



**Frederick County**  
*Maryland*

**PAY AND BENEFITS STUDY**

**November 2018**



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Cassi Fields and ESCI would like to acknowledge that without the assistance and support of the Frederick County Council, Frederick County Administration, Frederick County Human Resources Division, and the personnel of Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services, this project could not have been successfully completed.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Emergency Services Consulting International—Fields Human Capital Division has responded to Frederick County, Maryland’s request for a Comprehensive Firefighter Pay and Benefits Study for the Division of Fire Rescue Service (FCDFRS). ESCI’s team of subject matter experts and industrial/organizational psychologists have conducted this study to prepare Frederick County to make informed internal pay and benefits decisions for the personnel of fire rescue.

The study was directed at identifying comparable jurisdictions to benchmark pay and benefits against. These findings were then used to develop a comprehensive comparison for evaluation by Frederick County Government (FCG). Emergency Services Consulting International—Fields Human Capital Division thanks the County Council, County Executive, Human Resources Director, Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and the staff of (FCG) for their outstanding cooperation in the preparation of this report. All involved were candid in their comments and provided a tremendous amount of essential information. The ability of the ESCI team to receive this valuable input and information was key to the development of this study.

### EVALUATION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

An analysis of current conditions is documented in six organizational survey sections, reviewing the FCDFRS administration, governance, design, structure, service area and infrastructure, budget and finance. Each component of the evaluation includes an introductory explanation of the subject area and discussion of desirable outcomes and identified best practices. The study then provides a detailed description of the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking to include comparisons of demographics, budget allowances for services, emergency types and frequency, and staffing comparisons.

Criterion used to evaluate the fire department has been developed over many years. These gauges include relevant guidelines from national accreditation criteria, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, federal and state mandates for fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) systems, and generally accepted best practices within the fire and EMS industry.

The evaluation of current conditions offers a detailed comparison of FCDFRS and the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. These jurisdictions are: 1) Baltimore County, Maryland, 2) Montgomery County, Maryland, 3) Prince George’s County, Maryland, 4) Howard County, Maryland, and 5) Loudoun County, Virginia. This assessment of existing fire department operations provided the ESCI project team with a snapshot in time, the basis from which the balance of the report was developed. The following reviews some of the key findings:

### ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services is a combination department, comprised of career employees and volunteer personnel affiliated with 26 volunteer fire and rescue corporations. Organized in 1989, services are provided throughout Frederick County. The Division provides fire suppression, emergency medical service, rescue, hazardous materials containment, and special response operations to roughly 252,000 residents in Frederick County. Over 400 uniformed career, 700 operational volunteers, and civilian personnel work to provide these services.



The Division of Fire and Rescue Services operates under federal and state regulations and guidelines and the adopted County Code established through their charter government. The department was rated by the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) in the year 2015–2016 throughout the County as low as a 3/3y in Frederick, to a 9/10 in various other service areas, with most areas receiving a 4/5Y.

FCDFRS provides essential services to the citizens of their jurisdiction. Due to the proximity of several rival fire rescue agencies, many jurisdictions are competing for the bulk of the workforce. This competition forces agencies to ensure they can provide the most competitive pay and benefit packages. This study compared jurisdictional ranks, compensation plans, base wages for each classification, special pay incentives, work schedules, overtime calculations, and various fringe benefits.

#### RANK STRUCTURE

It is common for agencies to share similar rank structures. FCDFRS and the agencies chosen for benchmarking all shared very similar rank structures. The qualifications required by each jurisdiction were comparable, and essential job duties and functions were evaluated to ensure parity prior to comparison of pay and benefits. Key findings were the rank of Deputy Chief is used interchangeably amongst the organizations with the rank of Assistant Chief. Both share very similar essential job functions, and agencies that have one usually do not have the other. Loudoun County was the only agency in the study that used both. Rank and file classifications were similar in design and function. Many offer progressive pay plans for each and provide ample ability to promote through the rank structure. FCDFRS was no different.

Frederick County Jurisdictional Job Title/Rank Comparison						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince Georges County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
<b>Exempt Employees</b>						
Chief	x	x	x	x	x	x
Assistant Chief		x	x		x	x
Deputy Chief	x					x
Division Chief		x	x			
Battalion Chief	x		x		x	
Captain					x	
<b>Non-Exempt Employees</b>						
Battalion Chief	x	x		x		x
Captain	x	x	x	x		x
Lieutenant	x	x	x	x	x	x
Fire Apparatus Operator/ Technician/ Master FF	x	x	x	x	x	x
FF/Paramedic	x	x		x		x
FF/EMT	x	x				x
Firefighter	x	x	x	x	x	x
Paramedic	x	x		x		x
EMT		x				
Trainee/Recruit					x	





**COMPENSATION PLANS**

Each of the compensation plans was detailed for analysis to identify parity and disparity. The analysis identifies the type of plan, the number of steps or years in the base plan, the salary increase between steps, the differential between steps and rank, guaranteed increases if offered, and compensation offered after topping off. Overtime earnings, if available, are detailed as well. The analysis begins with a side by side comparison of the types of plans offered, followed by a detailed description to include a breakdown of each plan.

Jurisdictional Form of Compensation Plan						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
<b>Type of Plan Offered</b>	Merit-Based Step Plan	Service-Based Step Plan/ Longevity Plan	Service Based Step Plan	Merit-Based Plan	Service-Based Step Plan	Merit-Based Plan

Salary compression was evaluated for FCDFRS and found that the classifications are not experiencing compression from inside of each pay grade or between grades. Current perceptions of compression appear from the amount of overtime employees are earning. This practice allows employees to make money above of their normal pay scale allowances. Often this can be an indication of understaffing and a detailed staffing analysis should be conducted to ensure proper staffing levels are not contributing to pay and benefit issues.

Base annual wages for each organization was compared and found that FCDFRS offers the lowest annual pay for the ranks of Firefighter and Captain. The ranks of Fire Medic and Lieutenant and Battalion Chief are at or below the middle point of all the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. This position in the market can cause issues with recruitment and retention of employees. A detailed analysis including the percentage differences amongst ranks in each jurisdiction are included. FCG and FCDFRS should determine their compensation philosophy and position the wages for each rank accordingly. Often the cost of providing a slightly higher market wage for a job classification will reduce onboarding costs in the long run. The wages were compared to minimum, midpoint, and maximum base salary for each classification.

**Minimum**



The minimum base annual wage for each classification compared to FCDFRS varies amongst the classifications and ranges from being equal to as much as 27 percent more. The highest difference was found in the rank of Deputy Chief. In two of the classifications, Captain and Firefighter, FCDFRS pays the lowest of minimum base wage salaries of the jurisdictions surveyed. On the other end, FCDFRS pays higher than the minimum base wage salaries for the jurisdictions surveyed. These are the Fire Medic, Fire Technician, Lieutenant, Battalion Chief, and Deputy Chief. It is important to remember that these are base salary wage comparisons and do not consider special pay incentives or gross overtime wages associated with shift schedules. These salaries are referenced as annual salaries but do not consider the number of hours worked to achieve these salaries as not all the jurisdictions work the same number of hours in a year. The work schedule analysis is presented in the section titled Work Schedule Comparison.

### **Midpoint**

The midpoint base annual wage for each classification compared to FCDFRS varies amongst the classifications and ranges from being equal to as much as .86 percent more. The highest difference was again in the rank of Deputy Chief. Most of the classification in Frederick County earn less than the midpoint range for salaries of the jurisdictions surveyed. The classifications for Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief are paid less than the lowest midpoint salary. On the top end, FCDFRS pays equal to the highest midpoint base annual wage salary of jurisdictions surveyed for Fire Technician and more than the highest of midpoint base annual wage salaries of jurisdictions surveyed for Deputy Chief.

### **Maximum**

In all classifications except Deputy Chief, FCDFRS pays less than the maximum base annual wage salary for the analysis. In some cases, by as much as 25.74 percent lower.

### **SPECIAL PAY INCENTIVES**

Base wages were used as the starting point for the comparison of pay and benefits. Each organization included in the benchmarking offers various additional special pay incentives on top of base wages. These include ALS certification pay, bomb squad incentives, hazardous materials, technical rescue, investigations, SCBA maintenance, EMS preceptor, and vehicle operator incentives to name a few. In this area, FCDFRS does not offer a comparable means for employees to earn these special pay incentives even though they may be performing these job functions and tasks. One recommendation offered is the development of a special pay incentive plan for all ranks to earn extra incentive pay for specific job functions and tasks. Some of the jurisdictions add these special pay incentives towards the computation of overtime and retirement while others do not.



### WORK SCHEDULES

Each of the jurisdiction’s work schedule was evaluated and computed to ensure the percentage of hours worked versus benefit earned was comparable. For instance, some jurisdictions work a 42-hour work week while others work 48 hours. It is important when comparing fringe benefits earned that the percentage for accruals is computed equally. Along with work schedule comparison, the use of Kelly Days to comply with FLSA rules and ensure the computation of overtime is reduced was evaluated. Furthermore, the FLSA pay cycle was benchmarked amongst the jurisdictions. Currently, FCDFRS gets the best use of the FLSA period for overtime computation with a 28-day cycle.

Jurisdictional FLSA Pay Cycle Comparison Chart						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Pay Cycle	28 Day Cycle	14 Day Cycle	7 Day Cycle	28 Day Cycle	21 Day Cycle	28 Day Cycle

### FRINGE BENEFITS

Organizations use various fringe benefits to complement their work schedules and compensation plans offered to recruit and retain employees. Many of these fringe benefits are offered across all the jurisdictions and each will have small variances on how they are calculated and compensated to the employees. These fringe benefits usually include health and medical, dental, vision, life insurance policies, additional deferred compensation plans, and various forms of employee leave. Leave can be offered in several ways such as annual vacation leave, sick leave, bereavement leave, paid time off, holiday leave, and/or a variation of all.

The inclusion of fringe benefits coupled with a competitive wage package and solid retirement plan round out the making of a benefit package that corners the market and makes employee retention and recruitment easier for the organization. All the organizations offer at least one type of group medical plan, dental, vision, and some form of disability plan, as well as a host of other benefits.

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Medical	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dental	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retiree Health Care	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



Prescription	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Life Insurance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Disability	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retirement/ Pension	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DROP Plan	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Deferred Compensation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

#### MEDICAL

The jurisdictions medical plans were benchmarked to lay out employee cost versus employer cost for each plan offered. Two of the jurisdictions offer high deductible plans as an option. Another key offering amongst the jurisdictions is the offering of retiree health and medical plans. All jurisdictions offer retirees the ability to remain part of the county plan until they reach Medicare age. This of course has significant cost associated with the offering. However, as employees consider employment benefits and wages, the ability to provide for health care needs after a career in the fire service can be a key factor in recruitment and retention. Of the jurisdictions benchmarked, all provide at least 75 percent of the cost sharing for their plans. Many are at 80 percent of total premium. When considering post-employment health care costs, one aspect requested for thought was the inclusion of employees retired due to a “line of duty” injury. The jurisdictional plans that offer retiree health care do not specify the reasons for retirement they merely address qualified eligible retirees. The retirement plans for most of the jurisdictions address disability arising from a “line of duty” injury or illness to receive full retirement benefits as outlined in each plan.

#### DENTAL AND VISION

The jurisdictions all offer dental and vision plans that are either part of the main health insurance plan or offered as an add-on benefit for an additional monthly premium cost. These plans also fall into the different types of plans offered such as HMOs and PPOs. Most of the jurisdictions offer a cost sharing for these plans. However, Prince George’s County Fire/EMS does not provide any cost sharing for dental plans.

#### VACATION, SICK, AND HOLIDAY LEAVE

As to paid leave, FCDFRS was very close to the average of the range at ten years of service and above the average range for those having over twenty years of service. It is important to note that while Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System (LCCFES) earns less hours of actual accrual, they receive longevity hours on top of their vacation leave to make up the difference. This can add up to an additional 102 hours of leave after 12 years of service in addition to the 103 hours earned in normal accrual. FCDFRS remains competitive throughout a 30-year timeframe.



Prince George's County Fire/EMS (PGCFEMS), Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System (LCCFES), and Howard County Fire Rescue Services (HCFRS) all award their employees the same amount of sick leave regardless of their schedule. Frederick County Division of Fire Rescue Services (FCDFRS), Baltimore County Fire Department (BCoFD), and Montgomery County Fire Rescue Services (MCFRS) all have adjusted their rates to account for the extra hours worked based on schedules. At ten years of service, the average sick leave accrual rate is 11.1 hours a month. FCDFRS and three others all earn 12 hours a month. When evaluating twenty and thirty years of service, the result is the same. Therefore, FCDFRS is equal to or above the level of parity when considering sick leave accrual rates amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. It should be noted that when evaluating all the different schedules found within FCDFRS, each earns 5.7 percent sick leave hours based on their schedule of hours worked yielding parity amongst the workforce.

Holiday leave varied from ten days per year to thirteen and a half days per year, with an average of twelve days of holiday leave. FCDFRS, at 12 days per year, was at the average of those included for benchmarking. LCCFES and FCDFRS provide floating holidays. All the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking reported offering some form of additional compensation for holidays worked by employees. Of these, the majority compensated their holiday workers at 1.5 times the normal rate of pay, while one paid double time and one reported some other variety of holiday work compensation. Frederick County was within the survey average.

#### RETIREMENT PLANS

The retirement plans offered by employers provide an employment package designed to attract and retain employees for a long and productive career. Various forms of retirement plans exist, and each can have very different methods of contribution and payouts normally based on years of creditable service. When comparing plans, specifics considered were employer and member contributions, service retirement eligibility, service retirement benefits, early retirement benefits, time to become vested, disability provisions, and death benefits for beneficiaries. Each jurisdiction's plan was benchmarked against each of the others to identify areas of parity and disparity. In general, all the plans are constructed in a similar manner with minor differences in benefit computations. It should be noted that all the jurisdictions offer plans that are very different today than they were in years past. Many have lengthened the years of service to become vested and decreased the percentages for computation of benefits. One area FCDFRS does not compare with the other jurisdictions is the inclusion of a Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP).

DROP is a voluntary program that provides an alternative way for participants to earn and receive their retirement benefits. A key feature of DROP is the individual account. When a participant enters the program, a DROP account is created. The account is credited with the monthly retirement benefits that would have been collected if he/she had retired instead of entering DROP. Normally, a participant will continue to pay their required contributions to the retirement plan while in DROP, but these contributions will also be added to the DROP account along with interest compounded monthly.



To the extent that employers are initiating DROP plans, the major reason is a concern about the ability to retain valued employees who are eligible to retire. Many governmental plans, either as a matter of plan design or due to inadvertence, contain substantial incentives for employees to retire early.

Without the inclusion of a DROP plan, FCDFRS's retirement plan is less comparable to the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. While the specifics of the retirement plan are very similar in vesting, computation of benefit pay out, and plan construction, the benefit a DROP plan provides leaves FCDFRS with a plan that offers less.

#### QUALIFICATION COMPARISONS

Each of the organizations chosen for benchmarking sets their own standards for obtaining rank through meeting specific established qualifications for that rank. While national consensus standards, such as NFPA 1021, *Standard for Professional Fire Officer Qualifications*, recommend specific training requirements for Fire Officers, not all organizations recognize or follow these standards. As the pay and benefit analysis was completed, the classifications included were compared to ensure knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as qualifications and certification requirements were equal.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the study recommendations are derived from the information gathered and analyzed. These are then presented as short, mid-term, and long-term strategies. These strategies are discussed in the Future Recommendation and Strategies section. The initiatives identified and explained include:

- FCDFRS should develop a special pay incentive plan for all ranks to earn extra incentive pay for specific job functions and tasks and implement it through the negotiation process.
- Address rates of pay to employees for the job classes of Firefighter and Captain. These two classifications are the lowest paid of all the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking.
- Using the essential job duties and responsibilities, define the standard for the nature of the job class requirements and aggressively recruit qualified candidates.
- Establish a competitive standard position of pay and benefits amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking that is fiscally responsible with public resources but achieves organizational goals and objectives.
- Continue to maintain the system of pay grades that state the minimum and maximum rates that the County will pay individuals within a job class.
- Maintain the pay plan to ensure the percentage of spread and growth inside each grade is competitive but incentivizes progression for employees.
- Ensure employees understand the compensation program.

Some mid-term recommendations include:

- Establish common qualifications for each rank among jurisdictions surrounding FCDFRS as outlined in NFPA 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*.
- Conduct a staffing study to ensure proper staffing levels are achieved and ensure that understaffing is not attributing to the perception of compression issues with pay.
- Develop measures to reduce overtime or identify ways to balance the amount each employee earns.

The report continues by discussing long-term strategies and needs, including:



- FCDFRS should consider establishing a DROP plan to compete with the local market for retirement benefits.

The following figure is a recommendations table that provides a consolidated view of the key short, mid, and long-term recommendations. This table can serve as a tracking and progress report for the recommendations submitted as part of the Comprehensive Firefighter Pay and Benefits Study for the Division of Fire Rescue Service (FCDFRS).

**Figure 1: Key Recommendations**

Key Recommendations	Status		
	Started	50%	Complete
<b>SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			
FCDFRS should develop a special pay incentive plan for all ranks to earn extra incentive pay for specific job functions and tasks and implement it through the negotiation process.			
Address rates of pay to employees for the job classes of Firefighter and Captain. These two classifications are the lowest paid of all the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking.			
Using the essential job duties and responsibilities, define the standard for the nature of the job class requirements and aggressively recruit qualified candidates.			
Establish a competitive standard position of pay and benefits amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking that is fiscally responsible with public resources but achieves organizational goals and objectives.			
Continue to maintain the system of pay grades that state the minimum and maximum rates that the County will pay individuals within a job class.			
Maintain the pay plan to ensure the percentage of spread and growth inside each grade is competitive but incentivizes progression for employees.			
Ensure that the employee understands the compensation program.			
<b>MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			
Establish common qualifications for each rank among jurisdictions surrounding FCDFRS as outlined in NFPA 1021, <i>Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications</i> .			
Conduct a staffing study to ensure proper staffing levels are achieved and ensure that understaffing is not attributing to the perception of compression issues with pay.			
Develop measures to reduce overtime or identify ways to balance the amount each employee earns.			
<b>LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			
FCDFRS should consider establishing a DROP plan to compete with the local market for retirement benefits.			





## INTRODUCTION

*The beginning is the most important part of the work.*

Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) was engaged by Frederick County Government (referred to herein as “FCG”) to provide a Comprehensive Firefighter Pay and Benefit Study for the Division of Fire Rescue Services (referred to herein as “FCDFRS”). This report serves as the culmination of the project. ESCI’s team of subject matter experts and industrial/organizational psychologists have completed this study to prepare Frederick County prior to making informed internal pay and benefits decisions for the personnel of fire rescue. The study was directed at using the identified comparable jurisdictions to benchmark pay and benefits. These findings were then used to develop a comprehensive comparison for evaluation by FCG.

Using organizational, operational, staffing, benefit plans, and pay scales this phase of the study provides an evaluation of pay and benefits offered for personnel engaging in existing fire and rescue operations delivered to the benchmarking communities. The evaluation and analysis of data and other information is based on federal labor laws, Maryland law and Administrative Code as well as agency guidelines, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, the Center for Public Safety Excellence/Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CPSE/CFAI) *Standards of Cover*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, health and safety requirements, federal and state mandates relative to emergency services, and generally accepted best practices within the emergency services community; where applicable.

Each section in the following report provides the reader with general information about that element, as well as observations and analyses of any significant issues or pertinent conditions. Observations are supported by data provided by Frederick County Government, each of the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking and collected as part of the review and interview process. Finally, specific recommendations are included to address identified issues or to take advantage of opportunities that may exist.

It is important to bear in mind that these were the current conditions at the time of the data collection. The agencies involved are continuing to change and improve over the time required to write the report, therefore not every current condition remains as stated here.

### Methodology

To ensure FCG was providing the most comprehensive and competitive pay and benefits for its DFRS they requested Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI)—Fields Human Capital Division to conduct a Comprehensive Firefighter Pay and Benefit Study. ESCI was asked to:



1. Include five jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. These jurisdictions are 1) Baltimore County, Maryland, 2) Montgomery County, Maryland, 3) Prince George's County, Maryland, 4) Howard County, Maryland, and 5) Loudoun County, Virginia.
2. Collect all relevant demographic data from FCDFRS including size of the service area, total population, population density, at risk populations, service demand zone analysis, number of employees, operating budget, and number of housing units to name the most common. Current pay, benefit plan, current tasks performed, and corresponding knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed for each position will also be benchmarked.
3. Collect the same data as in Step #2 for all five comparable jurisdictions to be used in a benchmarking approach. Where available, each jurisdiction will be benchmarked against National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) data for service delivery and resource comparison. ESCI will create tables of each piece of relevant data so that FCG can make direct comparisons.
4. ESCI has outlined and compared each jurisdiction's compensation plan to allow FCG the ability to identify issues such as compression or areas to provide improvement. More importantly, the analysis validates current FCG plans with industry and local jurisdictional standards.
5. Retirement plans were compared and outlined for analysis to include what type of plans are offered, the basic design of each plan, and how benefits are calculated. If an agency offers a Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) it is outlined as well. Finally, how the plans are funded and what it takes for an employee to become "vested" in the plans are compared.
6. ESCI compared health benefits offered through each jurisdiction to include employee/employer contributions, deductibles, post-employment health benefits offered, as well as employer contribution for employees retired due to "line of duty" injuries.
7. A full comparison of jurisdictional leave policies and accruals was completed to include the type of leave, accrual rates, expenditure policies, carry over limits, and calculations as they apply to usage or cashing out.
8. ESCI consulted with relevant FCG stakeholders to obtain their input. In addition, ESCI reviewed and compared benchmarks for relevancy at each point in the data collection and comparison effort.
9. ESCI prepared a final report that contains all the data analysis conducted in Steps 1–8 above.

This is ESCI's final report, although any small requests for additional data in the next three months, if needed, will be our pleasure to obtain.

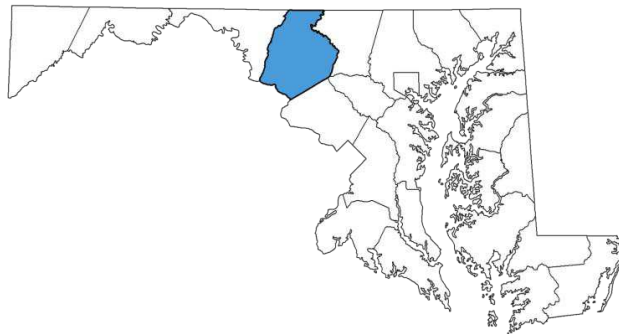


## FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

Frederick County (County) is a suburban county located in the northeastern part of Maryland. Frederick County is not far from the nation's capital, Washington DC, and nearby Baltimore, Maryland. It borders the southern border of Pennsylvania and the northeastern border of Virginia. Located north of Montgomery County, west of Carroll County, Northwest of Howard County, and northeast of Loudoun County, it encompasses 660.22 square miles.<sup>1</sup> Frederick County is the largest county in Maryland when considering land area. Its municipalities include Brunswick and Frederick, the County seat. Frederick County straddles the boundary between the Piedmont Plateau Region and the Appalachian Mountains. The County's two prominent ridges, Catoclin Mountain and South Mountain, form an extension of the Blue Ridge. The Middletown Valley lies between them. Most of the community commutes outside of the County to work. The County is part of the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan Statistical Area.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Frederick County had a population of 233,385 residents. The population has been increasing since 2010 and according to U.S. Census population estimates, the County had 252,022 residents in 2017. This resulted in an 8 percent growth rate during the period. The population density for the County is roughly 353.5 per square mile. The following figure displays the location of Frederick County, Maryland.

**Figure 2: Study Area Map**



<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau land area in square miles, 2010.



The provision of fire protection and EMS is an essential service that governments must provide. However, for this service to be effective and efficient, it must be staffed and organized appropriately to address emergencies as they occur in an equitable manner. Often, organizations must compete to secure the available workforce. Organizations who offer the most competitive pay and benefits have a higher success rate at attracting the workforce and stand better odds at retaining them.

## Frederick County Division of Fire Rescue Services

The Division of Fire and Rescue Services is a combination department comprised of career employees and volunteer personnel, affiliated with 26 volunteer fire and rescue corporations. Organized in 1989, services are provided throughout Frederick County. The Division provides fire suppression, emergency medical service, rescue, hazardous materials containment, and special response operations to roughly 252,000 residents in Frederick County. Over 400 uniformed career, 700 operational volunteers, and civilian personnel work to provide these services.

The Division of Fire and Rescue Services operates under federal and state regulations and guidelines, and the adopted County Code established through their charter government. The department was rated by the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) in the year 2015–2016 throughout the County as low as a 3/3y in Frederick, to a 9/10 in various other service areas, with most areas receiving a 4/5Y. The department has adopted the following mission and purpose, working tirelessly to accomplish it.

