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July
2023



A Semi-Annual Insight Into New Hampshire's Fire & EMS Workforce

Recruitment & Retention News



current topics >>>

Paid Training Opportunity

The New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs ~ Office of Workforce Opportunity has a program called the **Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (W.I.O.A.)** that can **pay for Firefighter I & II, CPAT, and EMS training** for eligible individuals regardless if they are affiliated or not. To find out more you can email trainingopportunities@snhs.org or call (603) 647-4470 ext 8047.

On February 23rd Director Justin Cutting spoke to *The Pulse of NH* about the **Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (W.I.O.A.)** program. Click on this link to listen [News Feed – New Hampshire Fire Academy & EMS \(nhfa-ems.com\)](#).



Keeping You Clued-In Projects and Progress Made

The past six months have been extremely busy. Here is an update on strategies being worked on to address New Hampshire's Fire and EMS recruitment and retention issues.

The **New Hampshire Brazilian Council** agreed to share Firefighter and EMS Provider career roadmaps to their community.

New Hampshire Employment Security has also agreed to share career roadmaps with all 12 local offices throughout the State.

Career pathways have been distributed to all public high schools as well as several Community Action offices throughout the State.

Additionally, they have been translated into several foreign languages including Chinese, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, and Vietnamese. The intent is to entice diverse people to join the Fire and EMS workforce by having visual pathways for them to use. View them at [Document Library - Division of Fire Standards and Training & Emergency Medical Services, NH DOS](#).

The **New Hampshire Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services** will also be distributing the career pathways to transitioning service members as part of their

A special thank you to Plymouth Fire, Golden Cross Ambulance, Atkinson Fire, and Swanzey Fire for the invitation to meet in person, speak to staff, and to learn more about the communities they serve.

“welcome home letters” that are distributed every month. Attracting candidates with similar characteristics and traits such as integrity, the ability to work in high-stress situations, effective communication skills, adaptability, dedication, compassion, physically fit,

tolerant, emotionally intelligent, and self-sacrificing are all invaluable. Recruiting Veterans benefits everyone because it provides them with rewarding careers that have a paramilitary lifestyle, great benefits, better work-life balance, and even paid training in some instances. We look forward to seeing how this collaboration will help with New Hampshire's Statewide recruitment efforts.

staffing >>>

Semi-Annual Staffing Questionnaire Results

In January a recruitment & retention semi-annual staffing questionnaire was sent to all NH fire departments and EMS units to gauge the previous six months.



Recruited

According to answers received, at least 185 firefighters and at least 117 EMS providers were hired in the past 6 months. Note: This includes lateral transfers.



Additional Info

Some reasons why retention has struggled in the past 6 months based on answers received include:

- 47 left to join another organization;
- 31 left for higher wages;
- 38 moved out of the area; and
- 31 retired.

Survey Takers

83 fire departments and 18 EMS units answered the questionnaire for a total of 101 organizations. The more answers received the better we can gauge progress and what areas remain troublesome.

Not Retained

According to answers received, at least 118 firefighters and at least 75 EMS providers left organizations in the past 6 months.

Still Needed

At least **248 firefighters** and at least **168 EMS providers** are still needed according to those departments that responded.



Grantham Fire Department gained inquiries after using this sign to attract new members.



resource

Stop Recruiting Gen Z Like Millennials



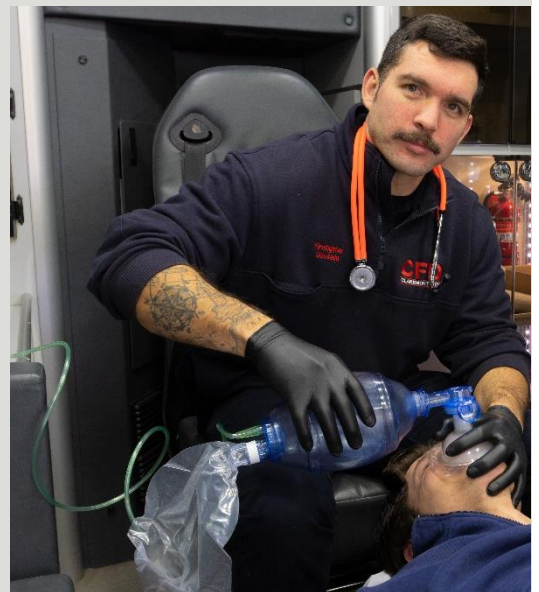
[Stop Recruiting Gen Z Like Millennials \(forbes.com\)](https://www.forbes.com)

