?

- ▶ The Denton Fire Department utilizes a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional forms of advertising and marketing to help increase our candidate pool.
  - ▶ Print ads in trade magazines
  - ▶ Social Media
  - ▶ Email
  - ▶ Website Presence
  - ▶ Information Booths at Community Events
  - ▶ Booths at local Fire and EMS Trade Shows
  - ▶ Visit Schools

# 5 Year Entrance Exam Demographics

	2013 Number Registered	2013 Percent Registered	2014 Number Registered	2014 Percent Registered	2015 Number Registered	2015 Percent Registered	2016 Number Registered	2016 Percent Registered	2017 Number Registered	2017 Percent Registered
African American	29	9.6%	16	6.3%	20	10.3%	25	13.4%	31	11.9%
Caucasian	230	75.9%	199	78.7%	140	72.2%	115	61.8%	178	68.2%
Hispanic	33	10.9%	32	12.6%	23	11.9%	31	16.7%	33	12.6%
Asian Pacific	5	1.7%	1	0.4%	4	2.1%	4	2.2%	7	2.7%
Native American	6	2.0%	2	0.8%	2	1.0%	1	0.5%	2	0.8%
Other	0	0.0%	3	1.2%	5	2.6%	10	5.4%	10	3.8%
Total	303	100.0%	253	100.0%	194	100.0%	186	100.0%	261	100.0%
Male	279	92.1%	244	96.4%	182	93.8%	176	94.6%	253	96.9%
Female	24	7.9%	9	3.6%	12	6.2%	10	5.4%	8	3.1%
	303		253		194		186		261	

# 2017 Exam Breakdowns

	Number Registered	Number Present	% Present	Number Passed	Percent Passed	Background Submittals	Background %	Background Passed	Background % Passed
African American	31	10	32.3%	6	60%	3	50%	0	0%
Caucasian	178	76	42.7%	74	97.4%	45	60.8%	24	53%
Hispanic	33	9	27.3%	9	100%	2	22.2%	1	50%
Asian Pacific	7	3	42.9%	3	100%	2	66.7%	0	0%
Native American	2	1	50%	0	0%	0	N/A	0	N/A
Other	10	2	20%	2	100%	1	50%	0	0%
Total	261	101	38.7%	94	93.10%	53		25	
Male	253	96	37.9%	89	92.7%	50	56.2%	24	48%
Female	8	5	62.5%	5	100%	3	60%	1	33%
Total	261	101	38.7%	94	93.1%	53	56.4%	25	47%

# Do We Offer Individual Scholarships?

- ▶ Currently the Fire Department does not have any specific scholarship programs.
- ▶ Civil Service hiring practices limit the hiring guidelines so individual scholarship programs would be difficult to offer.
- ▶ With Meet and Confer it may be possible to come up with a mutually agreed upon alternative hiring program that includes potential scholarships or similar items.

# Options Being Considered

- ▶ Adjust our minimum qualifications in which candidates have to be a firefighter and paramedic prior to being hired.
    - ▶ This can have a significant cost per candidate since fire academies run approximately 4 months long and paramedic schools range from 6 to 12 months. This option currently costs the city approximately \$8,000 per month per individual (Salary, Benefits, Etc.).
  - ▶ Develop a “Homegrown” recruiting program.
    - ▶ Partner with Denton ISD’s ATC program in the development of a fire academy to go along with their already established EMT program.
    - ▶ Program would provide most of the necessary training for candidates to complete during high school.
      - They could then go right into Paramedic School at NCTC upon graduation and be ready to be hired within 6 months of graduation.
- 13 ▶ This program would require a change in our Meet and Confer agreement.

# Questions?