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*Protect Life, property, and the environment by providing  
professional, efficient, and quality service.*

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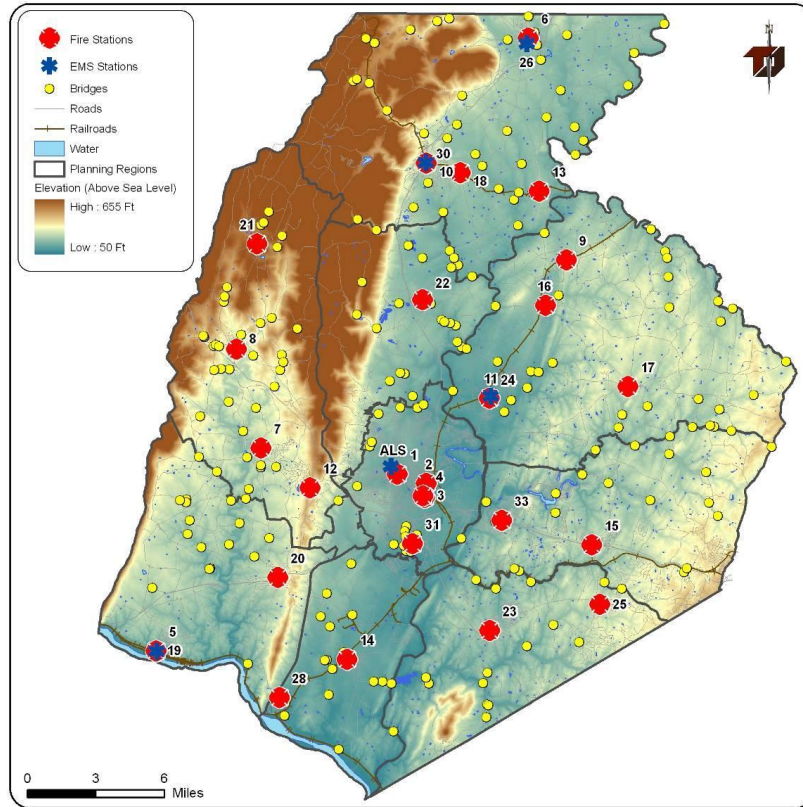
### Organizational Overview

The Organizational Overview component provides a summary of the agency's composition, discussing its configuration and the services that it provides. Data provided by FCDFRS administrative and management staff, as well as both internal and external stakeholders, was combined with information collected during ESCI's fieldwork to develop the following overview.

The FCDFRS service area is depicted in the following figure.



Figure 3: Frederick County Department of Fire Rescue Services Service Area



## Governance

The very basis of any service provided by governmental or quasi-governmental agencies lies within the policies that give that agency the responsibility and authority upon which to act. In most governmental agencies, including FCDFRS, those policies lie within the charters, ordinances, and other governing documents adopted by the agency.

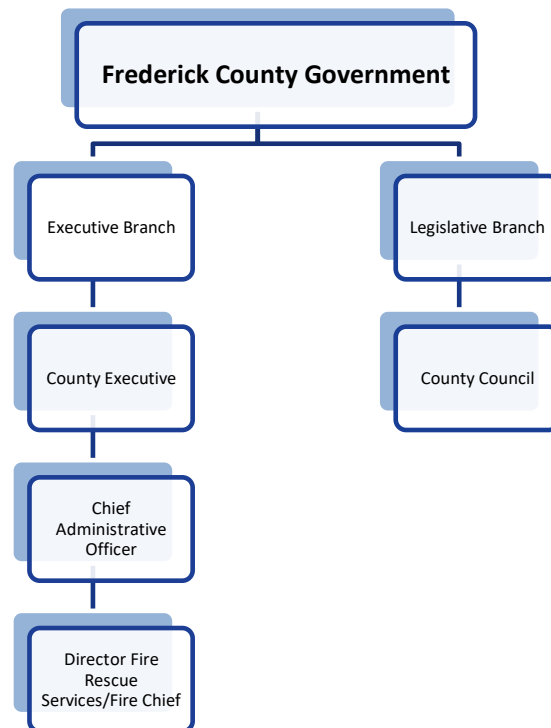
Frederick County transitioned from the County Commissioner form of government to the County Charter form of government on December 1, 2014. Under Charter Government, there is an Executive Branch with a County Executive and a Legislative Branch with a County Council. For many years, all five County Commissioners had been elected in at-large elections by all County voters. Under the new Charter Government, a County Executive is responsible for providing direction, supervision, and administrative oversight of all executive departments, agencies, and offices. A County Council will also be elected, made up of seven members: five based on district and two at-large.



The County Executive serves a four-year term and not more than two consecutive terms. The salary is \$95,000, plus benefits. County Council members serve for four years and no more than three consecutive terms and receive \$22,500 per year, with no benefits. Council meetings are limited to 45 days yearly and are usually conducted on the first and third Tuesday of the month. Council members have the power to initiate legislation under section 202 of the local charter. Legislative sessions are limited to 45 days yearly and non-legislative sessions as needed. The County governance is illustrated in the next figure.

FCDFRS is directed by a Director of Fire Rescue Services/Fire Chief, who by agency definition is an at-will employee who receives annual employee evaluations for performance review. The authority vested in the Fire Chief is outlined in the County Charter. The policy and administrative roles can be found in the County Policies and Procedures manual. Rules and Regulations were last reviewed in 2018. The Fire Chief has legal counsel available for consultation through the County Attorney.

Figure 4: Lines of Governance





## Organizational Design

The structural design of an emergency services agency is vitally important to its ability to deliver service in an efficient and timely manner while providing the necessary level of safety and security to the members of the organization, whether career, paid-on-call, or volunteer. During an emergency, an individual's ability to supervise multiple personnel is diminished, thus industry standards recommend a span of control of four-to-six personnel under stressed situations. This is a recommendation carried forward from military history and has shown to be effective in emergency service situations.

In addition, employees tend to be more efficient when they know to whom they report and have a single point of contact for supervision and direction. A research project conducted by Columbia University, Northwestern University, and the University of Queensland, Australia, found that,

...when there are tasks that require teamwork, people get more done when there are leaders and followers. Without a clear chain of command, members often become sidetracked with grabbing power and lose track of the task at hand.<sup>2</sup>

The organization design of FCDFRS mimics a paramilitary organization which is very common among first responder and emergency services agencies. This is a combination career agency and has a significant number of volunteer members. The chain of command is well identified in the policy manual, and the Deputy Chief has hiring and firing authority through the human resources approval process.

Job descriptions have been developed for all classifications and are maintained by human resources. It is important to set clearly defined job descriptions and then maintain a process to review and ensure they are current with operational practices. Job descriptions will be compared in detail later in the report.

## Organizational Structure

To operate effectively, the structure of a fire/EMS department needs to be clearly defined in a way that all members of the organization understand it. The organizational chart performs this function. The chart institutionalizes the agency's hierarchy, identifies roles and, most importantly, reporting authority, and helps to assure that communication flows appropriately, as well as limiting opportunities to circumvent the reporting structure. FCDFRS has developed an organizational chart that achieves this purpose. It operates in a traditional top-down manner. These lines of authority should be clear and carefully protected against communications external to the chain of command except in unusual circumstances. The FCDFRS organizational chart shows the formal reporting process. When the chain of command is violated it can cause a great deal of disruption to the organization.

The organization chart is shown in the following figure on the next page.

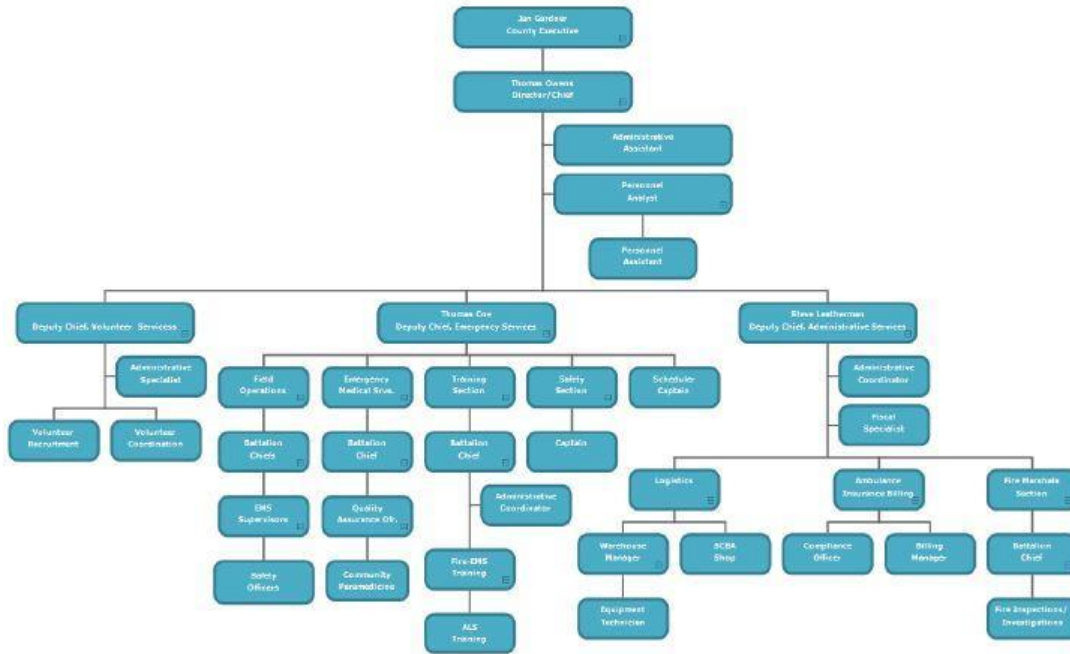
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<sup>2</sup> "Why Hierarchies are Good for Productivity," *Inc.* September 2012, p 26.



Figure 5: FCDFRS Organization Chart

Frederick County Fire and Rescue Services



**Discussion**

The Division is organized into three primary areas of responsibility for department operations. The FCDFRS chain of command establishes a Deputy Chief in each of these respective areas of responsibility. These areas of responsibility are Emergency Services, Volunteer Services, and Administrative Services all of which answer to the Fire Chief. It should be noted here that emergency service jurisdictions in the surrounding area often use the Assistant Chief and Deputy Chief titles interchangeably from one organization to another. While one organization will place the Assistant Chief higher in the rank structure for the organization, another may use the Deputy Chief. Some organizations will use one or the other, and other jurisdictions will include them both. It is important to compare job qualifications, job descriptions, and essential job functions of the two when comparing for decisions regarding pay and benefits. This comparison is included in the Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison section of the report.



The Emergency Services Section is responsible for all field services including: Fire Suppression, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Special Operations, Research and Planning, and Safety. The safety functions include management and oversight of the Training Academy and the Public Safety Training Facility. A Health and Wellness program supports the physical well-being of the Firefighters. All EMS, fire and rescue training, river training, and safety and management courses are conducted by in-house staff to ensure the highest level of quality and consistency in training standards.

The Administrative Services Section provides support, logistics, and finance services to the agency.

The Fire Marshal's Office enforces State and County fire codes and laws, performs on-site inspections at construction sites, responds to and investigates complaints and fire code violations, and aids fire companies.

Ambulance Insurance Billing collects reimbursement for services rendered for ambulance transport. In many cases, insurance policies and government support programs reimburse a portion for ambulance charges.

The Financial and Logistics Sections support fiscal management, budget preparation and management, fleet management including the specification and acquisition of vehicles and apparatus, maintenance of the reserve fleet, and fuel management.

The Division of Volunteer Fire-Rescue Services serves as a liaison to the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services community. The Frederick County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is an organization of 26 volunteer companies which provide firefighting and ambulance service throughout the County. Special operations are organized by team, including: Hazardous Materials, Advanced Technical Rescue, and a Dive team. The Division of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services has 700 operational and 1,200 administrative volunteers.

### **Service Area and Infrastructure**

The FCDFRS, as discussed, serves the jurisdiction of Frederick County, a county with a population of roughly over 252,000, within 660.22 square miles. Combination fire departments can determine which National Fire Protection Agency Standard for resource deployment it chooses to adopt. NFPA 1720, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Departments*, defines "urban" as a population of over 1,000 people per square mile and further defines "rural areas" as population densities of less than 500 people per square mile. While NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, does not specifically determine demand zones based on population. FCDFRS has some stations which serve some urban population densities in specific regions as defined by the NFPA 1720; however, Frederick County is predominantly rural. For purposes of this report ESCI will consider the County to be all rural density.

The service area and infrastructure for FCDFRS is depicted in the following figure.



Figure 6: Service Area and Infrastructure

Survey Component	Division of Fire Rescue Services
<b>Agency Description</b>	
Agency type (district, municipality, etc.)	County combination department
Area in square miles	660.22 square miles
Headquarters location (physical address)	5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick, Md. 21704
Number of fire stations	29
Other facilities	2
<b>Emergency vehicles (number, type)</b>	
Engine	42
Engine, reserve	4
Ladder truck	8
Ladder, reserve	0
EMS unit (ALS, BLS, 1 <sup>st</sup> Responder)	8 ALS response chase cars, 31 BLS Ambulances
EMS unit, reserve	8
Command Vehicles	30
Boat/Water craft	7
Tenders/Brush	20
Support Vehicles (not staff vehicles)	30

**Discussion**

FCDFRS has been able to deploy people and apparatus from 29 strategically located fire stations, balancing the needs of providing effective coverage to what is a widely dispersed geographic area. Particular challenges are presented in the area regarding response performance because of inclement weather. Placing, equipping, and staffing fire stations will be an ongoing challenge for FCDFRS. The ability to assemble an effective force poses additional challenges to first responder agencies who rely on volunteers as an addition to their operational workforce.

Decisions on deployment define the response capability of the Division of Fire Rescue Services. These decisions need to weigh multiple considerations including risk exposure, response times, access challenges, deployment, community expectations, personnel safety, and fire department capacity. Those decisions need to balance the financial considerations. These decisions are strategic and are in the purview of the elected officials and County Executive, in consultation with the Fire Chief. Ultimately, these individuals are responsible to the public to provide the level of service that the citizens desire and for which they are willing to pay.



### Budgets and Finance

No emergency services agency can survive without adequate funding. This funding, which may come from a variety of sources such as ad valorem taxes, fees, billing, fundraisers, donations, etc., forms the basis from which the agency is able to purchase the necessary resources to fulfill its mission. Without adequate funding that is also sustainable, an organization is destined for failure. In the current economy, most communities are searching for ways in which to reduce expenditures while maintaining levels of service. Simultaneously, emergency services organizations are finding it increasingly difficult to deliver the services that the community desires and are often asking for more funding to adequately supply the expected levels of services.

The following figure summarizes FCDFRS operating budget. The representations presented here illustrate total departmental budget contributed by the Frederick County Government.

**Figure 7: Operating Budget and Financial Resources provided by Frederick County Government**

Jurisdiction	Fund	FY2017 Budget	FY2018 Budget	FY2019 Budget
FCDFRS	General and Grants	\$56,735,957	\$56,357,674	\$58,695,803



## JURISDICTIONS SELECTED FOR BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking is a measurement of the quality of an organization’s policies, products, programs, strategies, etc., and their comparison with standard measurements, or similar measurements of its peers. The objectives of benchmarking are: 1) to determine what and where improvements are called for, 2) to analyze how other organizations achieve their high-performance levels, and 3) to use this information to improve performance.<sup>3</sup> The Frederick County Government (FCG) has selected the following jurisdictions for benchmarking. The jurisdictions chosen are of like comparison and compete for the same industry market of employees.

Figure 8: Jurisdictions Selected for Benchmarking Demographic Comparison Chart

Jurisdictional Demographic Overview Comparisons						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Geographic Size Sq. Miles	660.22	598.30	491.25	482.69	250.74	515.56
Miles from Frederick County	0	56.2 Miles	27.5 Miles	73.6 Miles	32.9 Miles	31.2 Miles
Population Estimate Served 2017	252,022	832,468	1,058,810	912,756	321,113	398,080
Population Density Per Square Mile	354	1,346	1,978	1,789	1,145	606
Housing Units	97,366	336,824	390,016	332,144	119,834	132,965
Annual Budget FY 2018/2019	\$58,695,803	\$99,086,347	\$218,000,027	\$191,039,100	\$107,084,935	\$89,133,020
Number of Stations	19 Career 10 Volunteer	25 Career 32 Volunteer	37	45	12	19 Career 15 Volunteer
Number of Calls for Service	32,529	138,147	100,000	135,000	36,031	27,023
Career Staffing	432	1,045	1,298	1,052	529.75	649.14
Schedule	24/48 (48 hours per week K Day)	10-hour Day/ 14-hour Night (42 hours a week)	24/48 (48 hours per week K Day)	24/72 (48 hours per week)	24/48 (48 hours a week with 3-week K Day)	24/72 (42 hours per week K Day)
Volunteers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### Discussion

The unanimous decision by the administrative staff was to compare FCDFRS to Baltimore County, Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, Howard County, and Loudoun County, Virginia. These jurisdictions are all within commuting distance from Frederick County, allowing current FCDFRS employees the ability to leave and begin employment elsewhere without having to relocate their home.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/benchmarking.html>



## Demographic Risk Factors

A recent study found that segments of the population are at a higher risk of injury or death due to fire.<sup>4</sup>

- **Risk by age:** In 2015, adults ages 50 or older had a greater relative risk of dying in fires than the general population. Those ages 85 and older had the highest risk of fire death. In addition, while lower than the relative risk of the general population, children ages 4 and younger faced an elevated risk of both injury and death in a fire when compared with older children (ages 5 to 14).
- **Risk by gender:** Males were 1.7 times more likely to die in fires than females.
- **Risk by income level:** The danger of death or injury is closely tied to household income, and children and the elderly in the poorest homes are exposed to the greater risk.
- **Risk by race:** African-Americans and American Indians/Alaska Natives were at a greater relative risk of dying in a fire than the general population.

The 2010 census for Frederick County revealed that 36.7 percent of the population was in a greater risk category based on age according to the study. This category consists of persons under the age of 5 (5.9%), persons who are 50 years of age and older (29.7%), and persons who are 85 years or older (.5%). Other vulnerable categories include persons under the age of 65 living with disability (7.2%) and people living at or below the poverty level (6.9%). Typically, populations within these categories have an increased likelihood of injury or death in fires. Additionally, populations in these categories place a high demand on emergency medical services.

Frederick County had a total of 93,645 housing units in 2016. This number has grown to an estimated 97,365 in 2017. Housing data shows that individual ownership is 74.1 percent of all units and that the median housing unit value of owner-occupied housing is \$306,100. Of the housing units, 93 percent were single family households, 16.2 percent were multifamily structures (2 to 20+ units), and .7 percent were mobile homes. Of these structures, 56.8 percent were built before 1980, and 11.8 percent were built before 1939.<sup>5</sup> Frederick County has 1,273 miles of roads.

Typically, when there are high numbers of vulnerable citizens and older buildings constructed before current fire codes were developed, there is an increased demand on emergency services. Given these factors for housing and population, it is likely that the department has a steady call volume. However, over the next 10 years, it is likely that the population of the County will continue to grow, as will the population of people over the age of 65.

A review of vulnerable population demographics is included in the following figure.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: 'Fire Risk in 2015'; U.S. Fire Administration, September 2017, Volume 18, Issue 6; Retrieved from [https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/statistics/v18i6.pdf?utm\\_source=website&utm\\_medium=pubsapp&utm\\_content=Fire Risk in 2015&utm\\_campaign=RID](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/statistics/v18i6.pdf?utm_source=website&utm_medium=pubsapp&utm_content=Fire Risk in 2015&utm_campaign=RID)

<sup>5</sup> <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>



Figure 9: Vulnerable Population Comparison Chart

Vulnerable Population Comparisons 2017 Estimates						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Geographic Size Sq. Miles	660.22	598.30	491.25	482.69	250.74	515.56
Population Served	252,022	832,468	1,058,810	912,756	321,113	398,080
Total Population at Risk	36.8%	59.6%	53.1%	54.7%	49.4%	40.5%
Population Under 5 years of Age	5.9%	5.9%	6.3%	6.5%	6.0%	7.2%
Population 50 Years of Age or Older	29.7%	37.2%	35.1%	32.7%	33.8%	26.3%
Population 65 Years Old Living with Disability	7.2%	7.5%	4.8%	6.3%	4.4%	3.5%
Population at or Below Poverty Level	6.9%	9.0%	6.9%	9.2%	5.2%	3.5%
Housing Units	97,366	336,824	390,016	332,144	119,834	132,965

**Discussion**

When jurisdictions are compared against vulnerable populations, Frederick County covers a larger geographic area. In most cases across the County, larger geographic areas require more resources based on distance of travel alone in efforts to achieve national standards for assembling effective firefighting forces for firefighting activities. Furthermore, providing emergency medical services to large geographic areas is difficult as long response times can have negative outcomes on patient survival rates. Frederick County has a smaller population spread over a larger area which poses challenges for emergency response. When comparing vulnerable populations based on percentages of total population, Frederick County does have a larger percentage of population living at or below poverty level as well as a higher percentage of the population older than 65 living with a disability. The total population at risk based on the study conducted in 2015, is lower than that of the comparable jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking.



## Description of Jurisdictions Chosen for Benchmarking

Jurisdictions used in this study were chosen by Frederick County Government to aid and assist with providing comprehensive comparable data to be used in developing and validating current and proposed pay and benefits. The primary jurisdictions chosen are all comparable in size and/or service delivery models with some minor differences. These differences will be outlined throughout the study.

### **Baltimore County, Maryland**

The Baltimore County Fire Department (BCoFD) provides quality fire protection, rescue services, emergency medical services, safety education, and mitigation of emergency situations for the citizens and visitors of Baltimore County. Baltimore County is located in central Maryland roughly 56.2 miles from Frederick County, it surrounds the City of Baltimore on three sides and extends from the Chesapeake Bay in the southeast to Pennsylvania in the north. The fire department serves a diverse area including heavy industrial areas, small towns, suburban neighborhoods, and farmland. Baltimore County surrounds Baltimore City. The northern two-thirds of the County is almost exclusively rural, with denser suburban populations and industrial areas. They provide fire and EMS delivery, and staff their units with Firefighters who are dual trained as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics. The organization works in conjunction with 32 volunteer fire companies and 25 career BCoFD stations. The organization aids a service area of 598.30 square miles. The population of Baltimore County is four times that of Frederick County with an estimated 832,468 total population. Population growth for Baltimore County is less than half of Frederick County's at 3.4 percent. Baltimore County operates roughly one more career fire station than FCDFRS to answer over 138,000 calls for service and employs approximately 700 more full-time employees (FTEs) for a total of 1,045 FTEs. BCoFD operates very similarly to FCDFRS. In doing so, BCoFD is afforded a budget of roughly \$99,086,347 million dollars, a budget that is roughly twice that of FCDFRS. BCoFD employees work a 24-hour shift with a Kelly Day to reduce employee hours closer to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) required overtime threshold. BCoFD uses volunteers in their organization and relies on them to supplement career staff. Rank, pay, benefits, qualifications, and education will be compared to FCDFRS.



### **Montgomery County, Maryland**

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) provides quality fire protection, rescue services, emergency medical services, safety education, and mitigation of emergency situations for the citizens and visitors of Montgomery County. Montgomery County is located in the suburban Washington D.C. area roughly 27.5 miles from Frederick County. MCFRS serves a diverse area including heavy industrial areas, small towns, suburban neighborhoods, and farmland. They provide fire and EMS delivery, and staff their units with Firefighters who are dual trained as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics. The organization works in conjunction with volunteer fire companies and 37 career MCFRS stations. The organization aids a service area of 491.25 square miles. The population of Montgomery County is five times that of Frederick County with an estimated 1,058,810 total population. Population growth for Montgomery County is slightly higher than Frederick County by just under one percent at 8.9 percent. Montgomery County operates roughly ten more career fire stations than FCDFRS to answer over 100,000 calls for service, and employs approximately 1,600 more full-time employees (FTEs) for a total of 1,978 FTEs. MCFRS operates very similarly to FCDFRS. In doing so, MCFRS is afforded a budget of roughly \$218,000,027 million dollars, a budget that is roughly four times that of FCDFRS. MCFRS employees work a 24-hour shift with a Kelly Day to reduce employee hours closer to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) required overtime threshold. MCFRS uses volunteers in their organization and relies on them to supplement career staff. Rank, pay, benefits, qualifications, and education will be compared to FCDFRS in later parts of the study.

### **Prince George's County, Maryland**

The Prince George's County Fire and Emergency Medical Services (PGCFEMS) provides quality fire protection, rescue services, emergency medical services, safety education, and mitigation of emergency situations for the citizens and visitors of Prince George's County. Prince George's County is located on the eastern boarder of the Washington D.C. area roughly 73.6 miles from Frederick County. Prince George's County Fire/EMS serves a diverse area including heavy industrial areas, small towns, suburban neighborhoods, and farmland. They provide fire and EMS delivery, and staff their units with Firefighters who are dual trained as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics. The organization works in conjunction with volunteer fire companies and 45 career Prince George's County Fire/EMS stations. The organization aids a service area of 482.69 square miles. The population of Montgomery County is roughly three times that of Frederick County with an estimated 912,756 total population. Population growth for Prince George's County is lower than Frederick County by approximately three percent. Prince George's County operates roughly 19 more career fire stations than FCDFRS to answer over 135,000 calls for service, and employs approximately 700 more full-time employees (FTEs) for a total of 1,052 FTEs. Prince George's County Fire/EMS operates very similarly to FCDFRS. In doing so Prince George's County Fire/EMS is afforded a budget of roughly \$191,039,100 million dollars, a budget that is over three times that of FCDFRS. Prince George's County employees work a 24-hour shift with a Kelly Day to reduce employee hours closer to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) required overtime threshold. Prince George's County uses volunteers in their organization and relies on them to supplement career staff. Rank, pay, benefits, qualifications, and education will be compared to FCDFRS in later parts of the study.