training program >>>

WorkInvestNH – EMT Training Incentive Program

In order to help the New Hampshire EMS System **RECRUIT** and **RETAIN** additional Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), the State of New Hampshire has created a new program that will pay for EMT and Advanced EMT related training; will offset a portion of wages paid to new employees; and will pay employees an incentive to remain in a position requiring an EMT License. Licensed EMS Units are able to utilize these incentives by participating in the WorkInvestNH-EMT program. The program provides employers with payment for 100% of the training, certification, and licensure costs for new and existing employees certified and licensed as EMTs and Advanced EMTs. The program also provides employers hiring individuals enrolled in EMT training with reimbursement of 50% of wages paid during the training period, for up to four (4) weeks and a maximum of \$2,000. The program will also pay \$1,000 as an **EMT RETENTION INCENTIVE** to each employee after successfully obtaining their EMT Provider License and remaining affiliated with the same licensed unit for six (6) months. This payment will go to the employer and is then required to be passed on to the employee.

For info email WorkInvestNH-EMT@nhes.nh.gov or visit [EMT Training Incentive Program \(nh.gov\)](https://www.nh.gov).



spotlight >>>

Firefighter/EMT Jim Terrero



Click on the PHOTO above or click on the hyperlink [Firefighter/EMT Jim Terrero on Vimeo](#) to hear Manchester Fire Department's Jim Terrero talk about his career path and how the opportunities in Fire and EMS are endless.



EMS Training Coordinator

Maria Varanka has been Coordinating EMS Training for NH Bureau of EMS since 2021 and has been in EMS for 12 years. She fell into the field by accident when she took an EMT class as an elective in college. To Maria's surprise she enjoyed the class and after graduating she continued to pursue her career. The best part of being an EMS Provider, according to Maria, is that you become part of a second family, and it's a huge community of people that you feel that you already know even if you have never met them before. She believes that people should consider EMS if they like problem-solving, are detail-oriented, have good communication skills and a sense of humor.

kudos >>>

Stratham Volunteer Fire Rescue



Forming its own Recruitment & Retention Committee

Earlier this year Stratham created its own Recruitment & Retention committee consisting of 5-6 steady committee members with a variety of professional backgrounds including a physician and a former US Army Special Operations combat medic. Their goal is to recruit 5 new volunteers with certifications. This huge undertaking has already shown progress with the roll out of a **formal on-boarding process** and **active social media presence**. And they are also in the process of creating a **mentorship program** for new recruits. One of the committee members brought in his pinball machine to add some fun and friendly competition with its members and so far it has worked. Keep up the good work!

Pictured left
to right:
FF/EMT
Dusty Almon,
EMT Kyle
Saltonstall,
LT/EMR
Chris Heal,
and FF Chris
Hayden.



EMS Providers

As of June 1, 2023 the total number of active EMS Providers is 5,484. Below is the breakdown by license level.

Emergency Medical Technicians: 2,571

Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians: 1,422

Paramedics: 1,247

Emergency Medical Responders: 233

NH EMT – Basics: 10

Apprentice: 1

Firefighters

As of June 1, 2023 the total number of Firefighters is 4,651. Below is the breakdown.

Firefighter I Certified: 3,454

Firefighter II Certified: 2,628

NOTE: Many Firefighters perform dual roles as EMS Providers.

Source: ImageTrend RespondNH



Did you know?

Seventy-two percent (72%) of New Hampshire's licensed Emergency Medical Service units are Fire Department based.

Source: 2022 R&R Ad Hoc Committee Report

fire explorers >>>

New Hampshire Exploring Posts

Consider the benefits of starting a Fire or EMS exploring program. Here is a list of current NH Fire/EMS Exploring Posts:

- Allenstown Fire Department
- Chester Fire Department
- Epping Fire Department
- Hudson Fire Department
- Lancaster Fire Department
- North Walpole Fire & Rescue
- Northwood Fire Rescue
- Peterborough Fire & Rescue
- Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department
- Springfield Fire Department

For information on how to join contact

James Thomson at james.thomson@scouting.org
(603) 625-6431 or visit <https://nhscouting.org/join/>



Haverhill Fire Department



Recruiting More Members While Successfully Revamping its Medical Unit

In the past 6 months Chief Phil Blanchard recruited 12 people to Haverhill Fire Department. They now have **54 members!**

New members include a few Paramedics, a few Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), and 9 Emergency Medical Responders (EMR). And while his recruitment numbers are impressive, so is his retention rate. **Only 3 people left in the past 3 years.**

When asked what strategies he uses, Chief Blanchard gave several good answers. He said they attend career fairs, hold open houses, they do community outreach, they have an active social media presence, writes on the town's Facebook page titled "The Chief's Corner" to **keep the community informed**, and asks his company officers to try to recruit 2 new people each year.