### **Howard County, Maryland**

The Howard County Department of Fire Rescue Services (HCDFRS) provides quality fire protection, rescue services, emergency medical services, safety education, and mitigation of emergency situations for the citizens and visitors of Howard County. Howard County is located between the City of Baltimore and Washington D.C. area roughly 32.9 miles from Frederick County. HCDFRS serves a diverse area including heavy industrial areas, small towns, and suburban neighborhoods. They provide fire and EMS delivery and staff their units with Firefighters who are dual trained as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics. The organization works in conjunction with volunteer fire companies and 12 career HCDFRS stations. The organization aids a service area of 250.74 square miles. The population of Howard County is roughly one and half times that of Frederick County with an estimated 321,113 total population. Population growth for Howard County is higher than Frederick County by approximately three percent. Howard County operates roughly 14 less career fire stations than FCDFRS to answer 36,031 calls for service, and employs approximately 230 more full-time employees (FTEs) for a total of 529.75 FTEs. HCDFRS operates very similarly to FCDFRS. In doing so, HCDFRS is afforded a budget of roughly \$107,084,935 million dollars, a budget that is twice that of FCDFRS. Howard County employees work a 24-hour shift with a Kelly Day to reduce employee hours closer to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) required overtime threshold. Howard County uses volunteers in their organization and relies on them to supplement career staff. Rank, pay, benefits, qualifications, and education will be compared to FCDFRS.

### **Loudoun County, Virginia**

The Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System (LCCFRS) provides quality fire protection, rescue services, emergency medical services, safety education, and mitigation of emergency situations for the citizens and visitors of Loudoun County. Loudoun County is located between the City of Baltimore and Washington D.C. area roughly 31.2 miles from Frederick County. LCCFRS serves a diverse area including heavy industrial areas, small towns, and suburban neighborhoods. They provide fire and EMS delivery and staff their units with Firefighters who are dual trained as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics. The organization works in conjunction with volunteer fire companies and 12 career LCCFRS stations. The organization aids a service area of 515.56 square miles. The population of Loudoun County is roughly one and half times that of Frederick County with an estimated 398,080 total population. Population growth for Loudoun County is higher than Frederick County by approximately almost 20 percent. Loudoun County operates roughly 5 less career fire stations than FCDFRS to answer 27,023 calls for service and employs approximately 350 more full-time employees (FTEs) for a total of 649.14 FTEs. LCCFRS operates very similarly to FCDFRS. In doing so, LCCFRS is afforded a budget of roughly \$89,133,020 million dollars, a budget that is roughly 31 million dollars more than FCDFRS. LCCFRS employees work a 24-hour shift with a Kelly Day to reduce employee hours closer to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) required overtime threshold. Loudoun County uses volunteers in their organization and relies on them to supplement career staff. Rank, pay, benefits, qualifications, and education will be compared to FCDFRS.



## Budget Comparison

A comparison of the finances involved shows that a cost per person can be determined by the number of people served for the cost of budgeted services. While this is a high-level evaluation and very general overview, FCDFRS is in the top two for cost of services per person. Although outside the scope of this study further comparison should be conducted to drill down the cost per person in each of the six systems. Larger systems that provide similar service begin to experience economies and efficiencies of scale as the organization grows beyond a specific point. These thresholds vary amongst jurisdictions and services offered.

Figure 10: Cost of Services Per Person

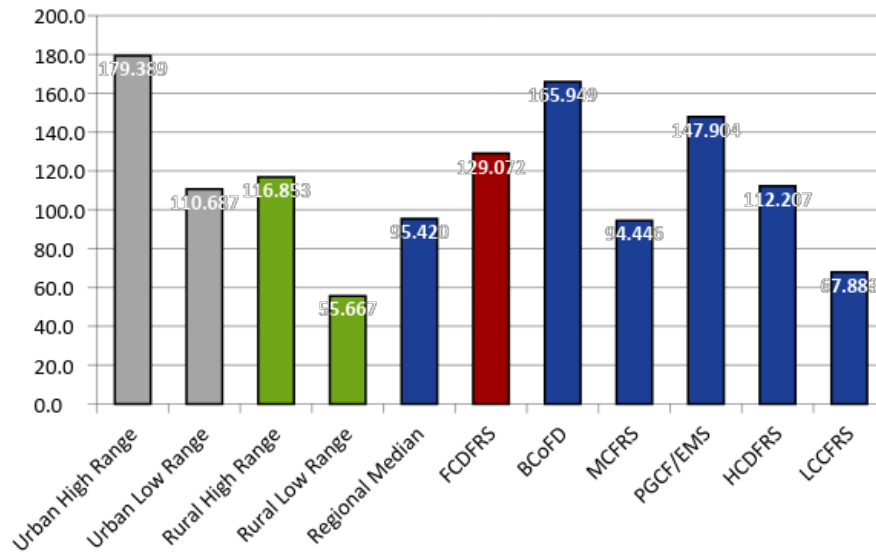
Jurisdiction	Population	Budget	Current Cost Per Person
Frederick County, MD	252,022	\$58,695,803	\$232.90
Baltimore County, MD	832,468	\$99,086,347	\$119.02
Montgomery County, MD	1,058,810	\$218,000,027	\$205.89
Prince George's County, MD	912,756	\$191,039,100	\$209.30
Howard County, MD	321,113	\$107,084,935	\$333.48
Loudoun County, VA	398,080	\$89,133,020	\$223.91



## Emergency Response Type and Frequency

FCDFRS responded to over 32,529 requests for assistance from the citizens of the Frederick County in the 2017 reporting year. As is typically found, many incidents are of an emergency medical nature. The FCDFRS emergency calls for FY2017 are listed in the following figure.

Figure 11: Incidents per 1,000 Population Comparison<sup>6</sup>



### Discussion

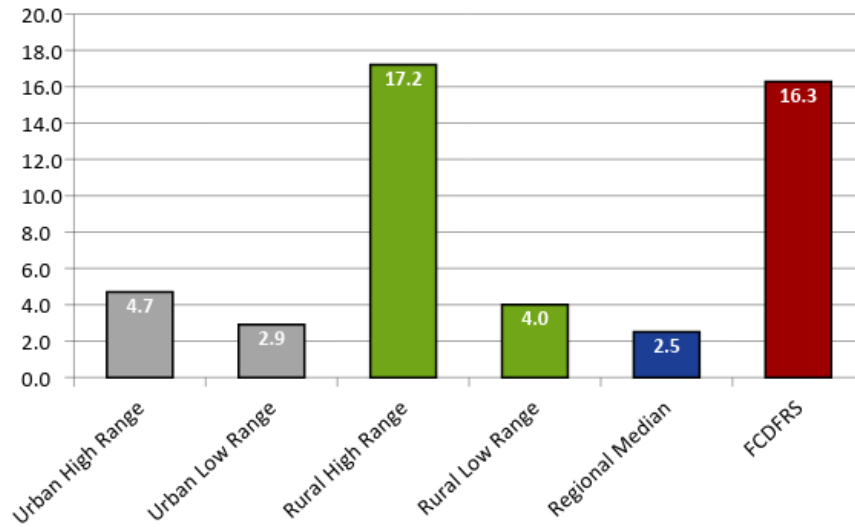
This figure reflects NFPA's data collection from fire departments throughout the nation. FCDFRS is comparable to other rural areas on the high end and above the regional median. The regional number of incidents per 1,000 is 95.4 incidents per population. This number is for departments in the southern region of the country and this may be distorted by the lack of EMS incidents reported in some comparable sized jurisdictions. When compared to the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking, FCDFRS ranked in the top three for calls per 1,000 and above the rural high and urban low ranges.

Contrasting the number of fire incidents to national and regional comparable-sized departments is shown in the following figure.

<sup>6</sup> Benchmark data available through National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is based on population and does not consider geographical size or population density of the particular area. Data for per capita comparisons does not delineate between volunteer or career agencies nor does it segregate out those EMS transport departments.



**Figure 12: Incident of Fire per 1,000 Population**



**Discussion**

When considering fires per 1,000 population FCDFRS is situated amongst the rural high range for the national comparison of the region. Emergency medical calls amounted to over 82 percent of the activity of FCDFRS in 2017. It is not unusual for FCDFRS to respond to a high percentage of EMS calls compared to the total calls.



## Staffing Comparison

Effective emergency services management is a common challenge for first responder service leaders. Today's emergency services must address management complexities that include an effective organizational structure, adequacy of response, maintenance of competencies, a qualified workforce, and financial sustainability for the future.

### Staffing and Personnel Management

An organization's most valuable assets is its people. It is important that special attention be paid to managing human resources in a manner that achieves maximum productivity while ensuring a high level of job satisfaction for the individual. Consistent management practices combined with a safe working environment, fair treatment, opportunity for input, and recognition of the workforce's commitment and sacrifice are key components influencing job satisfaction. This section provides an overview of the FCDFRS staffing configuration and management practices.

#### *Administrative and Support Staffing*

One of the primary responsibilities of a fire department's administration is to ensure that the operational segment of the organization has the ability and means to respond to and mitigate emergencies in a safe and efficient manner. An effective administration and support services system is critical to the success of an emergency services agency.

Like any other part of a municipal fire department or rural fire and EMS agency, administration and support need appropriate resources to function properly. By analyzing the administrative and support positions within an organization we can create a common understanding of the relative resources committed to this function compared to industry best practices and similar organizations. The appropriate balance of administration and support compared to operational resources and service levels is critical to the success of the agency in accomplishing its mission and responsibilities.

Figure 13: Administrative Staffing

Survey Components	FCDFRS Observations
<b>Administrative Staffing</b>	
Fire chief	1
Deputy chief	3
Administrative assistant	1
Total administrative & support staff (Number)	5
Percent administrative & support to total FD	1 to 81

#### *Discussion*

Typical responsibilities of the administration and support staff include, but are not limited to, planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and evaluating the various programs within the department. It is also important to understand that these functions change, are added to and revised regularly, and do not occur in a linear fashion and often occur concurrently. This requires the Fire Chief and staff to focus on many different areas at the same time.



Currently, FCDFRS has dedicated administrative staff. ESCI notes that the current level of administrative and support staffing is tasked to less than 10 percent. It is our experience that typically effective administrative staffing totals range from 12–15 percent of agency totals and are solely tasked with those functions. After reviewing the functions and responsibilities assigned to the work group, ESCI concludes that the number of FTEs assigned is below what is needed to appropriately accomplish the responsibilities of this Division. The understaffing of the administrative and support functions creates a situation in which important organizational activities, at best, are delayed, but in worst case scenarios get completely missed. While the SOW for this study was not concentrated on staffing analyses, one component of a recruitment and retention policy is the ability for the organization to support the operations of the organization and provide for upward mobility in the form of promotional opportunities. The functions of administrative support must not be forgotten, and appropriate resources should be allocated to ensure success. Planning suffers when staff is consumed with daily operations and no opportunities to prepare for future challenges.

### *Emergency Response Staffing*

It takes an adequate and properly trained staff of emergency responders to put the appropriate emergency apparatus and equipment to its best use in mitigating incidents. Insufficient staffing at an operational scene decreases the effectiveness of the response and increases the risk of injury to all individuals involved. The FCDFRS is at a point where the ability to assemble the necessary number of personnel to meet the growing EMS and fire call volume may be impacted by the availability of volunteer responders.

Tasks that must be performed at a fire can be broken down into two key components—life safety and fire flow. Life safety tasks are based on the number of building occupants, and their location, status, and ability to take self-preservation action. Life safety-related tasks involve search, rescue, and evacuation of victims. The fire flow component involves delivering enough water to extinguish the fire and create an environment within the building that allows entry by Firefighters.

The number and types of tasks needing simultaneous action will dictate the minimum number of Firefighters required to combat different types of fires. In the absence of adequate personnel to perform concurrent action, the command officer must prioritize the tasks and complete some in chronological order, rather than concurrently. These tasks include:

- Command
- Scene safety
- Search and rescue
- Fire attack
- Water supply
- Pump operation
- Ventilation
- Back-up/rapid intervention

The first 15 minutes is the most crucial period in the suppression of a fire. How effectively and efficiently Firefighters perform during this period has a significant impact on the overall outcome of the event. This general concept is applicable to fire, rescue, and medical situations. Critical tasks must be conducted in a timely manner in order to control a fire or to treat a patient.



ESCI notes a critical issue is the number of Firefighters that are assembled at the scene of an incident in conjunction with the scope and magnitude of the job tasks expected of them, regardless of the type or number of vehicles upon which they arrive. NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, and NFPA 1720, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments*, provides recommendations for deployment of resources for combination departments. However, staffing levels provided by FCDFRS is a determination that is made at the community level based on risk, capability, and citizen expectations coupled with the availability of volunteer response during these hours of peak demand. There is no mandated requirement that fits all situations, although NFPA 1710/1720 have objectives to meet regarding the number required for some typical scenarios. When a fire escalates beyond what can be handled by the initial assignment, or the fire has unusual characteristics such as a wind-driven fire, or has been accelerated with a highly flammable compound, additional personnel will be needed. There are also types of scenarios that may not be fires, but mass casualty incidents, explosions, tornadoes, etc., which may need additional staffing. It is difficult or impossible to staff for these worse case incidents. These require a strong mutual aid or automatic aid plan for assistance.

On a typical day, as in most jurisdictions, the full authorized staffing is not available due to normal scheduling, vacations, or other types of leave.

The following figure lists FCDFRS emergency response staffing configuration.

**Figure 14: Emergency Response Staffing**

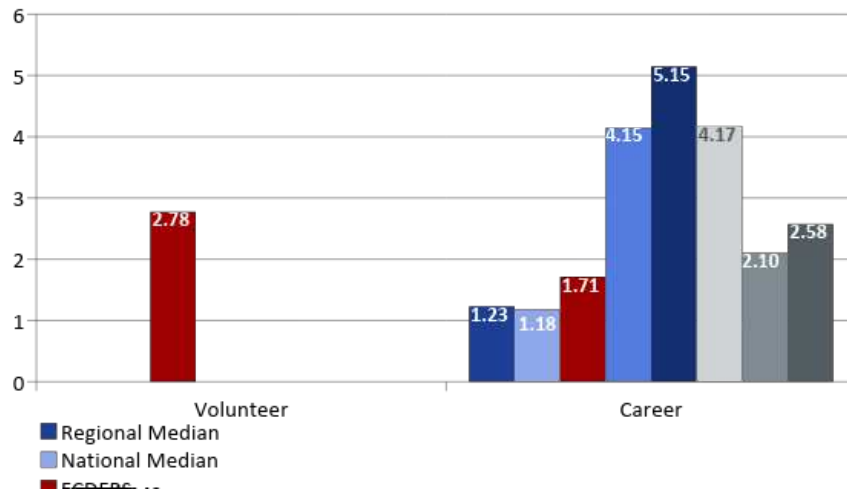
Survey Components	FCDFRS Observations
<b>Emergency Service Staff—Fire and EMS</b>	
Battalion Chief	7
Captain	19
Lieutenant	42
Firefighter Paramedic I, II, III	48
Firefighter I, II, III	201
Total FTE operational staff	405
Fire FTE department total	432
Percent Operational Officers to Firefighters	1 to 4
<b>Use of Career and Volunteer Personnel</b>	
Career scheduling methodology	
Length of normal duty period	24/48
Hours a week	48
FLSA period	28-day cycle

### Discussion

A means of comparison, also used on a national basis, is that of measuring the number of Firefighters, career and volunteer on staff per 1,000 population of the service area. The following figure illustrates the current comparison of FCDFRS staffing with both national and regional norms.



Figure 15: Career and Volunteer Firefighters per 1,000 Population<sup>7, 8</sup>



The 2016 National Fire Experience Survey indicates the median rate of career Firefighters per 1,000 population is 1.18, and regionally, the number of Firefighters per 1,000 population is 1.23. Within Frederick County, the rate of career Firefighters per 1,000 citizens is 1.71. While above the regional and national median, each of the other jurisdictional career personnel per 1,000 citizens is larger. The number of volunteers in Frederick County is 2.78 per 1,000 population. This comparison in and of itself does not indicate a necessary change in staffing, but it does serve as a point of reference for analysis of current operational benchmarks. Geographical features and distances are not taken into consideration when gathering these numbers for comparison as they are developed on a per capita basis. FCDFRS shift operations are accomplished using a three-platoon system working 24 hours per shift or assigned to day work. Each shift is led by a Battalion Chief that serves as the senior officer on the shift. This individual is responsible for all aspects of shift operations and serves as the Fire Chief’s representative at significant incidents.

**Recommendations:**

Conduct a staffing study to ensure proper staffing levels are achieved and ensure that understaffing is not attributing to the perception of compression issues with pay.

Increase staffing to provide the ability to assemble the required “Effective Firefighting Force” as depicted in NFPA 1710/1720.

## JURISDICTIONAL BENCHMARKING COMPARISONS

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Fire Department Profile – 2016, National Fire Protection Association, Fire Analysis and Research, Quincy, MA.

<sup>8</sup> NFPA stops collecting career firefighter data for populations below 25,000 and stops collecting volunteer firefighter data for populations above 25,000. If the population is over 25,000, accurate career ratios are included, but the nearest available volunteer ratios are considered.



## Rank Comparison

A comparison of FCDFRS ranks was conducted against the jurisdictions selected for benchmarking. These jurisdictions operate with many of the same rank classifications. Before an employee enters an organization, one of the common considerations is what type of future or advancement is available in the organization. The method and opportunity for advancement can mean the difference between an employee who remains active and engaged in the organization and one who seeks better advancement opportunities elsewhere. Each of the ranks within FCDFRS are compared to the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking in the figure and discussion that follows.

**Figure 16: Job Title/Rank Comparison versus Jurisdictions Chosen for Benchmarking**

Jurisdictional Job Title/Rank Comparison						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
<b>Exempt Employees</b>						
Chief	x	x	x	x	x	x
Assistant Chief		x	x		x	x
Deputy Chief	x					x
Division Chief		x	x			
Battalion Chief	x		x		x	
Captain					x	
<b>Non-Exempt Employees</b>						
Battalion Chief	x	x		x		x
Captain	x	x	x	x		x
Lieutenant	x	x	x	x	x	x
Fire Apparatus Operator/ Technician/ Master FF	x	x	x	x	x	x
FF/Paramedic	x	x		x		x
FF/EMT	x	x				x
Firefighter	x	x	x	x	x	x
Paramedic	x	x		x		x
EMT		x				
Trainee/Recruit					x	



### *Discussion*

The rank structures used throughout the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking offer very similar advancement opportunities for a new employee who is looking at the future. All the jurisdictions are organized in a top-down hierarchy and have either a Director or Fire Chief as the organizational leader who sets the tone for accomplishing the mission. One difference amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking is the use of the administrative chief-level officer rank nomenclature. Specifically, the Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, and Division Chief ranks. Of the Maryland jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking, BCoFD and HCDFRS use the Assistant Chief rank nomenclature a high level administrative chief level officer second to the Fire Chief whereas, in FCDFRS the Deputy Chief rank is used. MCFRS uses the Division Chief rank as their administrative chief-level officer below the Fire Chief. In many Virginia jurisdictions, the rank of Assistant Chief is used as the high level administrative chief officer. All three ranks can serve similar functions but can cause disparity when comparing job functions for pay and benefit studies such as this.

When evaluating the job titles and rank structures of each organization, they all share similar functions throughout their general organizational design. Most start with entry level Firefighter and then works to include either EMT or Paramedic training. These first few job titles all have an associated pay scale/grade that accompanies it with variances in the number of steps in each grade prior to moving to the next higher grade or promotion. Therefore, each of the organizations considered for benchmarking could be competing for the bulk of the workforce in the field of fire rescue services.

Promotions can be looked at in three ways. The first is the promotion or graduation from one step inside a grade to the next, or from one pay grade to the next pay grade. The last would be the promotion to a rank holding position that harnesses department authority or responsibility assigned with it. As will be discussed in the compensation plans, these rank holding promotions usually include a change in pay grade as well as corresponding steps or the step/grade stays the same and a specific identified percentage is applied to account for new job duties associated with the promotion.

One recommendation would be to use the job performance requirements outlined in NFPA 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*, prior to promotion.

**Recommendations:**

Ensure the job performance requirements outlined in NFPA 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*, are used to establish job descriptions within FCDFRS.



## Compensation Plan Comparison

Each jurisdiction offers a detailed compensation plan that affords employees with opportunities to advance and achieve various increases in pay. Probably the single most important consideration for employees is the wage associated with their entry-level position. This is the most tangible and readily measured item when comparing jurisdictions, even though every employer knows there are many components that comprise the pay and benefits offered to employees.

When comparing compensation plans amongst several different agencies, it is important to use language that communicates the same thing. Many organizations intermingle terms for describing classifications, pay grades, steps, pay bands, ranks, and titles. For the purposes of this analysis, classifications refer to the rank and/or job titles. Pay grades and bands will be used to discuss the level of pay associated to a job classification or group of classifications. These pay grades usually have a minimum and maximum pay range. Pay steps or step-in grade will be the various levels or moves an employee can make within a pay grade or band.

Each of the compensation plans will be detailed below for analysis to identify areas of equality, as well as identify parity and disparity. The analysis will identify the type of plan, the number of steps or years in the base plan, the salary increase between steps, the differential between steps and rank, guaranteed increases if offered, and compensation offered after topping off. Overtime earnings, if available, will also be detailed. The analysis begins with a side by side comparison of the types of plans offered.

The types of plans offered are compared in the following figure.

**Figure 17: Jurisdictional Form of Compensation Plan**

Jurisdictional Form of Compensation Plan						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
<b>Type of Plan Offered</b>	Merit-Based Step Plan	Service-Based Step Plan/ Longevity Plan	Service-Based Step Plan	Merit-Plan	Service-Based Step Plan	Merit-Plan



### Frederick County Division of Fire Rescue Services

FCDFRS offers a merit-based step plan for pay increases for employees. Employees enter the step plan at Step 1 of the classification into which they were hired. Probationary employees do not move steps until they have finished their probation period. Employees move into the next step on July 1 of the respective year. An employee is eligible to move to the next step if they receive an overall performance rating of “2.5” or higher. Employees who receive a “2.49” or lower do not move to the next step and do not receive a step increment for the fiscal year. Therefore, step increases are not guaranteed. Furthermore, step increases are given only if approved by the county executive or if approved in the budget. The pay scale is established and determines the amount of increase received during the step. Should the FCG approve a cost of living adjustment (COLA) then the pay scale will be adjusted accordingly.

The approved pay scale for 2018 begins with a Firefighter recruit classification and is followed by 14 classifications with 18 steps in each classification. Each classification begins with step 1 and ends with step 18. As an employee moves through the steps of each classification, they receive a standard pay adjustment that remains equal amongst the steps in that classification. The differentials between steps is outlined in the following figure.

Figure 18: FCDFRS Merit Step Plan Comparison Chart

FCDFRS Merit Step Plan Comparison Chart		
Job Classification	Pay Increase Per Step in Classification	Number of Steps
FF Recruit	\$2,743.00	1
FF1	\$1,872.00	18
FF2	\$2,004.00	18
FF3	\$2,146.00	18
Fire Medic 1	\$2,004.00	18
Fire Medic 2	\$2,146.00	18
Fire Medic 3	\$2,298.00	18
Fire Technician	\$2,298.00	18
Fire Medic Technician	\$2,461.00	18
Lieutenant	\$2,461.00	18
Lieutenant-Medic	\$2,635.00	18
Captain	\$2,635.00	18
Captain-Medic	\$2,819.00	18
Battalion Chief	\$3,021.00	18
Battalion Chief-Medic	\$3,233.00	18

Figure 19: FCDFRS Merit Step Plan Percentage Range Across Classifications

FCDFRS Merit Step Plan Percentage Ranges		
Job Classification	Percent Range Increase in Classification	Number of Steps
FF Recruit	N/A	1
FF1	57%	18



FF2	57%	18
FF3	57%	18
Fire Medic 1	58%	18
Fire Medic 2	58%	18
Fire Medic 3	58%	18
Fire Technician	57%	18
Fire Medic Technician	58%	18
Lieutenant	57%	18
Lieutenant-Medic	58%	18
Captain	57%	18
Captain-Medic	58%	18
Battalion Chief	57%	18
Battalion Chief-Medic	56%	18

If an employee promotes or “upgrades” to the next classification, they move to the same step for years of time in grade for the new classification and receive the pay grade for that step.

An example of this upgrade process is outlined in the following two figures.

**Figure 20: FCDFRS Merit Step Plan Upgraded, Example A**

FCDFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example A		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
FF1	Step 6 @ \$50,963.00	
FF2		Step 6 @ \$54,563.00

In the above example the employee has moved or “upgraded” from FF1 to FF2.

**Figure 21: FCDFRS Merit Step Plan Upgrade, Example B**

FCDFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example B		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Lieutenant Medic	Step 5 @ \$71,637.00	
Captain Medic		Step 5 @ \$76,473.00

In the example, the Lieutenant Medic has been promoted to Captain Medic and the step-in grade remains constant, but the employee is moved to a higher pay grade to account for new job duty responsibilities.

The entire approved pay scale for 2018 is detailed in the figure on the next page.



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Figure 22: FCDFRS Approved Pay Scale for 2018

FF Recruit				FF1				FF2				FF3				Fire-Medic 1				Fire-Medic 2				Fire-Medic 3			
Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly
1	41,603	1,600.10	16.6677	1	44,541	1,713.13	17.8451	1	47,588	1,834.16	19.1058	1	47,091	1,811.21	18.8667	1	50,238	1,932.23	20.1274	1	53,612	2,062.00		1	53,612	2,062.00	
2	43,475	1,672.10	17.4177	2	46,546	1,790.22	18.6481	2	49,834	1,916.69	19.9659	2	49,096	1,888.29	19.6697	2	52,384	2,014.76	20.9871	2	55,910	2,150.37		2	55,910	2,150.37	
3	45,347	1,744.11	18.1678	3	48,550	1,867.31	19.4511	3	51,980	1,999.23	20.8253	3	51,100	1,965.38	20.4727	3	54,530	2,097.31	21.8469	3	58,208	2,238.75		3	58,208	2,238.75	
4	47,219	1,816.11	18.9178	4	50,554	1,944.39	20.2541	4	54,126	2,081.77	21.6851	4	53,104	2,042.47	21.2757	4	56,676	2,179.85	22.7067	4	60,505	2,327.13		4	60,505	2,327.13	
5	49,091	1,888.11	19.6678	5	52,559	2,021.49	21.0572	5	56,272	2,164.30	22.5448	5	55,109	2,119.57	22.0788	5	58,822	2,262.38	23.5664	5	62,803	2,415.51		5	62,803	2,415.51	
6	50,963	1,960.12	20.4179	6	54,563	2,098.58	21.8602	6	58,418	2,246.84	23.4046	6	57,113	2,196.66	22.8818	6	60,968	2,344.92	24.4282	6	65,101	2,503.88		6	65,101	2,503.88	
7	52,835	2,032.12	21.1679	7	56,567	2,175.67	22.6632	7	60,564	2,329.37	24.2643	7	59,117	2,273.74	23.6848	7	63,114	2,427.45	25.2889	7	67,399	2,592.25		7	67,399	2,592.25	
8	54,707	2,104.13	21.9180	8	58,572	2,252.76	23.4662	8	62,710	2,411.91	25.1241	8	61,122	2,350.83	24.4878	8	65,260	2,509.99	26.1457	8	69,696	2,680.63		8	69,696	2,680.63	
9	56,579	2,176.13	22.6680	9	60,576	2,329.85	24.2693	9	64,856	2,494.45	25.9839	9	63,126	2,427.93	25.2909	9	67,406	2,592.53	27.0055	9	71,994	2,769.01		9	71,994	2,769.01	
10	58,452	2,248.14	23.4181	10	62,580	2,406.94	25.0723	10	67,002	2,576.99	26.8436	10	65,130	2,505.02	26.0939	10	69,552	2,675.06	27.8652	10	74,292	2,857.39		10	74,292	2,857.39	
11	60,324	2,320.14	24.1681	11	64,585	2,484.03	25.8753	11	69,148	2,659.53	27.7034	11	67,135	2,582.11	26.8969	11	71,698	2,757.60	28.7200	11	76,590	2,945.76		11	76,590	2,945.76	
12	62,196	2,392.14	24.9181	12	66,589	2,561.12	26.6783	12	71,293	2,742.05	28.5631	12	69,139	2,659.19	27.6999	12	73,843	2,840.13	29.5847	12	78,888	3,034.14		12	78,888	3,034.14	
13	64,068	2,464.15	25.6682	13	68,594	2,638.21	27.4814	13	73,440	2,824.60	29.4229	13	71,144	2,736.29	28.5030	13	75,990	2,922.68	30.4445	13	81,185	3,122.52		13	81,185	3,122.52	
14	65,940	2,536.15	26.4182	14	70,598	2,715.30	28.2844	14	75,586	2,907.14	30.2827	14	73,148	2,813.38	29.3060	14	78,136	3,005.22	31.3043	14	83,483	3,210.89		14	83,483	3,210.89	
15	67,812	2,608.16	27.1683	15	72,602	2,792.39	29.0874	15	77,731	2,989.67	31.1424	15	75,152	2,890.47	30.1090	15	80,281	3,087.75	32.1640	15	85,781	3,299.26		15	85,781	3,299.26	
16	69,684	2,680.16	27.9183	16	74,606	2,869.48	29.8904	16	79,877	3,072.21	32.0022	16	77,156	2,967.56	30.9120	16	82,427	3,170.29	33.0238	16	88,079	3,387.64		16	88,079	3,387.64	
17	71,556	2,752.17	28.6684	17	76,611	2,946.58	30.6935	17	82,023	3,154.74	32.8619	17	79,161	3,044.65	31.7151	17	84,573	3,252.82	33.8835	17	90,377	3,476.02		17	90,377	3,476.02	
18	73,428	2,824.17	29.4184	18	78,615	3,023.66	31.4965	18	84,169	3,237.28	33.7217	18	81,165	3,121.74	32.5181	18	86,719	3,335.36	34.7433	18	92,674	3,564.40		18	92,674	3,564.40	
Fire-Medic Technician				Lieutenant				Lieutenant/Medic				Captain				Captain/Medic				Battalion Chief (2496)							
Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly	Step	Annual	Biweekly	Hourly
1	57,226	2,200.99	22.9270	1	54,676	2,102.91	21.9053	1	61,098	2,349.95	24.4786	1	58,548	2,251.86	23.4569	1	65,197	2,507.57	26.1205	1	67,143	2,582.42		1	67,143	2,582.42	
2	59,686	2,296.62	23.9128	2	57,136	2,197.55	22.8911	2	63,733	2,451.28	25.6342	2	61,183	2,353.20	24.5125	2	68,016	2,616.00	27.2500	2	70,164	2,698.63		2	70,164	2,698.63	
3	62,146	2,390.25	24.8985	3	59,596	2,292.17	23.8768	3	66,368	2,552.61	26.5897	3	63,818	2,454.53	25.5680	3	70,835	2,724.42	28.3794	3	73,186	2,814.83		3	73,186	2,814.83	
4	64,607	2,484.89	25.8843	4	62,057	2,386.81	24.8626	4	69,003	2,653.95	27.6453	4	66,453	2,555.87	26.6236	4	73,654	2,832.85	29.5089	4	76,207	2,931.04		4	76,207	2,931.04	
5	67,067	2,579.51	26.8700	5	64,517	2,481.44	25.8483	5	71,637	2,755.29	28.7009	5	69,087	2,657.20	27.6792	5	76,473	2,941.28	30.6384	5	79,229	3,047.25		5	79,229	3,047.25	
6	69,528	2,674.14	27.8557	6	66,978	2,576.06	26.8340	6	74,272	2,856.61	29.7564	6	71,722	2,758.53	28.7347	6	79,292	3,049.71	31.7678	6	82,250	3,163.46		6	82,250	3,163.46	
7	71,988	2,768.78	28.8415	7	69,438	2,670.70	27.8198	7	76,907	2,957.95	30.8120	7	74,357	2,859.87	29.7903	7	82,112	3,158.14	32.8973	7	85,271	3,279.67		7	85,271	3,279.67	
8	74,449	2,863.40	29.8272	8	71,899	2,765.33	28.8055	8	79,541	3,059.28	31.8675	8	76,991	2,961.20	30.8458	8	84,930	3,266.56	34.0266	8	88,293	3,395.88		8	88,293	3,395.88	
9	76,909	2,958.03	30.8129	9	74,359	2,859.96	29.7912	9	82,176	3,160.62	32.9231	9	79,626	3,062.53	31.9014	9	87,750	3,374.99	35.1561	9	91,314	3,512.09		9	91,314	3,512.09	
10	79,369	3,052.67	31.7987	10	76,819	2,954.59	30.7770	10	84,811	3,261.96	33.9787	10	82,261	3,163.87	32.9570	10	90,569	3,483.42	36.2856	10	94,336	3,628.30		10	94,336	3,628.30	
11	81,830	3,147.30	32.7844	11	79,280	3,049.22	31.7627	11	87,445	3,363.28	35.0342	11	84,895	3,265.20	34.0125	11	93,388	3,691.84	37.4150	11	97,357	3,744.51		11	97,357	3,744.51	
12	84,290	3,241.93	33.7702	12	81,740	3,143.85	32.7485	12	90,080	3,464.62	36.0898	12	87,530	3,366.54	35.0681	12	96,207	3,700.27	38.5445	12	100,379	3,860.71		12	100,379	3,860.71	
13	86,751	3,336.56	34.7559	13	84,201	3,238.48	33.7342	13	92,715	3,565.95	37.1453	13	90,165	3,467.87	36.1236	13	99,026	3,808.69	39.6739	13	103,400	3,976.92		13	103,400	3,976.92	
14	89,211	3,431.19	35.7416	14	86,661	3,333.11	34.7199	14	95,349	3,667.29	38.2009	14	92,799	3,569.20	37.1792	14	101,845	3,917.12	40.8034	14	106,421	4,093.13		14	106,421	4,093.13	
15	91,671	3,525.82	36.7274	15	89,121	3,427.75	35.7057	15	97,984	3,768.61	39.2564	15	95,434	3,670.53	38.2347	15	104,664	4,025.55	41.9328	15	109,443	4,209.34		15	109,443	4,209.34	
16	94,132	3,620.45	37.7131	16	91,582	3,522.37	36.6914	16	100,619	3,869.95	40.3120	16	98,069	3,771.87	39.2903	16	107,483	4,133.98	43.0623	16	112,464	4,325.55		16	112,464	4,325.55	
17	96,592	3,715.09	38.6989	17	94,042	3,617.01	37.6772	17	103,253	3,971.29	41.3676	17	100,703	3,873.21	40.3459	17	110,303	4,242.41	44.1917	17	115,486	4,441.76		17	115,486	4,441.76	
18	99,053	3,809.72	39.6846	18	96,503	3,711.64	38.6629	18	105,888	4,072.62	42.4231	18	103,338	3,974.53	41.4014	18	113,122	4,350.83	45.3211	18	118,507	4,557.97		18	118,507	4,557.97	



A review of FCDFRS actual salaries reveals that employees on average are making more than the step plan allowances because of built-in and earned overtime compensation based on hours worked. For example, in the FF1 classification the average earned overtime is \$5,512.19 and the average earned overtime in the Battalion Chief rank is \$28,837.94. Of course, a detailed assessment will show that some employees earned very little overtime, and some earned the bulk.

A review of the average overtime per classification is listed in the following figure.

**Figure 23: FCDFRS Average Overtime Earnings Per Classification**

FCDFRS Average OT Per Classification 2018		
Job Classification	Average OT Earned Per Classification	Total OT Earned Per Classification
FF Recruit	\$0.00	\$0.00
FF1	\$5,512.19	\$396,877.78
FF2	\$10,094.00	\$191,786.08
FF3	\$7,976.07	\$797,606.96
Fire Medic 1	\$16,815.71	\$16,815.71
Fire Medic 2	\$12,703.29	\$190,549.35
Fire Medic 3	\$11,983.73	\$395,463.01
Fire Technician	\$9,398.72	\$422,942.22
Fire Medic Technician	\$10,975.99	\$43,903.96
Lieutenant	\$10,915.18	\$491,183.00
Lieutenant-Medic	\$15,099.38	\$105,695.64
Captain	\$14,782.87	\$280,874.44
Captain-Medic	\$26,709.04	\$133,545.21
Battalion Chief	\$28,837.94	\$144,189.72
Battalion Chief-Medic	\$30,236.75	\$90,710.25

### FCDFRS Salary Compression

FCDFRS displays a healthy spread of differential pay percentages across classifications. Over time it is possible to have employees begin to compress the pay grades as they remain in a specific classification rather than progress or move to a higher grade. Often organizations review these classifications to address compression and reduce the occurrence of an employee in a lower classification earning a higher wage than an employee in a higher pay grade. The cause for this can be inadvertent through the application of negotiated wage adjustments or market adjustments that are applied across the board, but push employees that are already on the upper end of the scale towards the next scale.

Another common occurrence is gross salaries in organizations that are experiencing higher than normal amounts of overtime. This overtime will often allow employees who are in lower pay grades the ability to rival higher and even promoted pay grades. When this happens employee morale and satisfaction sometimes suffer. It is important to note that an employee who can work excess hours by the nature of working more is going to make more and earn a higher salary.



Organizations can reduce the occurrence of employees earning gross salaries that are above the next pay grade by implementing programs and methods to reduce the availability of overtime. Furthermore, organizations that offer specialty pay or special incentive pay can sometimes have employees who earn these incentives compress employees in higher pay grades who do not receive special pay incentives.

An evaluation of FCDFRS salaries reveals that most compression issues are related to overtime and gross salary earnings. However, a detailed review of each classification yielded the following results in each job classification.

#### **FF Recruit**

There were not employees listed in this classification/grade.

#### **FF1**

There are 81 employees assigned to this classification/grade. Each employee is at step 1, works a 48-hour work week, and has a base budgeted salary of \$41,602.60. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was zero and the highest was \$29,199.77. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade and the highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$4,943.12 below the bottom employee in the next grade.

#### **FF2**

There are 19 employees assigned to this classification/grade. Eighteen employees are at step 2. They work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary of \$46,545. One employee is at step 13 for this grade and earned \$68,593.46 base budgeted salary. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$161.12 and the highest was \$30,993.62. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade but the highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$10,175.62 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

#### **FF3**

There are 100 employees assigned to this classification/grade. Eleven employees are at step 4, 12 employees are at a step 5, 23 employees are at a step 6, 10 employees are at a step 7, 21 employees are at a step 8, 13 employees are at a step 9, 4 employees are at a step 10, 2 employees are at a step 11, 2 employees at step 15, and 2 employees at step 18. All employees but one work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary between \$54,126 and \$84,169.28. Two employees are at step 18 for this grade and earned \$84,169.28 base budgeted salary. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$182.59 and the highest was \$43,825.00 by a step 8 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$37,078.28 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.



### **Fire Medic 1**

There is 1 employee assigned to this classification/grade. He or she works a 48-hour work week and has a base budgeted salary of \$47,091.46. The amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$16,815.71. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade and the highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$5,291.54 below the bottom employee in the next grade. This is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

### **Fire Medic 2**

There are 15 employees assigned to this classification/grade. Fourteen employees are at step 2. They work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary of \$52,383.76. One employee is at step 6 for this grade and earned \$60,967.92 base budgeted salary. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$718.81 and the highest was \$41,856.11. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade and the highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$6,047.45 above the bottom employee in the next grade. This is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

### **Fire Medic 3**

There are 33 employees assigned to this classification/grade. Four employees are at step 4, 2 employees are at a step 5, 9 employees are at a step 6, 8 employees are at a step 7, 3 employees are at a step 8, 3 employees are at a step 9, 1 employee is at step 10, 1 employee are at a step 11, 1 employee at step 12 and 1 employees at step 14. All employees but two work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary between \$60,505.38 and \$83,483.14. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$600.81 and the highest was \$40,401.00 by a step 6 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$25,066.14 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

### **Fire Technician**

There are 45 employees assigned to this classification/grade. Four employees are at step 5, 4 employees are at a step 6, 3 employees are at a step 7, 5 employees are at a step 8, 14 employees are at a step 9, 7 employees are at a step 10, 2 employees are at a step 11, 3 employees are at a step 12, 1 employee at step 14, 1 employees at step 15, and 1 employee at step 18 . All employees but one work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary between \$58,417.00 and \$90,124.32. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$72.84 and the highest was \$53,164.78 by a step 12 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$23,057.06 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

### **Fire Medic Technician**



There are 4 employees assigned to this classification/grade. One employee is at step 5, 2 employees are at step 10, and 1 employee is at step 11. They all work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary of \$67,067.26 to \$81,829.80. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$5,087.80 and the highest was \$17,336.32 by a step 5 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$17,312.36 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

#### **Lieutenant**

There are 45 employees assigned to this classification/grade. Two employees are at step 5, 3 employees are at a step 6, 2 employees are at a step 7, 4 employees are at a step 8, 5 employees are at a step 9, 8 employees are at a step 10, 5 employees are at a step 11, 6 employees are at a step 12, 1 employee at step 13, 2 employees at step 14, 4 employees at step 15, and 3 employees at step 16. All but two work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary of \$64,517.44 to \$91,581.62. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$117.89 and the highest was \$37,856.30 by a step 15 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$19,944.08 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

#### **Lieutenant-Medic**

There are 8 employees assigned to this classification/grade. One employee is at step 5, 1 employee is at a step 6, and 1 employee is at step 7, 1 employee is at a step 9, 3 employees are at a step 11, and 1 is at a step 16. All employees but two work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary between \$71,637.54 to \$100,618.70. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was zero and the highest was \$31,174.03 by a step 6 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$20,992.92 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

#### **Captain**

There are 19 employees assigned to this classification/grade. One employee is at step 9, 8 employees are at step 10, 2 employees are at step 11, 1 employee is at step 12, 1 employee is at step 13, and 3 are at step 14, 1 is at step 16, and 2 are at step 17. All but two work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary between \$79,625.78 and \$100,703.50. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$985.81 and the highest was \$50,659.57 by a step 10 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$10,134.58 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

#### **Captain-Medic**



There are 4 employees assigned to this classification/grade. One employee is at step 10, 1 employee is at step 12, 2 employees are at step 13, and 1 employee is at step 17. All but two work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary of \$90,568.92 to \$110,302.70. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was \$5,397.62 and the highest was \$48,500.69 by a step 12 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$12,945.44 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.



### **Battalion Chief**

There are 6 employees assigned to this classification/grade. One employee is at step 11, 2 employees are at step 14, 1 employee is at step 15, 1 employee is at step 17, and 1 employee is at step 18. All but one work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary of \$97,357.26 to \$118,507.20. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was zero and the highest was \$45,042.22 by a step 18 employee. There were no compression issues noted inside this grade. The highest base budgeted salary for this grade was \$8,552.16 above the bottom employee in the next grade. However, this is consistent with the pay scale allowances for time in grade.

### **Battalion Chief-Medic**

There are 4 employees assigned to this classification/grade. One employee is at step 12, 1 employee is at step 14, 1 employee is at step 16, and 1 employee is at step 17. All employees but two work a 48-hour work week and have a base budgeted salary between \$109,955.04 to \$126,119.76. The least amount of overtime earned for this grade was zero and the highest was \$43,382.68 by a step 12 employee.

The analysis of each grade shows that while there is no compression issue between grades, there are numerous employees whose base budgeted salaries are above the merit step plan they should be receiving according to the pay scale. The amounts vary from a few hundred to as much as two thousand. It should also be noted that the regular earnings are often more than the base budgeted amounts. This is most likely due to incentive pays and increased earnings. The current employees are spread out enough that these small differences are not compressing the employees yet. Across the board adjustments could change that if not applied correctly.



### Baltimore County Fire Department

The BCoFD offers a service-based step plan that transitions to longevity for pay increases for employees. The employee must receive a satisfactory job performance rating to be eligible for increases. Employees enter the step plan at the minimum pay associated with the grade into which they were hired. The pay scale is established and determines the amount of increase received during the steps. Fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019 are established in the current bargaining unit plan. Should Baltimore County approve a mutually agreed upon wage increase for any other represented employees, the members of the BCoFD will receive those benefits also with the same effective date.

The approved pay scale for 2018 begins with a Firefighter classification and is followed by 11 classifications with 7 pay steps in each classification, along with 8 longevity-based steps for each classification that begin in year ten. Each classification begins with the minimum pay and ends with a step for 29 years of longevity. As an employee moves through the steps of each classification, they receive a pay adjustment that fluctuates amongst the steps in that job classification. The average of each step is presented in the following figure. These enumerated steps, grades, and longevity are guaranteed for the term of the bargaining agreement which expires June 30, 2019, and no bargaining unit employee may be laid off or furloughed.

The differentials between steps is outlined in the following figure.

Figure 24: BCoFD Step Plan Comparison Chart

BCoFD Step Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Average Pay Increase Per Step	Number of Steps
Firefighter – 8F	\$2,550.00	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Firefighter EMT – 10F	\$2,820.33	7 Steps/8 Longevity
EMT Firefighter – 11F	\$2,960.27	7 Steps/8 Longevity
FAO/DO – 12F	\$3,106.07	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Paramedic – 13F	\$3,255.80	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Paramedic Firefighter – 14F	\$3,438.33	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Fire and EMS LT – 16F	\$3,843.80	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Fire and EMS Captain – 19F	\$4,527.60	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Battalion Chief – 23F	\$5,459.00	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Division Chief – 24F	\$5,750.07	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Assistant Chief – 26F	\$6,375.07	7 Steps/8 Longevity



**Figure 25: BCoFD Step Plan Percentage Range Across Classifications**

BCoFD Step Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Percent Range Increase in Classification	Number of Steps
Firefighter – 8F	53%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Firefighter EMT – 10F	53%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
EMT Firefighter – 11F	52%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
FAO/DO – 12F	52%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Paramedic – 13F	52%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Paramedic Firefighter – 14F	52%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Fire and EMS LT – 16F	51%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Fire and EMS Captain – 19F	50%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Battalion Chief – 23F	50%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Division Chief – 24F	49%	7 Steps/8 Longevity
Assistant Chief – 26F	49%	7 Steps/8 Longevity

If an employee promotes or “upgrades” to the next classification, they move to the same step for years of time in grade for the new classification and receive the pay grade for that step. Each year employees in the rank of FF, EMT, FF/EMT, EMT/FF, or PM who meet all the minimum qualifications will be given the opportunity to reclassify to the position of EMT/FF or PM/FF if they possess the NFPA FFII qualification. If an employee promotes to the rank of Lieutenant or Captain, they shall receive the entire salary improvement at the time of promotion.

An example of the upgrade process is outlined in the next two figures.

**Figure 26: BCoFD Step Plan Upgraded, Example A**

BCoFD Step Plan Upgrade, Example A		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
FF	Step 1 @ \$44,983	
FF/EMT		Step 1 @ \$48,797

In the above example the employee has moved or “upgraded” from FF to FF/EMT.

**Figure 27: BCoFD Step Plan Upgrade, Example B**

BCoFD Step Plan Upgrade, Example B		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Lieutenant – 16F	4 <sup>th</sup> Step @ \$71,462	
Captain – 19F		4 <sup>th</sup> Step @ \$81,530

In the above example, the Lieutenant has been promoted to Captain and the step-in grade remains constant, but the employee is moved to a higher pay grade to account for new job duty responsibilities. In the figure on the next page a sample of employee salaries according to the pay plan is provided.



Figure 28: BCoFD Salary Sample Comparison

BCoFD Salary Sample Comparison					
Job Title	Grade	Step	Longevity	Actual Salary	Pay Scale
Fire Specialist	12	5	0	\$61,508	\$62,738
Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator	12	5	0	\$61,508	\$62,738
Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator	12	4	0	\$58,953	\$60,132
Fire Specialist	12	4	0	\$58,953	\$60,132
Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator	12	4	0	\$58,953	\$60,132
Paramedic	13	7	2	\$76,478	\$78,008
Paramedic/Firefighter	14	2	0	\$58,953	\$60,132
Fire Lieutenant	16	7	1	\$83,559	\$85,230
Fire Lieutenant	16	7	2	\$87,341	\$89,088
Emergency Medical Services Lieutenant	16	7	7	\$109,979	\$112,179
Fire Captain	19	7	4	\$109,979	\$112,179
Fire Captain	19	7	8	\$133,681	\$136,355
Battalion Fire Chief	23	7	4	\$132,707	\$132,707
Battalion Fire Chief	23	7	7	\$153,473	\$153,473

#### Discussion

A comparison of BCoFD base salaries versus the pay scale reveals that all the sampled positions depicted in the figure are either less than or equal to the prescribed salary according to the pay scale. Several grades were compared, and it appears that BCoFD salaries are adhering to the prescribed salary scale.

The entire approved pay scale for 2018 is detailed in the following figure.



Figure 29: BCoFD Approved Pay Scale for 2018

GRADE	BASE ANNUAL RATES (In Dollars)								LONGEVITY ANNUAL RATES (In Dollars)					
	MIN.	1ST STEP	2ND STEP	3RD STEP	4TH STEP	5TH STEP	6TH STEP	MAX.	10 YEARS	13 YEARS	15 YEARS	17 YEARS	19 YEARS	21 YEARS
PF	37,276	38,827	41,843	43,272	44,983	46,783	48,797	50,810	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504
7F	41,843	43,272	44,983	46,783	48,797	50,810	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462
8F	43,272	44,983	46,783	48,797	50,810	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655
9F	44,983	46,783	48,797	50,810	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008
10F	46,783	48,797	50,810	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530
11F	48,797	50,810	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230
12F	50,810	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088
13F	52,913	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088	93,201
14F	55,263	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088	93,201	97,401
15F	57,617	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088	93,201	97,401	101,750
16F	60,132	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088	93,201	97,401	101,750	106,838
17F	62,738	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088	93,201	97,401	101,750	106,838	112,179
18F	65,504	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088	93,201	97,401	101,750	106,838	112,179	117,789
19F	68,441	71,462	74,655	78,008	81,530	85,230	89,088	93,201	97,401	101,750	106,838	112,179	117,789	123,679



**BALTIMORE COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
PAY SCHEDULE VIII  
STANDARD GRADES  
Supervisory, Management and Confidential Employees  
Fire Department  
Effective July 1, 2017**

GRADE	BASE ANNUAL RATES							LONGEVITY ANNUAL RATES						
	(In Dollars)							(In Dollars)						
	MIN.	1ST STEP	2ND STEP	3RD STEP	4TH STEP	5TH STEP	6TH STEP	MAX.	10 YEARS	13 YEARS	15 YEARS	17 YEARS	19 YEARS	21 YEARS
20F	69,193	72,382	75,731	79,250	82,953	86,800	90,921	95,111	99,726	104,580	109,673	115,019	120,630	126,522
21F	72,382	75,731	79,250	82,953	86,800	90,921	95,111	99,726	104,580	109,673	115,019	120,630	126,522	132,707
22F	75,731	79,250	82,953	86,800	90,921	95,111	99,726	104,580	109,673	115,019	120,630	126,522	132,707	139,205
23F	79,250	82,953	86,800	90,921	95,111	99,726	104,580	109,673	115,019	120,630	126,522	132,707	139,205	146,165
24F	82,953	86,800	90,921	95,111	99,726	104,580	109,673	115,019	120,630	126,522	132,707	139,205	146,165	153,473
25F	86,800	90,921	95,111	99,726	104,580	109,673	115,019	120,630	126,522	132,707	139,205	146,165	153,473	161,147
26F	90,921	95,111	99,726	104,580	109,673	115,019	120,630	126,522	132,707	139,205	146,165	153,473	161,147	169,205



### Montgomery County Fire Rescue Services

MCFRS offers a service-based step plan that transitions to longevity for pay increases for employees. Employees enter the step plan at the minimum pay associated with grade A for which classification they were hired. There are six pay grades associated with the plan. Each grade has steps A through O and two longevity steps. The pay scale is established and determines the amount of increase received during the steps. Fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019 are established in the current bargaining unit plan.