But what about retention? How has he managed to keep nearly all of their members active? The answer is not as shocking as

one might think. He uses a **mentorship program** (on a low level) and he maintains a great **relationship with former members**. One of his members left to become a career firefighter in the Seacoast area but she still comes back to volunteer every chance she gets.

This Spring Chief Blanchard rolled out a new Volunteer Staffing Program that sets realistic goals and expectations of its new and existing members. The program focuses on training and pre-planning to provide better service to their community. By creating a **positive and empowering culture to be a part of** Haverhill Fire Department is keeping its members happy and engaged. Fantastic job!



success >>>

Allenstown Fire Rescue



Keeping the Community Informed Has Been Helpful in Getting Support



Great Results

Allenstown is happy to report that it has managed to add a number of call and per diem members since they began their new round of recruiting. And they have also added 2 uncertified people who are



The Secret Sauce

Allenstown has kept its community in the loop of every aspect of its journey in starting its ambulance. **Keeping the public informed is key** as well as maintaining an **active social media presence**. They share what they are planning, how they are helping, and asking for new members. They are transparent with Allenstown residents and it is working.

Making Strides

Allenstown begun its own ambulance service the beginning of this year resulting with the need to hire more Emergency Medical Services Providers. The quickly began reaching out to their community for help.

enrolling in an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course, 1 firefighter who is pending EMT testing, 1 paramedic who is also a certified firefighter, and 5 Advanced EMTs with one of them pending paramedic testing.



Consider starting a Length Of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) to help energize and retain your volunteer and call members. Pictured above is Tom Green of Green Insurance presenting on this topic at Milford Fire Department this past March.

a different approach >>>

Londonderry Fire Department Matching Their Commitment to New Paramedics



Gone are the days of traditional hiring of career firefighters. For so many years fire departments would not even consider a candidate unless they already possessed every license and certification under the sun. But Londonderry recognized that those requirements were not practical with today's recruitment difficulties so they began taking a different approach. They **started hiring Paramedics, putting them on payroll so they receive full wages and benefits, then send them to firefighter recruit school**. This has had a positive impact in addressing staffing needs while demonstrating their commitment and investment in their new hires.



resource

10 Things Your EMT Onboarding Process is Missing



[EMS: 10 things your EMT onboarding process is missing \(ems1.com\)](https://www.ems1.com/EMS/10-things-your-EMT-onboarding-process-is-missing)

spotlight >>>

Firefighter/Paramedic Ken Carleton



Click on the PHOTO above or click on the hyperlink [Firefighter/Paramedic Ken Carleton on Vimeo](#) to hear what Sanbornton Fire Department's Ken Carleton hopes new recruits learn to love about this job.



Captain of Fire Training

Ted Tillson has been Captain of NH Bureau of Fire Training since 2018 and has been in the fire service for 28 years. His favorite part of being in the fire service is the excitement, being able to help people in emergency situations, and working with great people. One of Ted's most memorable moments was when he was on a fire department in southwestern NH and on one particular Christmas Eve there was a house fire and while trying to extinguish it they managed to save several gifts for the children. Another was when Ted's working partner went into cardiac arrest right in front of him just after they finished working a code. Luckily, they were still at the hospital and Ted helped the staff start CPR, shocked him twice, and revived him.