The approved pay scale for 2018 begins with a Firefighter/Rescuer I classification and is followed by 5 classifications and each has a pay grade associated with 14 pay steps in each. Two longevity-based steps for each classification are awarded after the last step. Each classification begins with the minimum pay and ends with a step for 20 and 24 years of longevity. As an employee moves through the steps of each classification, they receive a pay adjustment that fluctuates amongst the steps in that job classification.

The differentials between steps is outlined in the following figure.

**Figure 30: MCFRS Step Plan Comparison Chart**

MCFRS Step Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Average Pay Increase Per Step	Number of Steps
FF Rescuer I	\$2,082.00	14 Steps/2 Longevity
FF Rescuer II	\$2,185.64	14 Steps/2 Longevity
FF Rescuer III	\$2,295.07	14 Steps/2 Longevity
Master FF Rescuer	\$2,524.29	14 Steps/2 Longevity
Fire Rescue Lieutenant	\$2,777.07	14 Steps/2 Longevity
Fire Rescue Captain	\$3,131.43	14 Steps/2 Longevity
	3.5%	For Longevity Steps

**Figure 31: MCFRS Differential Step Plan Percentage Range Across Classifications**

MCFRS Step Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Percentage Range Increase in Classification	Number of Steps
FF Rescuer I	58%	14 Steps/2 Longevity
FF Rescuer II	58%	14 Steps/2 Longevity
FF Rescuer III	58%	14 Steps/2 Longevity
Master FF Rescuer	58%	14 Steps/2 Longevity
Fire Rescue Lieutenant	58%	14 Steps/2 Longevity
Fire Rescue Captain	58%	14 Steps/2 Longevity

If an employee promotes or “upgrades” to the next classification, they move to the same step for years of time in grade for the new classification and receive the pay grade for that step.

An example of the upgrade process is outlined in the next two figures.



**Figure 32: MCFRS Step Plan Upgraded, Example A**

MCFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example A		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
FF Rescuer I	F1-Step C @ \$50,444	
FF Rescuer II		F2-Step C @ \$52,967

In the above example, the employee has moved or “upgraded” from FF Rescuer I to FF Rescuer II.

**Figure 33: MCFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example B**

MCFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example B		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Lieutenant	B1-Step G @ \$77,231	
Captain		B2-Step G @ \$87,088

In the above example, the Lieutenant has been promoted to Captain and the step-in grade remains constant, but the employee is moved to a higher pay grade to account for new job duty responsibilities. In the following figure a sample of employee salaries according to the pay plan is provided.

**Figure 34: MCFRS Salary Sample Comparison**

MCFRS Salary Sample Comparison					
Job Title	Grade	Step	Longevity	Actual Salary	Pay Scale
Firefighter/Rescuer III	F3	A	1	\$46,166	\$51,917
Firefighter/Rescuer III	F3	A	1	\$48,738	\$51,917
Firefighter/Rescuer III	F3	C-D	4	\$56,435	\$63,320
Firefighter/Rescuer III	F3	G-H	8	\$57,265	\$66,058
Firefighter/Rescuer III	F3	I-J	11	\$69,375	\$70,763
Master Firefighter/Rescuer	F4	K-L	12	\$83,383	\$83,383
Master Firefighter/Rescuer	F4	O	18	\$92,449	\$92,449
Fire/Rescue Lieutenant	B1	L-M	12	\$93,767	\$94,942
Fire/Rescue Lieutenant	B1	M-N	14	\$94,942	\$98,265
Fire/Rescue Lieutenant	B1	N-O	16	\$99,710	\$101,704
Fire/Rescue Lieutenant	B1	LS2	31	\$110,984.87	\$108,948
Fire/Rescue Captain	B2	O	16	\$116,720	\$114,683
Fire/Rescue Captain	B2	LS2	26	\$120,442.11	\$122,851
Fire/Rescue Battalion Chief	B3	LS2	24	\$141,438.12	\$141,438
Fire/Rescue Battalion Chief	B3	LS2	28	\$141,438.12	\$141,438



*Discussion*

A comparison of MCFRS base salaries versus the pay scale reveals that almost all of the sampled positions depicted in the figure are either less than or equal to the prescribed salary according to the pay scale. Several grades were compared, and it appears that MCFRS salaries are adhering to the prescribed salary scale for base salaries. The entire approved pay scale for 2018/2019 is detailed in the following figure.



Figure 35: MCFRS Approved Pay Scale for 2018

**FISCAL YEAR 2019**  
**EFFECTIVE JULY 8, 2018**

GRADE	F1	F2	F3	F4	B1	B2
	FIRE FIGHTER RESCUER I	FIRE FIGHTER RESCUER II	FIRE FIGHTER RESCUER III	MASTER FIRE FIGHTER RESCUER	FIRE/RESCUE LIEUTENANT	FIRE/RESCUE CAPTAIN
A	\$47,089	\$49,446	\$51,917	\$57,109	\$62,825	\$70,843
B	\$48,738	\$51,175	\$53,735	\$59,108	\$65,024	\$73,324
C	\$50,444	\$52,967	\$55,616	\$61,178	\$67,301	\$75,890
D	\$52,211	\$54,822	\$57,564	\$63,320	\$69,657	\$78,548
E	\$54,038	\$56,742	\$59,578	\$65,536	\$72,095	\$81,297
F	\$55,930	\$58,728	\$61,664	\$67,831	\$74,618	\$84,143
G	\$57,888	\$60,782	\$63,822	\$70,205	\$77,231	\$87,088
H	\$59,915	\$62,911	\$66,058	\$72,662	\$79,935	\$90,136
I	\$62,012	\$65,114	\$68,371	\$75,206	\$82,732	\$93,291
J	\$64,184	\$67,393	\$70,763	\$77,837	\$85,629	\$96,557
K	\$66,430	\$69,753	\$73,240	\$80,563	\$88,627	\$99,938
L	\$68,755	\$72,194	\$75,804	\$83,383	\$91,730	\$103,435
M	\$71,162	\$74,720	\$78,458	\$86,300	\$94,942	\$107,057
N	\$73,653	\$77,336	\$81,205	\$89,322	\$98,265	\$110,804
O	\$76,231	\$80,045	\$84,048	\$92,449	\$101,704	\$114,683
LS1*	\$78,899	\$82,847	\$86,990	\$95,685	\$105,264	\$118,697
LS2**	\$81,660	\$85,747	\$90,035	\$99,034	\$108,948	\$122,851

\* 3.5 percent, upon completion of 20 years of service

\*\* 3.5 percent, upon completion of 24 years of service

**FY19 Notes:**

- FY19 GWA is 2.0% on July 8, 2018, for IAFF Bargaining Unit members.



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
FIRE/RESCUE MANAGEMENT  
SALARY SCHEDULE**

**FISCAL YEAR 2019**

**EFFECTIVE JULY 8, 2018**

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>MINIMUM</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>	<u>LONGEVITY</u> <u>(LS1)*</u>	<u>LONGEVITY</u> <u>(LS2)**</u>
<b>B3</b>	FIRE/RESCUE BATTALION CHIEF	\$79,451	\$132,034	\$136,655	\$141,438
<b>B4</b>	FIRE/RESCUE ASSISTANT CHIEF	\$86,765	\$145,227	\$150,310	\$155,571
<b>B6</b>	FIRE/RESCUE DIVISION CHIEF	\$99,182	\$164,665	\$170,428	\$176,393

\* 3.5 percent, upon completion of 20 years of service

\*\* 3.5 percent, upon completion of 24 years of service

**FY19 Notes:**

The FY19 GWA is 2.0% on July 8, 2018, for Fire/Rescue Management.



### Prince George’s County Fire/EMS

Prince George’s County Fire/EMS offers a merit plan for pay increases for employees using a MIN-MAX system. Employees enter the merit plan at the minimum pay associated with the grade for the classification they were hired. There are seven pay grades associated with the plan. Each grade receives a 3.5 percent increase each year until the maximum salary for that classification is reached. The employee can move one step per year on their anniversary hire date if they received a satisfactory performance evaluation for the preceding year. The pay scale is established and determines the amount of increase received during the steps. Fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018 are established in the current bargaining unit agreement and guarantee one merit increase of 3.5% and a cost of living adjustment of 2%. Merit raises are paid on the employee’s service date.

The approved pay scale for 2018 begins with grade Y01 classification and is followed by 6 pay grades. Some of these grades contain more than one job classification or title. For instance, grade Y01 contains the classifications Firefighter I, Paramedic I, and Fire Medic I. Each classification begins with the minimum pay and ends with a maximum pay.

The differentials between steps is outlined in the following figure.

Figure 36: PGC Fire/EMS Merit Plan Comparison Chart

PGC Fire/EMS Merit Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Average Pay Increase Per Step	Number of Steps
FFI/PMI/FMI	3.5%	Annual
FFII/PMII/FMII	3.5%	Annual
FFIII/PMIII/FMIII	3.5%	Annual
Fire Technician	3.5%	Annual
Fire Medic Technician	3.5%	Annual
Lieutenant	3.5%	Annual
Captain	3.5%	Annual
Battalion Chief	3.5%	Annual

Figure 37: PGC Fire/EMS Percentage Range Across Classifications

PGC Fire/EMS Merit Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Percentage Range Increase in Classification	Number of Steps
FFI/PMI/FMI	54%	Annual until Max
FFII/PMII/FMII	51%	Annual until Max
FFIII/PMIII/FMIII	46%	Annual until Max
Fire Technician	44%	Annual until Max
Fire Medic Technician	44%	Annual until Max
Lieutenant	49%	Annual until Max
Captain	48%	Annual until Max
Battalion Chief	48%	Annual until Max



Prince George’s County Fire/EMS use a competitive and non-competitive method for promotions. Non-competitive promotions involve grade changes for Firefighters, Paramedics, and Firefighter Paramedics. Competitive promotions are promotions for Firefighter Technician, Firefighter/Medic Technician, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief. If an employee promotes or “upgrades” to the next classification in a non-competitive promotion, they will receive a 5 percent increase to their base salary for Y01 to Y02. Upon further certification completion they will receive an additional 10 percent to promote to Y03 for a full 15 percent for certification completion benchmarks. Promotion for competitive positions are adjusted by the greater of 10 percent above the employee’s current rate, or 10 percent above the minimum rate for the grade being promoted to.

An example of the upgrade or promotion process is outlined in the next two figures.

**Figure 38: PGC Fire/EMS Merit Plan Upgraded, Example A**

PGC Fire/EMS Merit Plan Upgrade, Example A		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Paramedic I	Y01 @ \$42,924	5%
Paramedic II	Y02 @ \$45,025	10%
Paramedic III		Y03 @ \$49,527.00

In the above example, the employee has moved or “upgraded” from Paramedic I to Paramedic III.

**Figure 39: PGC Fire/EMS Merit Plan Upgrade, Example B**

PGC Fire/EMS Merit Plan Upgrade, Example B		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Lieutenant	Y04 @ \$54,542.00	10%
Captain		Y05 @ \$59,996.20

In the above example, the Lieutenant has been promoted to Captain and the step-in grade increases by 10 percent to a new grade to account for new job duty responsibilities.

The entire approved pay scale for 2018 is detailed in the following figure.



**Figure 40: Prince George’s County Approved Pay Scale for 2018**

**SALARY SCHEDULE Y – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 7, 2018  
SCHEDULE OF PAY GRADES – FIRE UNIT PERSONNEL  
PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY MARYLAND**

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>MINIMUM</b>	<b>MAXIMUM</b>	<b>CERTIFICATION</b>
<b>Y01</b>			
HOURLY	20.6363	38.4489	42.2938
BIWEEKLY	1,650.90	3,075.91	3,383.50
ANNUAL	42,924	79,974	87,971
<b>Y02</b>			
HOURLY	21.6466	42.6929	46.9622
BIWEEKLY	1731.73	3,415.43	3,756.98
ANNUAL	45,025	88,801	97,681
<b>Y03</b>			
HOURLY	22.6566	49.1014	54.0116
BIWEEKLY	1,812.53	3,928.11	4,320.93
ANNUAL	47,126	102,131	112,344
<b>Y13 (TECHNICIAN)</b>			
HOURLY	22.6566	51.2085	56.3293
BIWEEKLY	1,812.53	4,096.68	4,506.34
ANNUAL	47,126	106,514	117,165
<b>Y04 (LIEUTENANT)</b>			
HOURLY	26.2222	53.3157	58.6472
BIWEEKLY	2,097.78	4,265.26	4,691.78
ANNUAL	54,542	110,897	121,986
<b>Y05(CAPTAIN)</b>			
HOURLY	28.6873	59.4462	65.3908
BIWEEKLY	2,294.98	4,755.70	5,231.26
ANNUAL	59,670	123,648	136,013
<b>Y06 (BATTALION CHIEF)</b>			
HOURLY	31.4419	65.5133	72.0645
BIWEEKLY	2,515.35	5,241.06	5,765.16
ANNUAL	65,399	136,268	149,894

The minimum and maximum hourly rates are the July 9, 2017 multiplied by 102%. The hourly Certification Maximum rates are the July 9, 2017 Maximum rates multiplied by 102%. For administrative purposes, the hourly rates are the controlling rates. Biweekly rates are hourly rates multiplied by 80. Annual rates are the hourly rates multiplied by 2,080 and rounded to the nearest dollar.



### Howard County Division of Fire Rescue Services

HCDFRS offers a step plan for pay increases for employees. Employees enter the step plan at step 1 of the classification into which they were hired. Probationary employees do not move steps until they have finished their probation period. These classifications are referred to as Firefighter trainee and Firefighter Recruit until completing their probation, training, and 18 months of service. The pay scale is established and determines the amount of increase received during the step.

The approved pay scale for 2018 begins with a Firefighter Trainee classification and is followed by 6 classifications with 14 steps in each classification. Each classification begins with step 1 and ends with step 14. As an employee moves through the steps of each classification, they receive a pay adjustment that fluctuates amongst the steps in that job classification. The average of each step is presented in the following figure. Employees who reach 252 months of service with Howard County receive an annual longevity payment of \$2,500. These enumerated steps, grades, and longevity are guaranteed for the term of the bargaining agreement which expires July 1, 2019.

The differentials between steps is outlined in the following figure.

**Figure 41: HCDFRS Step Plan Comparison Chart**

HCDFRS Step Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Average Pay Increase Per Step	Number of Steps
Trainee	\$1,573.00	1
Recruit	\$1,971.85	13
Firefighter	\$2,185.00	13
Firefighter HVO	\$2,463.31	13
Master FF	\$2,424.92	13
Master FF HVO	\$2,425.00	13
Lieutenant	\$2,693.77	13
	\$2,500.00	Longevity @ 252 Months

**Figure 42: HCDFRS Percentage Range Across Classifications**

HCDFRS Step Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Percentage Range Increase in Classification	Number of Steps
Trainee	3.23%	1
Recruit	68%	13
Firefighter	68%	13
Firefighter HVO	68%	13
Master FF	68%	13
Master FF HVO	68%	13
Lieutenant	68%	13



HCDFRS uses a competitive and non-competitive method for promotions. Non-competitive promotions involve grade changes for Recruits, Firefighters, Paramedics, and Firefighter Paramedics. Competitive promotions are for Firefighter Heavy Vehicle Operator (HVO), Master FF/HVO, and Lieutenant. If an employee promotes or “upgrades” to the next classification in a non-competitive promotion, they will receive their current step based on their corresponding months of service in the new grade. Promotion for competitive positions are placed in the new grade based on their current months of service. The move must give a 7 percent increase, or they are moved up another step.

An example of the upgrade or promotion process is outlined in the next two figures.

Figure 43: HCDFRS Step Plan Upgraded, Example A

HCDFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example A		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Firefighter HVO	G3 @ \$65,121	
Master FF		H3 @ \$71,036

In the above example, the employee has moved or “upgraded” from Firefighter to Master Firefighter.

Figure 44: HCDFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example B

HDFRS Step Plan Upgrade, Example B		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Master FF HVO	I4 @ \$74,206	
Lieutenant		J4 @ \$81,120

In the above example, the Master FF has been promoted to Lieutenant and the step-in grade that corresponds with his/or her months of service with the department did not yield a 7 percent increase, so the new Lieutenant would be placed in the J3 step for grade J instead of J2 as the pay scale indicates. In the following figure a sample of employee salaries according to the pay plan is provided.

Figure 45: HCDFRS Salary Sample Comparison

HCDFRS Salary Sample Comparison					
Job Title	Grade	Step	Longevity	Actual Salary	Pay Scale
Firefighter	RC	5	5	\$67,416.96	\$67,416
Firefighter	RC	11	12	\$80,595.84	\$79,098
Firefighter HVO	RD	8	8	\$74,780.16	\$72,609
Master FF	RE	14	18	\$97,718.40	\$94,823
Master FF	RE	14	24	\$97,718.40	\$98,692
Master FF HVO	RF	14	25	\$98,766.72	\$99,765
Lieutenant	RG	5	8	\$82,692.48	\$81,120
Lieutenant	FG	10	13	\$96,116.80	\$94,199
Captain	RI	8	13	\$101,187.84	\$101,188
Captain	FI	14	22	\$121,080.96	\$121,081



*Discussion*

A comparison of HCDFRS base salaries versus the pay scale reveals that almost all of the sampled positions depicted in the figure are either less than or equal to the prescribed salary according to the pay scale. Several grades were compared, and it appears that HCDFRS salaries are adhering to the prescribed salary scale for base salaries.

The entire approved pay scale for 2019 is detailed in the following figure on the next page.



Figure 46: HCDFRS Approved Pay Scale for 2019

Exhibit D4		SALARY SCALE FY 2019											
		INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS LOCAL 2000											
Effective January 2019		(48 Hours per Week)											
Step	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Hire</b>													
40 hours	\$25.14	\$25.90											
D	\$20.95	\$21.58											
Trainee	\$52,291	\$53,864											
<b>Acad Grad</b>													
40 hours	\$26.17	\$26.98	\$27.84	\$28.64	\$29.54	\$30.42	\$31.31	\$32.28	\$33.30	\$34.31	\$35.36	\$36.38	
E	\$21.81	\$22.48	\$23.20	\$23.87	\$24.62	\$25.35	\$26.09	\$26.90	\$27.75	\$28.59	\$29.47	\$30.32	
Recruit	\$54,438	\$56,110	\$57,907	\$59,580	\$61,452	\$63,274	\$65,121	\$67,142	\$69,264	\$71,361	\$73,557	\$75,679	
	18	30	42	54	66	78	90	102	114	126	138	162	
40 hours	\$29.03	\$29.88	\$30.79	\$31.73	\$32.74	\$33.71	\$34.74	\$35.81	\$36.91	\$38.03	\$39.13	\$40.36	
F	\$24.19	\$24.90	\$25.66	\$26.44	\$27.28	\$28.09	\$28.95	\$29.84	\$30.76	\$31.69	\$32.61	\$33.63	
FireFighter	\$60,378	\$62,150	\$64,047	\$65,994	\$68,091	\$70,113	\$72,259	\$74,481	\$76,777	\$79,098	\$81,395	\$83,940	
	18	30	42	54	66	78	90	102	114	126	138	162	
40 hours	\$29.53	\$30.40	\$31.31	\$32.23	\$33.24	\$34.21	\$35.26	\$36.31	\$37.42	\$38.53	\$39.64	\$40.86	
FireFighter	\$24.61	\$25.33	\$26.09	\$26.86	\$27.70	\$28.51	\$29.38	\$30.26	\$31.18	\$32.11	\$33.03	\$34.05	
HVO	\$61,427	\$63,224	\$65,121	\$67,043	\$69,139	\$71,161	\$73,332	\$75,529	\$77,825	\$80,147	\$82,443	\$84,989	
	30	42	54	66	78	90	102	114	126	138	150	174	
40 hours	\$32.15	\$33.12	\$34.15	\$35.17	\$36.20	\$37.36	\$38.47	\$39.71	\$40.88	\$42.10	\$43.38	\$44.71	
H	\$26.79	\$27.60	\$28.46	\$29.31	\$30.17	\$31.13	\$32.06	\$33.09	\$34.07	\$35.08	\$36.15	\$37.26	
Master FF	\$66,868	\$68,890	\$71,036	\$73,158	\$75,304	\$77,700	\$80,022	\$82,593	\$85,039	\$87,560	\$90,230	\$93,001	
	30	42	54	66	78	90	102	114	126	138	150	174	
40 hours	\$32.65	\$33.61	\$34.66	\$35.68	\$36.71	\$37.86	\$38.99	\$40.22	\$41.39	\$42.60	\$43.90	\$45.22	
Master FF	\$27.21	\$28.01	\$28.88	\$29.73	\$30.59	\$31.55	\$32.49	\$33.52	\$34.49	\$35.50	\$36.58	\$37.68	
HVO	\$67,916	\$69,913	\$72,084	\$74,206	\$76,353	\$78,749	\$81,095	\$83,666	\$86,087	\$88,608	\$91,304	\$94,049	
	54	66	78	90	102	114	126	138	150	162	174	198	
40 hours	\$35.60	\$36.67	\$37.84	\$39.00	\$40.15	\$41.35	\$42.62	\$43.96	\$45.29	\$46.68	\$48.10	\$49.51	
J	\$29.67	\$30.56	\$31.53	\$32.50	\$33.46	\$34.46	\$35.52	\$36.63	\$37.74	\$38.90	\$40.08	\$41.26	
Lieutenant	\$74,056	\$76,278	\$78,699	\$81,120	\$83,516	\$86,012	\$88,658	\$91,428	\$94,199	\$97,094	\$100,040	\$102,985	

Longevity Pay: Employees who have completed 252 months of creditable service shall begin receiving Longevity Pay at the annualized rate of \$2500



Frederick County Division of Fire Rescue Services  
Pay and Benefits Study 2018



	Fire Management Schedule											
	FY 2018											
	Effective June 11, 2018											
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
months	66	78	90	102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	210
Capt FM1	\$82,019	\$84,515	\$87,036	\$89,781	\$92,527	\$95,322	\$98,292	\$101,188	\$104,208	\$107,403	\$110,698	\$114,092
40 hrs	\$39.43	\$40.63	\$41.84	\$43.16	\$44.48	\$45.83	\$47.26	\$48.65	\$50.10	\$51.64	\$53.22	\$54.85
48 hrs	\$32.86	\$33.86	\$34.87	\$35.97	\$37.07	\$38.19	\$39.38	\$40.54	\$41.75	\$43.03	\$44.35	\$45.71
months	78	90	102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	222
Batt Chf FM2	\$91,004	\$93,575	\$96,495	\$99,391	\$102,461	\$105,556	\$108,876	\$112,120	\$115,540	\$118,984	\$122,678	\$126,397
40 hrs	\$43.75	\$44.99	\$46.39	\$47.78	\$49.26	\$50.75	\$52.34	\$53.90	\$55.55	\$57.20	\$58.98	\$60.77
48 hrs	\$36.46	\$37.49	\$38.66	\$39.82	\$41.05	\$42.29	\$43.62	\$44.92	\$46.29	\$47.67	\$49.15	\$50.64
months	90	102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	210	234
Asst Chf FM3	\$105,352	\$108,576	\$111,862	\$115,253	\$118,810	\$122,304	\$126,069	\$129,958	\$133,848	\$138,008	\$142,189	\$146,411
40 hrs	\$50.65	\$52.20	\$53.78	\$55.41	\$57.12	\$58.80	\$60.61	\$62.48	\$64.35	\$66.35	\$68.36	\$70.39

Longevity Pay: Employees who have completed 252 months of creditable service shall begin receiving Longevity Pay at the annualized rate of \$2,500.



### Loudoun County Combined Fire Rescue System

LCCFRS offers a theoretical merit-based step plan for pay increases for employees. Rates of pay for positions are determined in accordance with Loudoun County’s Classification and Pay Plan. LCCFRS is non-union and does not have a collective bargaining unit agreement. This plan is not guaranteed and provides a general idea of what the specified pay would equal if awarded. Employees enter the step plan at the minimum of the of the classification into which they were hired and by the plan will not exceed the maximum for the pay grade or band. Probationary employees do not move steps until they have finished their probation period. The pay scale is established and determines the amount of increase received during the step.

The approved pay scale for 2019 begins with a F1 Firefighter classification and is followed by 7 classifications with progressive steps in each classification. Each classification begins with the minimum pay for the classification band and ends with a maximum rate for the classification band. As an employee moves through the steps of each classification, they could receive a standard pay adjustment equal to a 5 percent increase for each step in that job classification. The classification and pay plan are governed by their County Board and are only awarded if budgeted. Actual awards may not be the amount specified.

The differentials between steps is outlined in the following figure.

Figure 47: LCCFRS Merit Plan Comparison Chart

LCCFRS Differential Merit Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Average Pay Increase Per Step	Number of Steps
F1 – Firefighter	5%	15
F2 – Technician	5%	15
F3	5%	15
F4 – Lieutenant	5%	15
F5 – Captain	5%	15
F6 – Battalion Chief	5%	15
F7 – Deputy Chief	5%	15
F8 – Assistant Chief	5%	15

Figure 48: LCCFRS Percentage Range Across Classifications

LCCFRS Differential Merit Plan Comparison		
Job Classification	Percentage Range Increase in Classification	Number of Steps
F1 – Firefighter	56%	15
F2 – Technician	56%	15
F3	56%	15
F4 – Lieutenant	56%	15
F5 – Captain	56%	15
F6 – Battalion Chief	56%	15



F7 – Deputy Chief	56%	15
F8 – Assistant Chief	56%	15

LCCFRS uses a competitive and non-competitive method for promotions or “upgrades”. Non-competitive promotions involve changes for recruits, Firefighters, Paramedics and Firefighter Paramedics. These increases are only available after a successful annual performance evaluation. If an employee promotes or “upgrades” to the next level in a non-competitive promotion, they will receive 5 percent. Competitive promotions are promotions for technician, Lieutenant, Captain, and various chief level position. Promotion for competitive positions are placed in the new grade and receive 10 percent on their salary. The Captain rank also gets a 10 percent market adjustment on top of the 10 percent promotional raise.

An example of the upgrade or promotion process is outlined in the next two figures.

**Figure 49: LCCFRS Merit Plan Upgraded, Example A**

LCCFRS Merit Plan Upgrade, Example A		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Firefighter	F1 – Step 3 @ \$48,000	5%
Firefighter		F1 – Step 4 @ 56,210

In the above example, the employee has moved or “upgraded” within classification.

**Figure 50: LCCFRS Merit Plan Upgrade, Example B**

LCCFRS Merit Plan Upgrade, Example B		
Job Classification	Current Step Pay	New Step Pay
Lieutenant	F4 – Step 6 @ \$71,390	10%
Captain		F5 – Step 6 @ \$78,529

In the above example, the Lieutenant has been promoted to Captain. In the following figure a sample of employee salaries according to the pay plan is provided.

**Figure 51: LCCFRS Salary Sample Comparison**

LCCFRS Salary Sample Comparison				
Job Title	Grade	Longevity	Actual Salary	Pay Scale
Firefighter/EMT	F1	0	\$45,168.11	\$41,539
Firefighter/EMT	F1	3	\$46,751.47	\$45,693
Firefighter/EMT	F1	7	\$64,233.86	\$49,847
FR Technician	F2	10	\$58,129.98	\$58,156
FR Technician	F2	11	\$73,656.49	\$58,156
FR Lieutenant	F4	13	\$69,511.59	\$89,690
FR Lieutenant	F4	13	\$80,755.32	\$89,690
FR Lieutenant	F4	18	\$89,908.14	\$96,668
FR Lieutenant	F4	19	\$91,771.96	\$96,668
FR Captain	F5	18	\$104,118.84	\$106,005
FR Captain	F5	18	\$102,152.63	\$106,005



FR Battalion Chief	F6	18	\$117,274.12	\$116,714
FR Battalion Chief	F6	22	\$129,566.28	\$122,093

**Discussion**

A comparison of LCCFRS base salaries versus the pay scale reveals that almost all of the sampled positions depicted in the figure are not following the prescribed salary according to the pay scale. Several grades were compared, and it appears that LCCFRS salaries are above and below the prescribed salary for the plan in several classifications and grades with no details to explain the differences. It is possible that the additional special pay incentives are attributing to this, however those details are not included in the salary data provided. A common drawback of the merit-based plan is the inability to maintain the predicted structure if adjustments are not awarded for the appropriate years of service.

The entire approved pay scale for 2019 is detailed in the following figure.



Figure 52: LCCFRS Approved Pay Scale for 2019

Loudoun County - Fire and Rescue Salary Schedule - LEO-Eligible Uniformed Positions, 42 hours per week  
Salary Ranges at 5% Increments  
Effective 7/12/18  
Annual Hours 2,184

Payband	FY 2019 Minimum	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	FY 2019 Midrange	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	FY 2019 Maximum
F1	43,636	45,818	48,000	50,182	52,364	54,545	56,727	58,909	60,442	61,091	63,273	65,454	67,636	69,818	72,000	77,248
(Bi-weekly)	1,678.32	1,762.24	1,846.15	1,930.07	2,013.98	2,097.90	2,181.82	2,265.73	2,324.70	2,349.65	2,433.56	2,517.48	2,601.40	2,685.31	2,769.23	2,971.08
(Hr.)	19.98	20.98	21.98	22.98	23.98	24.98	25.97	26.97	27.68	27.97	28.97	29.97	30.97	31.97	32.97	35.37
F2	48,878	51,322	53,766	56,210	58,654	61,097	63,541	65,985	67,682	68,429	70,873	73,317	75,761	78,205	80,649	86,486
(Bi-weekly)	1,879.92	1,973.92	2,067.91	2,161.91	2,255.90	2,349.90	2,443.90	2,537.89	2,603.16	2,631.89	2,725.88	2,819.88	2,913.88	3,007.87	3,101.87	3,326.40
(Hr.)	22.38	23.50	24.62	25.74	26.86	27.98	29.09	30.21	30.99	31.33	32.45	33.57	34.69	35.81	36.93	39.60
F3	52,787	55,427	58,066	60,705	63,345	65,984	68,623	71,263	73,098	73,902	76,542	79,181	81,820	84,460	87,099	93,410
(Bi-weekly)	2,030.28	2,131.79	2,233.31	2,334.82	2,436.34	2,537.85	2,639.36	2,740.88	2,811.48	2,842.39	2,943.91	3,045.42	3,146.93	3,248.45	3,349.96	3,592.68
(Hr.)	24.17	25.38	26.59	27.80	29.00	30.21	31.42	32.63	33.47	33.84	35.05	36.26	37.46	38.67	39.88	42.77
F4	57,112	59,967	62,823	65,678	68,534	71,390	74,245	77,101	79,083	79,956	82,812	85,667	88,523	91,379	94,234	101,054
(Bi-weekly)	2,196.60	2,306.43	2,416.26	2,526.09	2,635.92	2,745.75	2,855.58	2,965.41	3,041.64	3,075.24	3,185.07	3,294.90	3,404.73	3,514.56	3,624.39	3,886.68
(Hr.)	26.15	27.46	28.77	30.07	31.38	32.69	34.00	35.30	36.21	36.61	37.92	39.23	40.53	41.84	43.15	46.27
F5	61,851	64,943	68,036	71,129	74,221	77,314	80,406	83,499	86,334	86,591	89,684	92,776	95,869	98,961	102,054	110,816
(Bi-weekly)	2,378.88	2,497.82	2,616.77	2,735.71	2,854.66	2,973.60	3,092.54	3,211.49	3,320.52	3,330.43	3,449.38	3,568.32	3,687.26	3,806.21	3,925.15	4,262.16
(Hr.)	28.32	29.74	31.15	32.57	33.98	35.40	36.82	38.23	39.53	39.65	41.06	42.48	43.89	45.31	46.73	50.74
F6	72,138	75,744	79,351	82,958	86,565	90,172	93,779	97,386	99,885	100,993	104,599	108,206	111,813	115,420	119,027	127,633
(Bi-weekly)	2,774.52	2,913.25	3,051.97	3,190.70	3,329.42	3,468.15	3,606.88	3,745.60	3,841.74	3,884.33	4,023.05	4,161.78	4,300.51	4,439.23	4,577.96	4,908.96
(Hr.)	33.03	34.68	36.33	37.98	39.64	41.29	42.94	44.59	45.74	46.24	47.89	49.55	51.20	52.85	54.50	58.44

Loudoun County - Fire and Rescue Salary Schedule - LEO-Eligible Uniformed Positions, 40 hours per week  
Salary Ranges at 5% Increments  
Effective 7/12/18  
Annual Hours 2,080  
\*shift comm NE/2184

Payband	FY 2019 Minimum	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	FY 2019 Midrange	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	FY 2019 Maximum
F7	83,782	87,972	92,161	96,350	100,539	104,728	108,917	113,106	115,887	117,295	121,484	125,674	129,863	134,052	138,241	147,992
(Bi-weekly)	3,222.40	3,383.52	3,544.64	3,705.76	3,866.88	4,028.00	4,189.12	4,350.24	4,457.20	4,511.36	4,672.48	4,833.60	4,994.72	5,155.84	5,316.96	5,692.00
(Hr.)	40.28	42.29	44.31	46.32	48.34	50.35	52.36	54.38	55.72	56.39	58.41	60.42	62.43	64.45	66.46	71.15
F8	94,162	98,870	103,578	108,286	112,994	117,702	122,410	127,118	130,250	131,826	136,534	141,242	145,950	150,659	155,367	166,338
(Bi-weekly)	3,621.60	3,802.68	3,983.76	4,164.84	4,345.92	4,527.00	4,708.08	4,889.16	5,009.60	5,070.24	5,251.32	5,432.40	5,613.48	5,794.56	5,975.64	6,397.60
(Hr.)	45.27	47.53	49.80	52.06	54.32	56.59	58.85	61.11	62.62	63.38	65.64	67.91	70.17	72.43	74.70	79.97



## Compensation Plan Sample Comparison

Of the jurisdictions surveyed three offer service-based plans and three offer merit-based plans. Many of the plans are in the process of transitioning to new pay scales for 2019 or have recently adjusted for 2108. Comparing actual budgeted salaries versus the established plan step will offer the ability to determine if the prescribed plan is being adhered to and if there are noticeable disparities. Gross overtime earnings are not included as each jurisdiction offers various methods for handling overtime awarded to employees and does not provide a consistent metric for comparison across the jurisdictions. Furthermore, base wages for calculating retirement pay outs in most all of the jurisdictions do not consider overtime and thus overtime should not be used to determine base wage adjustments.

A side by side comparison of the compensation plans is offered on the following page.



**Figure 53: Jurisdictional Compensation Plan Actual Versus Scale Comparison Chart**



Jurisdictional Compensation Plan Actual Versus Scale Comparison Chart													
Rank	Years of Service	Frederick County, MD		Baltimore County, MD		Montgomery County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Howard County, MD		Loudoun County, VA	
		Merit Based		Service Based		Service Based		Merit Based		Service Based		Merit Based	
		Actual 2018	Scale 2018	Actual 2018	Scale 2018	Actual 2018	Scale 2018	Actual 2018	Scale 2018	Actual 2018	Scale 2018	Actual 2018	Scale 2019
Firefighter 1	1	\$41,602.60	\$41,603	N/A	\$43,272	\$46,166.00	\$47,089	\$44,425.89	\$42,924	\$59,779.20	\$59,779	\$43,636.00	\$43,636
Firefighter 2	3	\$46,545.72	\$48,550	\$49,814	\$52,913	\$56,252.00	\$55,616	\$49,969.50	\$45,025	\$65,345.28	\$63,423	\$46,751.47	\$50,182
Firefighter 3	5	\$54,126.02	\$56,272	\$54,179	\$60,132	\$58,410.00	\$59,578	\$62,423.71	\$47,126	\$67,416.00	\$67,417	\$48,510.46	\$52,364
Firefighter 3	10	\$56,271.80	\$67,002	\$64,220	\$68,441	\$63,493.00	\$70,763	\$73,818.58	\$47,126	\$78,324.00	\$78,324	\$52,845.48	\$63,273
Technician	5	N/A	\$60,253	\$56,487	\$62,738	N/A	\$65,536	\$61,531.18	\$47,126	\$68,465.28	\$68,465	\$53,340.29	\$61,097
Technician	10	\$62,551.06	\$71,742	\$70,061	\$71,462	\$77,837.00	\$77,837	\$81,200.29	\$47,126	\$79,347.84	\$79,348	\$57,428.98	\$70,873
Technician	15	\$71,742.06	\$83,231	\$76,478	\$78,006	\$90,636.00	\$92,449	\$89,039.81	\$47,126	\$84,140.16	\$84,140	\$67,587.73	\$86,486
Technician	20	\$76,337.56	\$90,124	\$87,341	\$85,230	\$95,685.72	\$95,685	N/A	\$47,126	\$98,766.72	\$98,767	\$73,180.93	\$86,486
Lieutenant	10	\$66,977.56	\$76,819	\$76,478	\$85,230	\$88,501.00	\$85,629	\$81,200.29	\$54,542	\$87,784.32	\$87,784	\$67,123.54	\$79,956
Lieutenant	15	N/A	\$89,121	\$91,374	\$93,201	\$99,710.00	\$101,704	\$97,934.87	\$54,542	\$99,041.28	\$99,041	\$72,474.21	\$101,054
Lieutenant	20	\$81,740.36	\$96,503	\$99,755	\$101,750	\$101,704.00	\$105,264	N/A	\$54,542	\$105,164.80	\$105,156	\$84,362.57	\$101,054
Captain	12	N/A	\$87,530	\$95,491	\$97,401	N/A	\$103,435	\$101,690.99	\$59,670	\$104,208.00	\$114,092	\$96,832.05	\$95,869
Captain	15	\$82,260.62	\$95,434	\$104,743	\$106,838	\$126,259.00	\$114,683	\$107,738.38	\$59,670	\$110,697.60	\$121,081	\$88,598.55	\$110,816
Captain	20	\$92,799.20	\$103,338	\$115,479	\$117,789	\$134,558.91	\$118,697	\$127,975.74	\$59,670	\$117,486.72	\$121,081	\$104,479.96	\$110,816
Battalion Chief	15	N/A	\$109,443	N/A	\$126,522	N/A	\$79,451	\$118,511.74	\$65,399	N/A	\$134,110	\$110,071.37	\$127,633
Battalion Chief	20	\$109,442.80	\$118,507	\$139,205	\$139,205	\$133,975.58	\$136,655	\$141,037.10	\$65,399	\$130,166.40	\$134,110	\$130,504.66	\$127,633

**Discussion**

Of the jurisdictions surveyed three offer service-based plans and three offer merit-based plans. The plans that offer service-based plans for the most part adhere to their prescribed plans. The merit-based plans on the other hand have disparity between the prescribed scales and the actual budgeted salaries for their grades and steps. This is not specific to one grade or one step or even one employee. PCG Fire/EMS use the MIN-MAX system and there is no real correlation between service and salaries. The scale simply starts with a minimum pay scale and ends with a maximum for that pay grade. Multiple employees throughout the merit-based plans that step out their plans are significantly below where they would be in the pay scale if the pay scale was service-based and guaranteed in the collective bargaining agreement as in BCoFD, MCFRS, and HCDFRS. These three jurisdictions offer the service-based plan and have the most consistent employee actual to pay scale comparisons.



## Base Wage Comparison

The jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking all have entry level positions for various job classifications. Many are equal in job duties and base responsibilities. A starting point for the analysis is to identify the pay associated with entry level employment and then consider the added pay enhancements for each classification. For instance, some of the jurisdictions hire the job classification of Firefighter and then offer an added pay incentive for Paramedic job responsibilities. However, the actual job classification is not listed as a Paramedic.

The following figure outlines the entry level pay associated with the different job classifications considered.



Figure 54: Jurisdictional Base Annual Wage Comparison Chart

Jurisdictional Base Annual Wage Comparison							
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	
Assistant Chief		\$90,921.00	\$86,765.00		\$105,352.00	\$94,162.00	40 Hrs./W
Deputy Chief	\$101,335.00				\$100,468.00	\$83,781.00	40 Hrs./W
Division Chief		\$82,953.00	\$99,182.00				40 Hrs./W
Station Chief	\$67,143.00	\$79,250.00	\$79,451.00	\$65,399.00	\$91,004.00	\$72,138.00	
Captain	\$58,548.00	\$68,441.00	\$70,843.00	\$59,670.00	\$82,019.00	\$61,851.00	
Lieutenant <sup>9</sup>	\$54,676.00	\$60,132.00	\$62,825.00	\$54,542.00	\$73,332.00	\$57,112.00	
Apparatus Operator/Technician/ Master	\$51,062.00	\$50,810.00	\$57,109.00	\$47,126.00	\$67,242.00	\$48,878.00	
Paramedic	\$47,091.00	\$55,263.00		\$42,924.00			
Firefighter	\$41,603.00	\$43,272.00	\$47,089.00	\$42,924.00	\$59,779.00	\$43,636.00	
Paramedic		\$52,913.00		\$42,924.00			
EMT		\$46,783.00					
EMT		\$46,783.00					
Trainee Recruit	\$38,860.00				\$51,767.00		
	<b>48 Hour/Week</b>	<b>42 Hour/Week</b>	<b>48 Hour/Week</b>	<b>42 Hour/Week</b>	<b>48 Hour/Week</b>	<b>42 Hour/Week</b>	
	<b>2496 Hours/Year</b>	<b>2184 Hours/Year</b>	<b>2496 Hours/Year</b>	<b>2184 Hours/Year</b>	<b>2496 Hours/Year</b>	<b>2184 Hours/Year</b>	

<sup>9</sup> The above chart compares jurisdictional listed base rates according to the pay plan for the positions of rank. Position of rank each have promotional processes specific to each jurisdiction with service requirements that may not be reflected in the salaries listed above. For instance, FCDFRS lists base pay for a Lieutenant as \$54,676.00, however service requirements would not permit an employee to start at that pay rate as they would be already above that rate when they became eligible for promotion.



Figure 55: Jurisdictional Base Hourly Wage Comparison Chart

Jurisdictional Base Hourly Wage Comparison										
	Frederick County, MD		Baltimore County, MD		Montgomery County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Howard County, MD	
Assistant Chief			\$43.71	\$90,921.00	\$41.71	\$86,765.00			\$50.65	\$105,352.00
Deputy Chief	\$48.72	\$101,335.00							\$48.30	\$100,468.00
Division Chief			\$39.88	\$82,953.00	\$47.68	\$99,182.00				
Battalion Chief	\$26.90	\$67,143.00	\$36.29	\$79,250.00	\$31.83	\$79,451.00	\$29.94	\$65,399.00	\$36.46	\$91,004.00
Captain	\$23.46	\$58,548.00	\$31.34	\$68,441.00	\$28.38	\$70,843.00	\$27.32	\$59,670.00	\$32.86	\$82,019.00
Lieutenant	\$21.91	\$54,676.00	\$27.53	\$60,132.00	\$25.17	\$62,825.00	\$24.97	\$54,542.00	\$29.38	\$73,332.00
Fire Apparatus Operator/ Technician/ Master FF	\$20.46	\$51,062.00	\$23.26	\$50,810.00	\$22.88	\$57,109.00	\$21.58	\$47,126.00	\$26.94	\$67,242.00
FF/Paramedic	\$18.87	\$47,091.00	\$25.30	\$55,263.00			\$19.65	\$42,924.00		
Firefighter	\$16.67	\$41,603.00	\$19.81	\$43,272.00	\$18.87	\$47,089.00	\$19.65	\$42,924.00	\$23.95	\$59,779.00
Paramedic			\$24.23	\$52,913.00			\$19.65	\$42,924.00		
FF/EMT			\$21.42	\$46,783.00						
EMT			\$21.42	\$46,783.00						
FF Trainee Recruit	\$15.57	\$38,860.00								\$51,767.00
	<b>48 Hour/Week</b>		<b>42 Hour/Week</b>		<b>48 Hour/Week</b>		<b>42 Hour/Week</b>		<b>48 Hour/Week</b>	
	<b>2496 Hours/Year</b>		<b>2184 Hours/Year</b>		<b>2496 Hours/Year</b>		<b>2184 Hours/Year</b>		<b>2496 Hours/Year</b>	



The following figures represent minimum, midpoint, and maximum annual salaries for each classification.

Figure 56: Jurisdictional Base Annual Wage Ranking

Jurisdictional Base Annual Wage Ranking						
	Maximum		Midpoint		Minimum	
	Frederick County, MD		Howard County, MD		Loudoun County, VA	
Deputy Chief <sup>10</sup>	\$101,335.00		\$100,468.00		\$79,740.00	
	Howard County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Frederick County, MD	Prince George's County, MD
Battalion Chief	\$91,004.00	\$79,451.00	\$79,250.00	\$72,138.00	\$67,143.00	\$65,399.00
	Howard County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Prince George's County, MD	Frederick County, MD
Captain	\$82,019.00	\$70,843.00	\$68,441.00	\$61,851.00	\$59,670.00	\$58,548.00
	Howard County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Frederick County, MD	Prince George's County, MD
Lieutenant <sup>11</sup>	\$73,332.00	\$62,825.00	\$60,132.00	\$57,112.00	\$54,676.00	\$54,542.00
	Howard County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Prince George's County, MD
Technician/FA O Master FF	\$67,242.00	\$57,109.00	\$51,062.00	\$50,810.00	\$48,878.00	\$47,126.00
		Baltimore County, MD		Frederick County, MD		Prince George's County, MD
FF/Paramedic <sup>12</sup>		\$55,263.00		\$47,091.00		\$42,924.00
	Howard County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Baltimore County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Frederick County, MD
Firefighter	\$59,779.00	\$47,089.00	\$43,636.00	\$43,272.00	\$42,924.00	\$41,603.00

<sup>10</sup> The job functions of the Administrative Chief level officer second to the Fire Chief in each organization were used to rank the FCDFRS Deputy Chief job classification. The organizations vary in their use of nomenclature for rank designation of this position even though job functions and responsibilities are similar. Only three organizations use Deputy Chief's.

<sup>11</sup> Annual Base wages for each classification do not take into considerations the promotional process or eligibility to attain that classification or rank and are representative of the pay scale referenced.

<sup>12</sup> The Firefighter/Paramedic job classification for this analysis only included three jurisdictions that hire that classification. All six jurisdiction hire Firefighter/Paramedics however, they receive their Paramedic pay in the form of special pay incentives instead of being part of their actual classification base wage upon hire. Three of the six jurisdiction hire Firefighters and then add Paramedic special pay incentive to make the gross wage.



### ***Discussion***

The jurisdictional wage comparison figure allows FCDFRS to compare their base annual wage with the minimum, midpoint, and maximum salaries offered throughout the jurisdictions. There were 6 jurisdictions included in the analysis. The top two for each category were evaluated. These analyses were used to benchmark the beginning point for each classification and the percentage difference prior to any offered special pay incentives. Classifications not offered by FCDFRS were not included.

#### **Maximum**

In all classifications except Deputy Chief, FCDFRS pay less than the lowest maximum base annual wage salary of jurisdictions surveyed for the analysis. In some cases, by as much as 25.74 percent lower.

#### **Midpoint**

The midpoint base annual wage for each classification compared to FCDFRS varies amongst the classifications and ranges from being equal to as much as .86 percent more. The highest difference was again in the rank of Deputy Chief. Most of the classification in Frederick County earn less than the midpoint range for salaries of the jurisdictions surveyed. The classifications for Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief are paid less than the lowest midpoint salary. On the top end, FCDFRS pays equal to the highest midpoint base wage salary of jurisdictions surveyed for Fire Technician and more than the highest of midpoint base wage salaries of jurisdictions surveyed for Deputy Chief.

#### **Minimum**

The minimum base annual wage for each classification compared to FCDFRS varies amongst the classifications and ranges from being equal to as much as 27 percent more. The highest difference was found in the rank of Deputy Chief. In two of the classifications, Captain and Firefighter, FCDFRS pays the lowest of minimum base annual wage salaries of the jurisdictions surveyed. On the other end, FCDFRS pays higher than the minimum base annual wage salaries for the jurisdictions surveyed. These are the Fire Medic, Fire Technician, Lieutenant, Battalion Chief, and Deputy Chief.

The same analysis was conducted using the base hourly rate. The base hourly wages are ranked in the following figure on the next page.



Figure 57: Jurisdictional Base Hourly Wage Ranking

Jurisdictional Base Hourly Wage Ranking						
	Maximum		Midpoint		Minimum	
	Frederick County, MD		Howard County, MD		Loudoun County, VA	
<b>Deputy Chief<sup>13</sup></b>	\$48.72		\$48.30		\$40.28	
	Howard County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Frederick County, MD
<b>Battalion Chief</b>	\$36.46	\$36.29	\$31.83	\$29.94	\$28.90	\$26.90
	Howard County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Frederick County, MD
<b>Captain</b>	\$32.86	\$31.34	\$28.38	\$27.32	\$24.78	\$23.46
	Howard County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Frederick County, MD
<b>Lieutenant<sup>14</sup></b>	\$29.38	\$27.53	\$25.17	\$24.97	\$22.88	\$21.91
	Howard County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Frederick County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
<b>Technician/FA O Master FF</b>	\$26.94	\$23.26	\$22.88	\$21.58	\$20.46	\$19.58
		Baltimore County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Frederick County, MD
<b>FF/Paramedic<sup>15</sup></b>		\$25.30		\$19.65		\$18.87
	Howard County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Loudoun County, VA	Frederick County, MD
<b>Firefighter</b>	\$23.95	\$19.81	\$19.65	\$18.87	\$17.48	\$16.67

<sup>13</sup> The job functions of the Administrative Chief level officer second to the Fire Chief in each organization were used to rank the FCDFRS Deputy Chief job classification. The organizations vary in their use of nomenclature for rank designation of this position even though job functions and responsibilities are similar. Only three organizations use Deputy Chief's.

<sup>14</sup> Annual Base wages for each classification do not take into considerations the promotional process or eligibility to attain that classification or rank and are representative of the pay scale referenced.

<sup>15</sup> The Firefighter/Paramedic job classification for this analysis only included three jurisdictions that hire that classification. All six jurisdiction hire Firefighter/Paramedics however, they receive their Paramedic pay in the form of special pay incentives instead of being part of their actual classification base wage upon hire. Three of the six jurisdiction hire Firefighters and then add Paramedic special pay incentive to make the gross wage.



### **Discussion**

The jurisdictional base hourly wage comparison figure allows FCDFRS to compare their base hourly wage with the minimum, midpoint, and maximum salaries offered throughout the jurisdictions. There were 6 jurisdictions included in the analysis. The top two for each category were evaluated. Classifications not offered by FCDFRS were not included.