Golden Cross Ambulance in Claremont

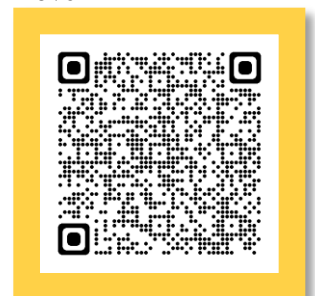


Is hiring full-time candidates whom they will train to become Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) when a commitment is made to working for them. They are taking a forward-thinking approach to addressing its staffing shortages.



resource

How Salary is Tied to EMS Turnover

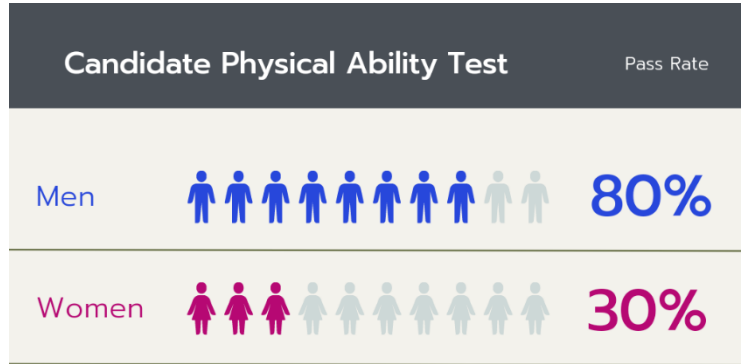


[How Salary Is Tied To EMS Turnover | EMS1.com](#)

recap >>>



The CPAT Prep for Women class in February could not have happened without the help of this dedicated group of women.



The top right image illustrates the estimated Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) pass rate in New Hampshire since January 1, 2021.

tips >>>

Be the boss you want to work for. Fifty percent of people who leave their job leave due to a poor relationship with their direct supervisor or manager.

The key to retention success is recruiting your existing members over and over again.

Giving positive recognition results in happier employees, higher performance and less turnover.

Pictured left to right: CJ Gosselin (Claremont FD), Rob Leite (Manchester FD), Micah Wonyetye (Nashua FD), Jon Fosher, Jr. (Manchester FD), and Dave DiTommaso (Laconia FD).



CPAT Prep For Women

Why This New Full-day Hands-on Class Was Long Overdue

It is of no surprise that New Hampshire's fire service is 93% male dominated. According to RespondNH there are only 174 female firefighters in New Hampshire who are Firefighter II certified, yet only 55 of them having successfully passed the Candidate Physical Ability Test ("CPAT") and are employed as career firefighters.

Back in February this much needed yet controversial class had a successful turn out. Participants were coached and mentored by 12 New Hampshire female firefighters. But why? And why not just attend a coed CPAT orientation? Well, here's why. It was so much more than simply allowing women to try the CPAT course; it allowed professional firefighters to train, mentor and provide guidance. It

they were asked if they liked having an all-women class, here were some of their responses. "Absolutely, yes, because it's hard in the fire service to find female role models. It's nice to be able to see how many other women want to do this job and to be able to talk and create new contacts and friendships." Another answer was "Yes, because it was nice to hear how the girls of all statures went about it."

also provided networking opportunities. Here are a few reasons the attendees gave for why they found this class so helpful. "The introduction to the course and expectations, without the additional dynamic of men attending." And "Being able to try out each station and also getting really helpful tips from women who have already successfully passed the CPAT!" And when

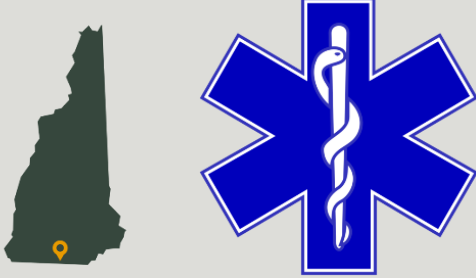
A special thank you to the following women who volunteered as mentors and made this event successful: Jordan Lippmeier; Beth Davin; Jen Meyers; Micah Wonyetye, Kate Meehan; Jessica Colpoys; Deb Pendergast; Kayleigh Eastman; Morgan Brennan; Katie Downs; Kaycee Reagan; and lastly Cassie Chamberlain who demonstrated exceptional leadership and inspiration that day.

"It was amazing to be in such a supportive environment where I didn't have to be self conscious and this was one of the first times in my career I wasn't surrounded by men!"

keeping up with the times >>>

Brookline Ambulance is using a **modern approach** to reach a bigger audience in hopes of attracting new members.

Watch Brookline Ambulance's video on YouTube at [Brookline Ambulance Recruitment - What is your favorite part of BAS? Why did you join? - YouTube](#).



Brookline Ambulance

Seeking new members now!

Brookline Residents...