#### **Maximum**

In all classifications except Deputy Chief, FCDFRS pays less than the maximum base hourly wage salary of jurisdictions surveyed for the analysis.

#### **Midpoint**

The midpoint base hourly wage for each classification compared to FCDFRS reveals that FCDFRS base hourly rates for all classifications with the exception of Deputy Chief are below the midpoint salary.

#### **Minimum**

The minimum base hourly wage for each classification when compared to the jurisdictions surveyed reveals that FCDFRS pays the minimum base hourly rate for the classifications of Battalion Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, Firefighter/Paramedic, and Firefighter.

It is important to remember that these are base salary wage comparisons and do not consider special pay incentives or gross overtime wages associated with shift schedules. These salaries are referenced as base hourly salaries but do not consider the number of hours worked to achieve the overall annual salary as not all the jurisdictions work the same number of hours in a year. The work schedule analysis is presented in the section titled Work Schedule Comparison.

Another component of the overall wage package that a prospective fire rescue employee considers is special pay incentives for additional training and specialty assignments. The fire rescue industry has various opportunities for employees to expand their knowledge, skill, and abilities to provide an enhanced employee for the organization. In most case organizations offer these incentives to attract, reward, and retain their employees. In areas where there are several jurisdictions competing for the same specialized workforce, these special pay incentives can be the difference needed to persuade employees to choose one organization over another. Special pay incentives are considered in the next section of the report.



## Special Pay Incentive Comparison

As discussed in the previous base wage comparison, many of the jurisdictions use special pay incentives and add-on pay to compensate employees with extra job duties or functions not specifically outlined by an additional classification in the overall pay scale. Many of these special pay incentives are negotiated through the collective bargaining process and can be vastly different amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. An overview of the incentives and special pay is outline in the following figure. Further analysis of these pay incentives and how they will affect overall employee compensation will be addressed in detail later in the report.

An overview of special pay incentives is outlined in the following figure.



Figure 58: Jurisdictional Special Pay Incentive Comparison Chart

Jurisdictional Special Pay Incentive Comparison Chart						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County VA
Assignment Pay, Paramedic Pay Incentive	\$3 an hour	\$3,000 a year	0-4 Years \$6,080 5-8 Years \$7,391 8+ Years \$8,701	10.0%*	\$7,000 plus* 0 to 48 months \$500 49 to 96 months \$1,000 97 to 144 months \$2,000 145 months plus \$3,000	\$14,000 annual plus \$10,000 one-time lump sum for new ALS providers.
T-I/CRT					\$2,500.00*	\$12,000
CD/Driver					\$1,000.00*	
Interlingual			\$1 per hour*			
Station Commander			\$2,887.00			
Paramedic Primary Unit		\$90/pay \$2,340/year	\$2,037 pay* \$500 Cert. pay	1.5%		\$2,500
Paramedic Satellite Unit		\$45/pay \$1,170/year				\$1,500
Station Training Facilitator		\$60/pay \$1,560/year				
Paramedic Tactical Rescue Team/ TRT		\$90/pay \$2,340/year	\$2,037 pay* \$407 Cert. pay	1.5% for each discipline up to 6%	\$1,000.00*	
Water Rescue Team			\$2,037 pay* \$407 Cert. pay	1.5%		\$1,500
Paramedic Squad				10.0%*		\$1,500
Paramedic Marshall Office Assignment Pay, Fire Investigations, Code Compliance		\$60/pay \$1,560/year	\$2,037.00*	1.5% for each discipline	\$1,000.00*	
Paramedic-Rescue Academy Pay		\$60/pay \$1,560/year		1.5%		
Paramedic Field Preceptor		\$90/pay \$2,340/year		\$1,040.00*	\$5.00 per hour while precepting	\$15,000 for PM and \$13,000 for EMT-I
Paramedic Fitness Trainer		\$60/pay \$1,560/year		1.5%*		
Paramedic A Technician/ Air Compressor Technician/ Lifter Technician			\$2,037 each*			\$1,500
Back Pay		Min 4 Hours	Min 3 Hours		Min 3 Hours	Min 2 Hours
Paramedic Educator			\$2,037 pay* \$500 Cert. pay			
Paramedic On Call Pay			15% of reg hourly pay			Paid for actual hours worked in 15 min increments.
Holiday Pay	11 Holidays @ 9.6 hours of Straight pay.	1.5 times rate of pay for the entire shift	Based on hours worked in a year 13,14, or 16 hours of straight pay or compensatory time for each holiday	2 times hourly rate except on OT.	1.5-time rate of pay, 2 times for Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas, and Easter.	8.5 hours of pay at 1.5 times rate of pay.
Meal Allowance		\$7.00 if held over per meal				
Substitution Pay		Working in a higher class				
Shift Differential/ Workload Incentive		\$.75/hour for employees on 40-hour schedule in support services, M-1, M-2,			\$4,000 a year	



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		or E-Shift				
Uniform Allowance				\$1,270.00		
Special Training Pay				\$225 a year	\$250.00	
Educational Assistance	\$3,000 a year	\$2,000 a year	\$1,830 per year			
Specialty Pays toward Base Rate and Overtime		Differential pay is considered supplemental and not computed for overtime.	Special duty pays above with * is counted towards computing overtime, overtime caps, and retirement.	Special duty pays above with * is considered part of employee's base.	Special duty pays above with * is considered part of employee's base.	
	48 Hrs./Wk.	42 Hrs./Wk.	48 Hrs./Wk.	42 Hrs./Wk.	48 Hrs./Wk.	42 Hrs./Wk.
	2496 Hrs./Yr.	2184 Hrs./Yr.	2496 Hrs./Yr.	2184 Hrs./Yr.	2496 Hrs./Yr.	2184 Hrs./Yr.



### *Discussion*

As depicted in the previous figure, there are an enormous amount of special pay incentives offered across the jurisdictions. Some jurisdictions offer a wide variety and others offer very little. Those special pay incentives depicted with an (\*) are considered part of the employee's base salary and wages when computing overtime wages, caps, and retirement contributions. These special pay incentives can add thousands of dollars to the annual final compensation for the employee. One benefit for these types of pay adjustments is the ability to incentivize advancement and places ownership on the employee to seek and develop knowledge, skills, and abilities to better the workforce and the organization. In other aspects, these special pay incentives are ways for the organization to set themselves apart from other organizations who may pay close to the same base wage for entry level positions but pull away from those who do not with these special pay incentives. Most of the special pay incentives revolve around tasks or functions found in most modern fire rescue systems. FCDFRS should evaluate the previous figure and determine which of these special pay incentives could be offered to its employees to enhance the overall benefit package and compete with local jurisdictions who offer similar plans.

**Recommendations:**

FCDFRS should develop a special pay incentive plan for all ranks to earn extra incentive pay for specific job functions and tasks, and implement it through the negotiation process.



## Work Schedule Comparison

Fire rescue organizations across America currently are struggling to meet growing demands of their communities and provide services that are prompt, reliable, and most importantly cost effective. These services—even when patterned by the best programs—are required twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, through the entire year. Organizations that were strictly volunteer organizations have struggled to provide services as the industry has changed and society has difficulty supporting the all-volunteer model. Therefore, career organizations seek methods and schedules that provide these services without interruption in the most economical and efficient manner. Many schedules exist, and each schedule requires a specific amount of staff to minimally provide various services to make it work.

As an organization determines the amount of staffing required to accomplish its mission, consideration for federal and local labor laws must be given. Often the line between hiring more staff and paying additional hours to current staff is a juggling act that balances salaries, benefits, and legacy costs for retirement versus hiring additional full time equivalent (FTE) employees. In most organizations, shift work is prevalent, and the type of shift chosen is determined by the organization's drive to balance costs and provide effective, efficient service. Some schedules require more FTEs than others.

The organizations chosen for benchmarking all use a form of shift work for their response personnel. Various positions in all the organizations are assigned to either a 40, 42, or 48-hour work week. Organizations that offer higher wages for less hours per year have a better chance of attracting employees.

The most prevalent schedules offered by each jurisdiction are listed in the following figure.



Figure 59: Jurisdictional Schedule Comparison

Jurisdictional Schedule Comparison						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Chief	40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.
Deputy Chief	40 Hrs./Wk.			40 Hrs./Wk.		40 Hrs./Wk.
Assistant Chief		40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.		40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.
Division Chief	40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.	40 Hrs./Wk.			
Battalion Chief	24/48 K Day	10/14 for 2 days each then 4 days off	24/48 K Day	24/72	24/48 K Day	24/72 5-12 7-12
Captain	24/48 K Day	10/14 for 2 days each then 4 days off	24/48 K Day	24/72	24/48 K Day	24/72 5-12 7-12
Lieutenant	24/48 K Day	10/14 for 2 days each then 4 days off	24/48 K Day	24/72	24/48 K Day	24/72 5-12 7-12
Fire Apparatus Operator	24/48 K Day	10/14 for 2 days each then 4 days off	24/48 K Day	24/72	24/48 K Day	24/72 5-12 7-12
FF/Paramedic	24/48 K Day	10/14 for 2 days each then 4 days off	24/48 K Day	24/72	24/48 K Day	24/72 5-12 7-12
Firefighter	24/48 K Day	10/14 for 2 days each then 4 days off	24/48 K Day	24/72	24/48 K Day	24/72 5-12 7-12
Paramedic		10 Hour Days with rotating day off (40 hours a week)				24/72 5-12 7-12
FF/EMT	24/48 K Day	10/14 for 2 days each then 4 days off	24/48 K Day	24/72	24/48 K Day	24/72 5-12 7-12
	48 Hour/Week	42 Hour/Week	48 Hour/Week	42 Hour/Week	48 Hour/Week	42 Hour/Week
	2496 Hrs./Yr.	2184 Hrs./Yr.	2496 Hrs./Yr.	2184 Hrs./Yr.	2496 Hrs./Yr.	2184 Hrs./Yr.



### *Discussion*

Many organizations in the industry use a 24-hour shift for front line and supervisory positions, which is very common in the first response community. All the organizations used for benchmarking offer a 24-hour schedule with some sort of rotating method to reduce overtime to the allowable Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements, except for BCoFD who uses 10 and 14-hour shifts consecutively to achieve the 42 hours a week. These FLSA requirements set the threshold for when an employee begins to earn overtime. This becomes a motivating factor for organizations when they begin to establish the work schedule. Meeting the required service demand with the allowable FTE positions becomes a challenge for organizational leaders who are typically forced to do so with less positions than what is required or suggested by national consensus standards. These FLSA standards are usually divided into two groups—those who provide fire protection and those who provide EMS. Organizations who provide fire protection are afforded several choices of when an employee begins to accrue overtime. EMS providers on the other hand must pay overtime after the employee works 40 hours in the week. To provide a schedule that uses the most out of allotted FTEs, many departments use a 24-hour schedule. Organizations that are typically very busy often increase the number of FTE positions but work them less hours in the day.

Three of the jurisdictions offer the Kelly Day schedule that reduces the work week to an average of 42 hours. This means the three jurisdictions that work the 24/72-hour schedule work on average 312 hours more per year. This equates to roughly 14 percent more hours per year. Therefore, some of the jurisdictions work less hours and still garner a higher annual base salary than FCDFRS in some classifications. The number of hours each jurisdiction schedules and ultimately pays the employee for working is affected by several factors. These are factors like the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) pay cycle or period for computation of overtime hours, whether the jurisdiction counts various types of leave as hours worked, and the use of Kelly Days to reduce compensable hours for computation of overtime. These will be outlined and analyzed in the Overtime Compensation Comparison section of the report.

### **Kelly Day**

The term “Kelly Day” is used to describe a day granted off during the pay cycle to reduce the number of compensable hours for the employee. The purpose of these days is to reduce the number of hours the employee would work in the pay period dictated by the FLSA. In most cases, the Kelly Day is assigned during a 28-day cycle to reduce the hours earned per week to as close to the threshold prior to incurring overtime as possible. In some cases, the Kelly Day may be described as a paid day off or an unpaid day off. This is determined if the jurisdiction’s employees are considered salary or hourly for computing their rate of pay. If the jurisdiction is considered salary, then the days are considered paid days off and the total hours per year are used to determine the hourly rate of pay for calculating overtime earned. If the days are considered unpaid then these days off are not considered in the hourly rate of pay for calculating overtime.



Whether paid or unpaid, the purpose of a Kelly Day in modern times is to reduce the hours that a Firefighter works, most commonly to minimize the need to pay Firefighters' overtime. To use a simple example, let's assume a Firefighter works 24-on, 48-off with a 28-day work period. Under this schedule, the Firefighter has 28-day work periods that vary between 216 and 240 hours, and rotate in a common rotational order of 216, 216, 240; 216, 216, 240; etc. By design the unpaid Kelly Days increase the hourly rate while the paid Kelly Days would decrease the hourly rate. Therefore, departments that are salary and consider their Kelly Days paid days off save on hourly generated overtime. Often this concept is difficult to understand.

Of the jurisdictions chosen, FCDFRS, MCFRS, and HCFRS use the Kelly Day to reduce their employees' hours to avoid overtime. The most common is every three-week Kelly Days. Every three-week Kelly Days are assigned to each employee as a specific day of the week and when their shift falls on that day they are considered off and do not report for duty. This practice reduces the number of hours they earn during the pay period to keep overtime down. The schedule of hours and how they apply to FLSA are discussed in the Overtime Compensation Comparison section of the report.



## Overtime Compensation Comparison

In the preceding discussion, references are made to the FLSA and the number of hours worked when determining employee schedules. These decisions are usually geared at the organization's attempt to provide effective and efficient services at the most reasonable cost. Since personnel costs are most of any jurisdiction's budget expense, determining a schedule that complies with federal regulations and yet is cost effective is a major concern for jurisdictions. The FLSA establishes guidelines for employers to ensure they compensate employees who fall under these requirements appropriately. One provision of the FLSA provides specific and special treatment for those employees engaging in fire protection activities.

The Department of Hours and Wages Fact Sheet #8 provides the following definition. Section 7(k) of the FLSA provides that employees engaged in fire protection or law enforcement may be paid overtime on a "work period" basis. A "work period" may be from 7 consecutive days to 28 consecutive days in length. For work periods of at least 7 but less than 28 days, overtime pay is required when the number of hours worked exceeds the number of hours that bears the same relationship to 212 (fire) or 171 (police) as the number of days in the work period bears to 28. For example, fire protection personnel are due overtime under such a plan after 106 hours worked during a 14-day work period, while law enforcement personnel must receive overtime after 86 hours worked during a 14-day work period.<sup>16</sup>

Under certain prescribed conditions, a State or local government agency may give compensatory time, at a rate of not less than one and one-half hours for each overtime hour worked, in lieu of cash overtime compensation. Employees engaged in police and fire protection work may accrue up to 480 hours of compensatory time.

An employee must be permitted to use compensatory time on the date requested unless doing so would "unduly disrupt" the operations of the agency.

At the time of termination, an employee must be paid the higher of (1) his or her final regular rate of pay, or (2) the average regular rate during his or her last three years of employment for any compensatory time remaining "on the books" when termination occurs.

Jurisdictions typically use the 28-day cycle because it extends the pay period when determining hours worked. Often the use of vacation or other forms of leave may or may not be counted as hours worked and will affect these compensable overtime hours. For instance, a sick leave day taken during the 28-day cycle that is not counted as hours worked reduces the total by an additional 24 hours. This coupled with a Kelly Day would require the employee to work almost an additional two days in the pay cycle prior to reaching the threshold for earning overtime. This is an obvious savings for the jurisdiction.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs8.pdf>



Many organizations do not count hours taken for various types of leave as hours worked. This is often a subject of negotiations as to count leave hours as hours worked if certain specifics are met. For instance, vacation days prescheduled within a set time frame could be counted as hours worked for calculating overtime. Jurisdictions that are not using a 28-day cycle and further are counting various leave hours as hours worked could see significant savings as well as a reduction in the use of leave hours outside of appropriately scheduled usage.

The FLSA cycles for the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking are listed in the following figure.

**Figure 60: Jurisdictional FLSA Pay Cycle Comparison Chart**

Jurisdictional FLSA Pay Cycle Comparison Chart						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
<b>Pay Cycle</b>	28-Day Cycle	14-Day Cycle	7-Day Cycle	28-Day Cycle	21-Day Cycle	28-Day Cycle

**Discussion**

Jurisdictions that use the 28-day cycle tend to experience less overtime per pay period because the employee must remain at work for a longer consecutive time during the pay period to reach the FLSA overtime threshold. During these pay cycles employees who work more than the FLSA hours or who have hours scheduled a paid leave may have those hours counted towards their FLSA thresholds. PCGFEMS for example calculates overtime for all hours in excess of their regular scheduled hours as well as counts all paid leave as hours worked. MCFRS pays overtime for all hours in excess of scheduled work hours but does not specifically detail if paid leave is counted as hours worked in their collective bargaining agreement. HCDFRS computes overtime for all hours worked above their regularly scheduled shifts as well as counts all paid leave as hours worked. BCoFD compensated overtime for all hours above normally scheduled work hours but does not detail if paid leave is counted as hours worked.

BCoFD specifically spells out the rate of pay for overtime is equal to one and one-half times the employees' rate of pay. MCFRS details overtime rates as one and one-half times the employee's rate of pay. PCGFEMS details all hours in overtime as time at one and one-half times the employee's rate of pay. HCDFRS computes overtime hours as one and one-half times the employee's rate of pay. LCCEMS computes overtime rates at one and one-half times the employee's rate of pay for all hour physically worked beyond FLSA work periods. It is important for organizations to use consistent and proper terminology when referring to compensation methods. The term overtime should be reserved for actual hours paid in accordance with FLSA rules at time and one half the employees rate of pay.





## FRINGE BENEFIT COMPARISONS OF BENCHMARKING JURISDICTIONS

Organizations use various fringe benefits to complement their work schedules and compensation plans offered to recruit and retain employees. Many of these fringe benefits are offered across all the jurisdictions and each will have small variances on how they are calculated and compensated to the employees. These fringe benefits usually include health and medical, dental, vision, life insurance policies, additional deferred compensation plans, and various forms of employee leave. Leave can be offered in several ways such as annual vacation leave, sick leave, bereavement leave, paid time off, holiday leave, and/or a variation of all.

### Medical, Vision, Dental, Life, and Disability Benefit Jurisdictional Comparison

The inclusion of fringe benefits, coupled with a competitive wage package and solid retirement plan, round out the making of a benefit package that corners the market and makes employee retention and recruitment easier for the organization. A high-level comparison will benchmark the jurisdictional offering of fringe benefits and identify areas of concern. All the organizations offer at least one type of group medical plan, dental, vision, and some form of disability plan as well as a host of other benefits.

A depiction and jurisdictional comparison of the type of fringe benefits offered by each jurisdiction are listed in the following figure.

Figure 61: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Medical	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dental	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retiree Health Care	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prescription	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Life Insurance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Disability	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retirement/Pension	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DROP Plan	No	Yes	Yes	YES	Yes	No
Deferred Compensation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



## Medical Plan Comparison

Employees often spend a considerable amount of time determining which jurisdiction offers the best benefits after evaluating salaries. Each of the organizations must determine which types of plans they choose to offer. There are five main types of plans organizations can choose from. These are Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs), Open Access Plan (OAPs), Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs), Point-of-Service Organizations (POS), and High-Deductible Plans (HDHPs). Each of these has pros and cons to their offering and cost.

HMOs deliver all health services through a network of healthcare providers and facilities. These provide the least amount of freedom to choose your healthcare provider. These also allow for a primary doctor to refer you to a specialist, so it can be covered by the health plan. Most HMOs will require this referral to see a specialist. This usually involves a higher copay. HMOs usually have an associate copay or coinsurance usually around 20 percent for coverage and is usually counted toward the deductible. HMOs do not require claims forms.

OAPs are very similar to PPO plans and allow for a larger variety of health care providers to be chosen. The downside is that sometimes these plans require larger payments for that freedom or may require the deductible to be paid prior to coverage of services. In an Open Access plan, you may have to file your own claim, but depending on the provider, you might not. Employees on Open Access plans might also need to have some outpatient care and hospitalizations pre-approved, but with an in-network provider, you will not have to do any paperwork.

PPOs provide a moderate amount of freedom to choose health care providers and you do not have to get a referral to see a specialist. They do usually have higher out-of-pocket costs for out-of-network doctors versus in-network doctors. The out-of-network providers will generate more paperwork and claims than the HMOs.

POS plans blend the features of an HMO with a PPO plan. They allow more freedom to choose health care providers and generate a moderate amount of paperwork if you choose to see an out-of-network provider. These plans also usually have a primary care doctor who manages your care and provides referrals to specialists if needed. These plans may require the payment of the deductible before it covers care beyond preventive services and out-of-network providers will cost more. With POS plans, if you see an out-of-network provider you are responsible to pay the bill and then submit a claim for reimbursement. This can be a hassle and requires the ability to cover the cost up front.

Each of the jurisdictions offer a variety of health and medical plans for employees to choose from. These range from high deductible plans with low monthly premiums, to the inverse. The employee versus employer contributions were benchmarked when the information was available. Several of the jurisdictional comparisons, Baltimore County for instance, have their employee/employer contributions detailed in their collective bargaining agreement.

An overview of the jurisdictional plans and contributions are detailed in the following figure on the next page.





Figure 62: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Medical

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart- Medical											
	Frederick County, MD		Baltimore County, MD		Montgomery County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Howard County, MD		Loudoun County, VA
<b>Medical Plan A</b>											
	Open Access Plus		Cigna Open Access Plus		CareFirst Standard POS		Cigna HMO		Aetna Open Choice PPO		POS Plan
Pays	26		24		26		26		24		26
	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee
	\$49.04	\$277.61	\$114.61	\$343.85	\$62.36	\$187.06	\$55.33	\$166.00	\$54.00	\$305.00	\$135.20
+ Child	\$89.78	\$552.24	\$178.91	\$493.91	\$107.87	\$323.59	\$110.66	\$331.98	\$94.50	\$534.00	\$341.08
+ Spouse	\$97.55	\$508.18	\$270.56	\$707.75	\$107.87	\$323.59	\$110.66	\$331.98	\$124.00	\$702.50	\$341.08
	\$143.18	\$810.40	\$395.98	\$1,000.39	\$181.63	\$544.88	\$154.73	\$464.18	\$154.00	\$1,024.00	\$593.20
<b>Medical Plan B</b>											
	Open Access Plus <sup>17</sup>		Cigna Open Access IN		United Healthcare Select HMO		Cigna PPO		Aetna Open Access Select		OAP Plan
Pays	26		24		26		26		24		26
	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee
	\$111.35	\$277.62	\$54.46	\$308.65	\$45.80	\$183.19	\$86.68	\$202.26	\$30.50	\$273.50	\$60.28
+ Child	\$201.74	\$508.19	\$103.67	\$423.48	\$88.04	\$352.17	\$174.79	\$407.85	\$57.00	\$569.19	\$193.28
+ Spouse	\$218.97	\$552.25	\$178.75	\$598.68	\$88.04	\$352.17	\$174.79	\$407.85	\$70.50	\$633.50	\$193.28
	\$320.20	\$810.43	\$274.88	\$822.97	\$139.96	\$559.85	\$245.46	\$572.31	\$90.50	\$900.50	\$459.28
<b>Medical Plan C</b>											
	N/A		Kaiser Permanente		Kaiser HMO		Kaiser Permanente		Kaiser HMO		CIGNA Choice I
Pays	N/A		24		26		26		24		26
	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee
			\$49.40	\$279.97	\$53.18	\$212.70	\$52.93	\$158.81	\$28.00	\$275.48	\$30.88
+ Child			\$94.03	\$384.12	\$99.97	\$399.88	\$105.63	\$316.88	\$52.50	\$523.41	\$111.70
+ Spouse			\$162.14	\$543.05	\$99.97	\$399.88	\$105.63	\$316.88	\$63.50	\$633.61	\$111.70
			\$249.34	\$746.50	\$157.40	\$629.59	\$153.05	\$458.77	\$83.00	\$826.44	\$294.84
<b>High Deductible Plan</b>											
Pays	26		Not Offered		26		Not Offered				
	Employee	Employer			Employee	Employer					
	\$10.81	\$264.30			\$67.05	\$201.15					
+ Child	\$19.46	\$486.17			\$115.99	\$347.95					
+ Spouse	\$21.62	\$528.07			\$115.99	\$347.95					
	\$32.44	\$775.39			\$195.30	\$585.89					
ISA		\$1000/		None	None	None	None	None	None	None	
Ins		\$2,000									

<sup>17</sup> This plan is no longer offered for enrollment.



### ***Discussion***

All of the jurisdictions offer at least two plans to choose from with several offering three. Two of the jurisdictions offer high deductible plans as an option. Of those offering high deductible plans FCDFRS is the only plan that contributes to the Health Savings Account for the employee. Of the jurisdictions benchmarked, all provide at least 75 percent of the cost sharing for their plans. Some are at 80 percent of total premium. All jurisdictions offer retirees the ability to remain part of the County plan until they reach Medicare age. These contributions are outlined in the Retiree Health Care Section of the report.

### **Dental and Vision Plan Comparison**

The jurisdictions all offer dental and vision plans that are either part of the main health insurance plan or offered as an add on benefit for an additional monthly premium cost. These plans also fall into the different types of plans offered such as HMOs and PPOs. Most of the jurisdictions offer a cost sharing for these plans. However, PGC Fire/EMS does not provide any cost sharing for dental plans.

The dental and vision plans are listed in the following figure.