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

- Become part of a caring & dedicated team of emergency medical responders
- Flexible on-call hours for rewarding & exciting work
- Upcoming Classes: <https://nhfa-ems.com/catalog/>
- Initial Training reimbursed / on-going training & certifications provided
- Uniforms, insurance, & vehicle ID plate provided
- Pager, 2-way radio, medical jumpkit provided
- Paid call time, special details, & coverage hours



diversity >>>

Swanзей Fire Department



Chief William Gould is proud of his diverse group of firefighters and EMS providers and their achievements. He is supportive in their aspirations of becoming career firefighters and is willing to help guide them on their journey. Chief Gould understands the **important role that supportive work environments play in retaining staff.**

Gould became Chief of Swanзей in 2020 after retiring from the New Haven Fire Department in Connecticut.

Pictured left to right: Firefighter/EMT Meghan Foley, Chief Gould, and Firefighter Sam Corban.



time warp >>> 1990

4/14/90



FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC

City of Concord, New Hampshire

Concord Fire Department

JOB SUMMARY: Performs responsible firefighter and emergency medical work for the City, engages in fire suppression, fire prevention, rescue and paramedical services.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from a standard four year high school. Possession of an appropriate N.H. Vehicle License to operate all Fire Department equipment, Ambulance Attendant's License, and N.H. Paramedic License, as prescribed by the N.H. Board of Registry of Medicine. Must meet department probationary requirements for firefighter within 12 months of appointment.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMITTING CITY APPLICATIONS: May 21, 1990 12:00 Noon

STARTING SALARY: \$23,521.68

Fringes Include:

- State Retirement (20 years)
- Paid Health Insurance
- Vacation, Holidays, Sick Leave

City applications accepted only. Please include documentation for above criteria. Applications may be obtained from:

Personnel Department
City of Concord
City Hall — 41 Green Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301
603-225-8535

An Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/H

Qualified/selected applicants will be evaluated/tested/interviewed on June 18, 1990.

Image clipped from Newspapers.com from The Concord Monitor, Concord, NH April 14, 1990, Page 29.

final thoughts...

In addition to coordinating several recruitment and retention classes, I have also attended career fairs and visited several fire departments and EMS units across the State. Building a solid foundation is the first step in creating a healthy working partnership. I appreciate the warm welcome and support in this position. As you can see from the photo below, my collection of challenge coins and patches has grown and I look forward to see what the second half of the year brings. – Kimberly McCulloch, Recruitment & Retention Coordinator



upcoming R&R events >>>

don't miss out

- Jul. 13 – Recruit & Re-Energize Your Department @ Haverhill
- Aug. 3 – LOSAP @ Swanzey
- Aug. 22 – Explore Fire Exploring @ Ray Burton Training Facility
- Sep. 13 – When Retirement Rules Change, Change Your Financial Game @ FSTEMS
- Oct. 28 & 29 – International Association of Fire Chiefs Recruitment & Retention Coordinator Certification @ FSTEMS

Congrats to Laconia Fire Department for being fully staffed!

Click below to read how they did it.

[Laconia Fire Department achieves full staffing amid nationwide recruitment challenges | Local News | laconiadailysun.com](#)



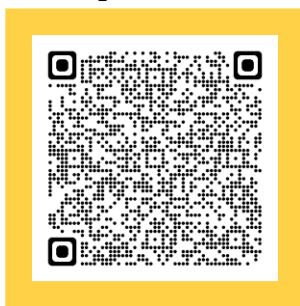
goals for this fall/winter >>>

in the works

- Create a mentor training program
- Create exit interview questions template
- Meet with mutual aid groups
- Host a class on grant writing
- Hold a recruitment event for Military Veterans and their spouses
- Give flyers to sports complexes and fitness gyms throughout the State
- Create a Fire and EMS open house guide
- Coordinate IAFF recruitment & retention workshop

resource

Mentorship



[Mentoring II: Developing and Retaining Firefighters Through Relationships \(iafc.org\)](#)



CHALLENGE YOUR STAFF

Encourage each staff member to recruit at least one person within the next six months. Word-of-mouth remains the most cost-effective and organic recruitment method to date.

Feel Free To Reach Out

If you have a recent success story with recruitment or retention and would like to have it shared in a future newsletter please let me know. Or if you would like a recruitment & retention class held in your area please call (603) 223-4384 or email Kimberly.M.McCulloch@dos.nh.gov.