Figure 63: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Dental and Vision

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart— Dental and Vision												
	Frederick County, MD		Baltimore County, MD		Montgomery County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Howard County, MD		Loudoun County, VA	
<b>Dental Coverage</b>												
<b>Dental Plan A</b>												
	Cigna Dental Care DHMO		Cigna Dental DHMO		Dental DHMO		Aetna Dental DMO		Delta Dental PPO Plus		Delta Dental Vision Combination	
Number of Pays	26		24		26		26		24		26	
Employee	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer
	\$2.10	\$2.31	\$2.52	\$7.59	\$1.78	\$5.33	\$11.85	N/A	\$9.00	\$16.73	\$7.40	\$7.40
Employee + Child	\$8.73	\$2.31	\$4.55	\$1,367.00	\$3.37	\$10.10	\$18.65	N/A	\$15.00	\$29.24	\$17.84	\$17.84
Employee + Spouse	\$6.51	\$2.31	\$5.04	\$15.14	\$3.37	\$10.10	\$18.65	N/A	\$19.50	\$38.47	\$17.84	\$17.84
	\$12.34	\$2.31	\$7.60	\$22.82	\$4.93	\$14.80	\$23.86	N/A	\$24.00	\$47.34	\$30.88	\$30.88
<b>Dental Plan B</b>												
	Cigna Basic Dental PPO		CareFirst BCBS Traditional Dental		Dental Traditional PPO		Aetna Dental PPO		Dominion Dental ePPO		N/A	
Number of Pays	26		24		26		26		24		N/A	
Employee	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer
	\$10.45	\$2.31	\$4.12	\$12.37	\$4.00	\$12.01	\$18.02	N/A	\$4.00	\$6.83		
Employee + Child	\$18.09	\$2.31	\$6.17	\$18.54	\$8.92	\$26.74	\$33.00	N/A	\$7.00	\$12.78		
Employee + Spouse	\$25.62	\$2.31	\$8.24	\$24.72	\$8.92	\$26.74	\$33.00	N/A	\$7.00	\$12.78		
	\$34.66	\$2.31	\$12.36	\$37.10	\$4.93	\$38.48	\$48.87	N/A	\$8.50	\$16.50		
<b>Dental Plan C</b>												
	Cigna Enhanced Dental PPO		CareFirst BCBS Preferred Dental PPO		N/A							
Number of Pays	26		24									
Employee	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer								
	\$15.90	\$2.31	\$3.33	\$10.02								
Employee + Child	\$26.83	\$2.31	\$4.73	\$14.20								
Employee + Spouse	\$37.58	\$2.31	\$6.31	\$18.95								
	\$50.49	\$2.31	\$9.47	\$28.43								
<b>Vision Coverage</b>												
<b>Vision Plan A</b>												
	N/A		CareFirst Davis Vision		Vision Plan		Basic Plan		N/A		Delta Dental Vision Combination	
Number of Pays	N/A		24		26		26		N/A		26	
Employee	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer	Employee	Employer
			\$0.13	\$1.22	\$0.43	\$1.28	\$0.52	\$2.94			\$7.40	\$7.40
Employee + Child			\$0.20	\$1.83	\$0.68	\$2.02					\$17.84	\$17.84
Employee + Spouse			\$0.27	\$2.43	\$0.68	\$2.02					\$17.84	\$17.84
			\$0.40	\$3.65	\$1.03	\$3.07	\$1.12	\$6.36			\$30.88	\$30.88



### **Retiree Health Care Plans**

One important factor considered when comparing fringe benefits is the offering and inclusion of retiree health care. This benefit can be a significant factor for recruitment and retention as employees weigh out the benefit of a full career with the organization. Each jurisdiction surveyed offers retiree health care plans, each as different as their pay scales. Once the retired employee reaches Medicare age their contributions shift and are affected by Medicare inclusion. Retiree health care plans have significant cost associated with the offering. However, as employees consider employment benefits and wages the ability to provide for health care needs after a career in the fire service can be a key factor in recruitment and retention. When considering post-employment health care costs, one aspect requested for consideration was the inclusion of employees retired due to a “line of duty” injury. The jurisdictional plans that offer retiree health care do not specify the reasons for retirement they merely address qualified eligible retirees with creditable years of service. The retirement plans for most of the jurisdictions address disability arising from a “line of duty” injury or illness to receive full retirement benefits as outlined in each plan.

A comparison of the plans is included in the figure on the following page.



Figure 64: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Retiree Health Care Plans

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Retiree Health Care Plans										
	Frederick County, MD		Baltimore County, MD		Montgomery County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Howard County MD	
<b>Medical Coverage</b>										
<b>Eligibility Requirements</b>										
Current Requirement	10 Years of Service		10 Years of Service		10 years of Service		Eligible Retiree		20 Years of Service	
<b>Cost Sharing Main Plan</b>										
	Retiree	Employee	Retiree	Employee	Retiree	Employee	Retiree	Employee	Retiree	Employee
10	75.00%	25.00%	80.00%	20.00%	50.00%	50.00%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
11	75.00%	25.00%	77.50%	22.50%	48.67%	51.33%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
12	75.00%	25.00%	75.00%	25.00%	47.34%	52.66%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
13	75.00%	25.00%	72.50%	27.50%	46.00%	54.00%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
14	75.00%	25.00%	70.00%	30.00%	44.67%	55.33%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
15	65.00%	35.00%	67.50%	32.50%	43.34%	56.66%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
16	65.00%	35.00%	65.00%	35.00%	42.00%	58.00%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
17	65.00%	35.00%	62.50%	37.50%	40.67%	59.33%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
18	65.00%	35.00%	60.00%	40.00%	39.34%	60.66%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
19	65.00%	35.00%	57.50%	42.50%	38.00%	62.00%	25.00%	75.00%	50.00%	50.00%
20	55.00%	45.00%	53.00%	47.00%	36.67%	63.33%	25.00%	75.00%	25.00%	75.00%
21	55.00%	45.00%	51.00%	49.00%	35.34%	64.66%	25.00%	75.00%	25.00%	75.00%
22	55.00%	45.00%	49.00%	51.00%	34.00%	66.00%	25.00%	75.00%	25.00%	75.00%
23	55.00%	45.00%	47.00%	53.00%	32.67%	67.33%	25.00%	75.00%	25.00%	75.00%
24	55.00%	45.00%	45.00%	55.00%	31.34%	68.66%	25.00%	75.00%	25.00%	75.00%
25 Plus	45.00%	55.00%	25.00%	75.00%	30.00%	70.00%	25.00%	75.00%	10.00%	90.00%
30									0.00%	100.00%



**Annual Vacation Leave**

Organizations usually will offer employees various amounts of vacation time to allow for time off. This vacation time is usually structured to allow a specific amount of employee’s time off at once without disrupting the productivity and efficiency of the organization. The jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking all offer various amounts of vacation leave. Each jurisdiction will develop a conversion rate or factor to determine a level of parity for shift employees who work more than the normal 40-hour a week schedule because of FLSA allowances.

The comparison of annual vacation leave is listed in the following figure.

**Figure 65: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Vacation Leave**

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Vacation Leave						
Vacation Leave						
Frederick County, MD						
2496 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift	
	0–2 Years	8.8 Hours a Month	288		Excess annual leave will be converted to sick leave based on their current accrual rate.	Chiefs 1
	2–10 Years	13.6 Hours a Month	288			Officers 2
	10 Years plus	19.2 Hours a Month	288			Line 7
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift	
	0–2 Years	7.33 Hours a Month	240		N/A	
	2–10 Years	11.33 Hours a Month	240			
	10 Years plus	16 Hours a Month	240			
Baltimore County, MD						
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift	
	0–3 Years	11 Hours per Month	312		33 Bargaining Unit Members	
	4–9 Years	16 Hours per Month	384			
	10–19 Years	21 Hours per Month	480			
	20 Years plus	26 Hours per Month	480			
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift	
	0–3 Years	16 2/3 Hours per Month	312		1 Employee for every 10 assigned to the shift.	
	4–9 Years	20 Hours per Month	384			
	10–19 Years	23 1/3 Hours per Month	480			
	20 Years plus	26 2/3 Hours per Month	480			
Montgomery County, MD						



<b>2496 Hours a Year</b>	<b>Service Time</b>	<b>Earning Rate</b>	<b>Maximum Accrual</b>	All hours in excess of accrual rates will be forfeited at the end of the year. All forfeited leave in excess of the accrual rate will be credited to the employee's sick leave. The employee may elect to sell 50% of the forfeited accruals and credit the remaining 50% to sick leave.	<b>Number Off Per Shift</b>  12% Vacation Leave 9% Casual Leave
	0–3 Years	12 Hours per Month	288		
	3–15 Years	16 Hours per Month	288		
	15 Years plus	20 3/4 Hours per Month	288		
48 Hours Personal Leave					
<b>2080 Hours a Year</b>	<b>Service Time</b>	<b>Earning Rate</b>	<b>Maximum Accrual</b>	Personal leave does not carry over and is forfeited at the end of the year if not used to be converted to sick leave. Annual Leave can be used to purchase retirement credit at a rate of 80 hours = 1 month	<b>Number Off Per Shift</b>  N/A
	0–3 Years	10.5 Hours per Month	252		
	3–15 Years	14 Hours per Month	252		
	15 Years plus	18.25 Hours per Month	252		
Personal Leave prorated for 40- and 42-hour employees					
<b>Prince George's County, MD</b>					
<b>2184 Hours a Year</b>	<b>Service Time</b>	<b>Earning Rate</b>	<b>Maximum Accrual</b>	Personal leave does not carry over and is forfeited at the end of the year if not used to be converted to sick leave. Annual Leave can be used to purchase retirement credit at a rate of 80 hours = 1 month	<b>Number Off Per Shift</b>  12%
	0–3 Years	8.6 Hours per Month	360		
	4–15 Years	13.33 Hours per Month	360		
	16 Years plus	17.33 Hours per Month	360		
24 Hours Personal Leave					
<b>2080 Hours a Year</b>	<b>Service Time</b>	<b>Earning Rate</b>	<b>Maximum Accrual</b>	Personal leave does not carry over and is forfeited at the end of the year if not used to be converted to sick leave. Annual Leave can be used to purchase retirement credit at a rate of 80 hours = 1 month	<b>Number Off Per Shift</b>  N/A
	0–3 Years	8.6 Hours per Month	360		
	4–15 Years	13.33 Hours per Month	360		
	16 Years plus	17.33 Hours per Month	360		
<b>Howard County, MD</b>					
<b>2496 Hours a Year</b>	<b>Service Time</b>	<b>Earning Rate</b>	<b>Maximum Accrual</b>		<b>Number Off Per Shift</b>  13%
	0–5 Years	10.4 Hours per Month	468		
	6–10 Years	12.8 Hours per Month	468		
	11 Years plus	15.2 Hours per Month	468		



Vacation Leave					
Loudoun County, VA					
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Number Off Per Shift	
	All	8.6 Hours per Month	364	Chiefs 2 Day/ 1 Night Officers 7 Day/ 1 Night Line 11 Day/ 10 Night	
	Longevity leave up 8.5 hours per year after the first year of employment up to 102 hours a year.				

**Discussion**

The jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking all offer a variety of accrual rates for leave earned during the month. It is important to keep in mind that the employees from the different jurisdictions do not always work the same schedule of hours and therefore simply looking at the represented number will not yield a true comparison. The hours earned need to be divided by the hours worked during the month to determine a percentage of hours earned versus hours worked. This percentage now becomes the factor to determine parity.

The hours worked versus hours earned are depicted in the following figure.



Figure 66: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Vacation Leave Percentages

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Vacation Leave												
Years of Service	Frederick County, MD		Baltimore County, MD		Montgomery County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Howard County, MD		Loudoun County, VA	
	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked
1	8.8	4.23%	11	6.04%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%	10.4	5.00%	8.6	4.73%
2	8.8	4.23%	11	6.04%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%	10.4	5.00%	8.6	4.73%
3	13.6	6.54%	11	6.04%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%	10.4	5.00%	8.6	4.73%
4	13.6	6.54%	16	8.79%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	10.4	5.00%	8.6	4.73%
5	13.6	6.54%	16	8.79%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	10.4	5.00%	8.6	4.73%
6	13.6	6.54%	16	8.79%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	12.8	6.15%	8.6	4.73%
7	13.6	6.54%	16	8.79%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	12.8	6.15%	8.6	4.73%
8	13.6	6.54%	16	8.79%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	12.8	6.15%	8.6	4.73%
9	13.6	6.54%	16	8.79%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	12.8	6.15%	8.6	4.73%
10	13.6	6.54%	21	11.54%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	12.8	6.15%	8.6	4.73%
11	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
12	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
13	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
14	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
15	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	16	7.69%	13.33	7.32%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
16	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
17	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
18	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
19	19.2	9.23%	21	11.54%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
20	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
21	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
22	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
23	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
24	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
25	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
26	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
27	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
28	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
29	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%
30	19.2	9.23%	26	14.29%	20.75	9.98%	17.33	9.52%	15.2	7.31%	8.6	4.73%



### *Discussion*

The above analysis considers employees assigned to 24-hour shift work outside the 40-hour work week. The number of hours awarded per year was divided by the number of hours worked to yield a percentage of total hours awarded for leave based on hours worked. After determining the percentage of hours earned to hours worked the jurisdictions can then be evaluated to determine where parity is achieved and when disparity begins across the jurisdictions. As to paid leave, FCDFRS was very close to the average of the range at ten years of service and above the average range for those having over twenty years of service. It is important to note that while LCCFES earns less hours of actual accrual they receive longevity hours on top of their vacation leave to make up the difference. This can add up to an additional 102 hours of leave after 12 years of service in addition to the 103 hours earned in normal accrual. FCDFRS remains competitive throughout a 30-year time frame.

### **Annual Sick Leave**

In addition to annual vacation leave that is structured for employees to plan and use, many organizations offer additional hours in the form of sick leave to account for unexpected illness or injury. These hours usually provide the employee an ability to take off from work at the last minute and with very little notice. Often sick leave hours are less than allotted vacation hours but are usually accrued in a similar manner at a lower accrual rate. Some organizations set a specific number of hours for all employees regardless of what type of shift they work, while others offer a rate that is correlated to the number of actual hours they work in a week. For instance, an employee that works 48 hours a week in some organizations will earn more sick time than employees who work a regular 40 hour a week schedule.

The comparison of annual sick leave is listed in the following figure.



Figure 67: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Sick Leave

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Sick Leave						
Sick Leave						
Frederick County, MD						
2496 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual	Unused sick leave shall be credited by dividing the number of accrued sick leave hours as of the Participant's Termination Date by the number of hours in the Participant's regularly scheduled work day as of the Participant's Termination Date, then dividing the product by 22, then further dividing the product by 12 and rounding to the closest 10,000th.	Number Off Per Shift	
	All	12 Hours per Month	None		No Limit	
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual		Number Off Per Shift	
	All	10.5 Hours a Month	None			
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual		Number Off Per Shift	
	All	10 Hours a Month	None		No Limit	
Baltimore County, MD						
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual	All sick leave hours in excess of maximum accrual can be used towards service requirement for retirement. 16 days equals one month of creditable service. For conversion (1 day = 12 hours; 1 Day = 10 hours; or 1 Day = 8 hours based on shift assignment).	Number Off Per Shift	
	All	12 hours per Month	1500 Hours		No Limit	
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual		Number Off Per Shift	
	All	10 Hours per Month	1000 Hours		No Limit	
Montgomery County, MD						
2496 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual		Excess sick leave may be used to receive credited service at a rate of 176 hours = 1 month towards retirement eligibility.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 Hours per Month	None	No Limit		
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual	Number Off Per Shift		
	All	10.5 Hours per Month	None	No Limit		
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximu m Accrual	Number Off Per Shift		
	All	10 Hours per Month	None	No Limit		



Sick Leave					
Prince George's County, MD					
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Annual leave in excess of the maximum will be converted to new sick leave up to a maximum of 1,040 and may be used to purchase pension credit at 40 hours = 1 month of pension credit.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	10 Hours per Month	360		No Limit
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	10 Hours per Month	360		No Limit
Howard County, MD					
2496 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Personal leave is not allowed to roll over to the next year. Unused sick leave can be used for service credit at a rate of 22 days = 1 month of service. <sup>18</sup>	Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 Hours per Month	144		No Limit
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 Hours per Month	144		No Limit
Loudoun County, VA					
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	8.6 Hours per Month	364		No Limit
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	8.6 Hours per Month	364		No Limit

### Discussion

The jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking all offer a variety of accrual rates for leave earned during the month. It is important to keep in mind that the employees from the different jurisdictions do not always work the same schedule of hours and therefore simply looking at the represented number will not yield a true comparison. The hours earned need to be divided by the hours worked during the month to determine a percentage of hours earned versus hours worked. This percentage now becomes the factor to determine parity.

The hours worked versus hours earned are depicted in the following figure on the next page.

<sup>18</sup> The Howard County Pension Plan does not specify how many hours equals one day for service credit.



Figure 68: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Sick Leave Percentages

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Sick Leave												
Years of Service	Frederick County, MD		Baltimore County, MD		Montgomery County, MD		Prince George's County, MD		Howard County, MD		Loudoun County, VA	
	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked	Hours Earned	% of Hours Worked
1	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
2	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
3	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
4	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
5	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
6	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
7	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
8	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
9	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
10	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
11	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
12	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
13	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
14	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
15	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
16	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
17	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
18	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
19	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
20	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
21	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
22	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
23	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
24	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
25	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
26	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
27	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
28	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
29	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%
30	12	5.77%	12	6.59%	12	5.77%	10	5.49%	12	5.77%	8.6	4.73%



### *Discussion*

The jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking all accrue hours to be used for sick or unexpected absence. Most of the jurisdictions have adjusted the number of accruals to try to achieve parity based on the same premise discussed during the vacation accrual discussion. PGC Fire/EMS, LCCFES, and HCFRS all award their employees the same amount of sick leave regardless of their schedule. FCDFRS, BCoFD, and MCFRS all have adjusted their rates to account for the extra hours worked based on schedules. At ten years of service, the average sick leave accrual rate is 11.1 hours a month. FCDFRS and three others all earn 12 hours a month. When evaluating twenty years of service the result is the same as well as thirty years. Therefore, FCDFRS is equal to or above the level of parity when considering sick leave accrual rates amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. It should be noted that when evaluating all the different schedules found within FCDFRS, each earns 5.7 percent sick leave hours based on their schedule of hours worked yielding parity amongst the workforce for FCDFRS.



### **Holiday Leave**

As with vacation and sick leave, organizations use the number of holidays as additional fringe benefits to offer employees. While many organizations struggle to be inclusive of the right mix of holidays for their employees, often the number of holidays offered revolves around federally recognized holidays. Some organizations have begun offering a variety of floating holidays to allow employees the ability to choose holiday's that are important to them.

The comparison of holiday leave is listed in the following figure.



Figure 69: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Holiday Leave

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Holiday Leave					
Holiday Leave					
Frederick County, MD					
2496 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Of the 12 holidays, 2 are floating holidays. Holidays are not delivered as time off but rather receive holiday compensation.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 Holidays per Year	N/A		No Limit
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 Holidays per Year	N/A		
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 Holidays per Year	N/A		
Baltimore County, MD					
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Employees working a shift on a holiday will receive holiday pay at 1.5 times regular salary.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	10 Holidays per Year	N/A		No Limit
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	10 Holidays per Year	N/A		
Montgomery County, MD					
2496 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Employee receive holiday compensation as straight time for each holiday. For Inauguration Day, President's Day, Columbus Day, and Election Day employees may choose to receive compensatory leave instead at the same number of hours offered for compensation.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	13 Holidays @ 16 Hours	N/A		No Limit
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	13 Holidays @ 14 Hours	N/A		
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	13 Holidays @ 13 Hours	N/A		



Holiday Leave					
Prince George's County, MD					
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Employee receive holiday compensation as 2 times rate of pay for each holiday.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	13 Holidays	N/A		No Limit
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	13 Holidays	N/A		
Howard County, MD					
2496 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Employee receive holiday compensation as 2 times rate of pay for each holiday.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 @ 9.6 hours	N/A		No Limit
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	12 @ 8 hours	N/A		
Loudoun County, VA					
2184 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual	Employees receive holiday compensation at 1.5 times rate of pay for each holiday.	Number Off Per Shift
	All	12.5 Plus 1 Floating @ 8.5 hours	N/A		No Limit
2080 Hours a Year	Service Time	Earning Rate	Maximum Accrual		Number Off Per Shift
	All	12.5 Plus 1 Floating @ 8.5 hours	N/A		

**Discussion**

Holiday leave varied from ten days per year to thirteen and a half days per year, with an average of twelve days of holiday leave. FCDFRS, at 12 days per year, was at the average of those included for benchmarking. LCCFES and FCDFRS provide floating holidays. All the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking reported offering some form of additional compensation for holidays worked by employees. Of these, the majority compensated their holiday workers at 1.5 times the normal rate of pay, while one paid double time and one reported some other variety of holiday work compensation. Frederick County was within the survey average.



### Shift Exchanges

Many emergency service jurisdictions across the country offer employees the ability to exchange shifts. Under USC 29 CFR553.31- Substitution Section 7(p)(3) of the Fair Labor Standards Act an employee may agree, solely at their option and with approval of the employer, to substitute for one another during scheduled work hours in performance of work in the same capacity. These shift exchanges can be a significant benefit that enhances the employee’s ability to take leave without expending earned sick or vacation leave. During a shift exchange two employees mutually agree to work the other employee’s shift. The employee who is off duty still receives credit for the hours worked thereby receiving their original paycheck with no loss of wages. The employee who agrees to work substitution hours has no claim to those hours under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Some organizations place restrictions or limits on these shift exchanges. Arguably one of the most enjoyed benefits amongst agencies that offer shift exchanges.

A breakdown of jurisdictional shift exchange policies is included in the following figure.

**Figure 70: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Shift Exchanges**

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Shift Exchanges						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Shift Exchanges	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eligibility	Minimum specification requirements for the position.	Minimum specification requirements for the position.	Minimum specification requirements for the position.	Supervisor’s approval of equal qualifications including driving.	No requirement if daily staffing needs are met.	Supervisor’s approval
Limits	Unlimited exchanges of shifts.	Unlimited exchanges of shifts.	Unlimited exchanges of shifts. No more than 38 consecutive hours.	Not specified	Unlimited exchanges of shifts. No more than 48 consecutive hours.	No limit on payback.
Financial	Must not incur overtime.	No financial remuneration.	Must not incur overtime.	Rests solely with the individuals involved.	Must not incur overtime.	Must not incur overtime.
Tracking and repayment of shift exchanges	County not responsible to track.	County not responsible to track.	County not responsible to track.	County not responsible to track.	County not responsible to track.	Not specified.

### Discussion

All of the jurisdictions offer shift exchanges. Each policy is very similar in design and function. FCDFRS is consistent with the industry when considering shift exchanges.



## Retirement Comparison

Every employee enters the workforce with the hopes of establishing a solid plan for retirement after they can no longer continue to work or have reached the retirement eligibility requirements. Many employees who choose public safety make the decision of where to work based on the type of retirement plan the organization offers, as well as the benefits afforded should they become disabled. The retirement plans offered by employers provide an employment package designed to attract and retain employees for a long and productive career. Various forms of retirement plans exist, and each have very different methods of contribution and payouts normally based on years of creditable service. When comparing plans, specifics considered usually are employer and member contributions, service retirement eligibility, service retirement benefits, early retirement benefits, time to become vested, disability provisions, and death benefits for beneficiaries.

The benefits of FCDFRS retirement versus the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking are illustrated in the following figure.



Figure 71: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Retirement Plans

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Retirement Plans						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
Part of the State Retirement Plan	No	No	No	No	No	Yes; Virginia Retirement System
Plan Type	Defined Benefit	Defined Benefit	Defined Benefit	Defined Benefit	Defined Benefit	Hybrid
Employer Contribution	20.50%	5% Interest on employee contribution.	The amount of normal contribution must at least match the contribution made by members each fiscal year but must not be less than the amount which could be provided by multiplying the latest published actuarial normal cost accrual rate, expressed as a percentage of covered payroll, times the payroll of covered members. Most recent employer contribution rate is 27.47%.	The County shall contribute to the trust fund from time to time such amounts as are actuarially determined to be required to provide for the benefits under the Plan. An actuarial valuation of the Plan shall be obtained at intervals of not more than two years to determine the required contributions of the County. Current contribution rate is 58.60%.	The County's contributions to the Plan are determined annually by professional actuaries to ensure that the Plan is adequately funded to provide benefits for all plan participants. Current contribution rate is 33.1%.	The recommended employer contribution rate is calculated by the VRS actuary every two years and is based on the funds needed to pay for the cost of benefits and outstanding liabilities. Separate employer contribution rates are calculated for each defined benefit plan. Current contribution rate is 13.52%.
Member Contribution	9%	10%	11%	10%	7.7%	5%
Normal Retirement Eligibility	Age 55 with 5 years eligibility service or any age with 25 years of eligibility service.	Employees hired after July 1, 2007, normal service retirement would be thirty (30) years of creditable service regardless of age, or age sixty (60) with at least ten (10) years of creditable service.	Age 55 with 15 years eligibility service or any age with 20 years of eligibility service.	20 years of service or age 55.	Participants reach normal retirement on the first day of the month on or after completion of 20 years of eligibility service. Normal retirement is also defined as age 62 with at least 5 years of eligibility service, if earlier.	Under the defined benefit component of the plan, you become eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit when you reach your normal Social Security retirement age and have at least five years (60 months) of creditable service; or when you reach age and service equivalent to age 60 with 30 years of creditable service.



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<p>Normal Retirement Benefit</p>	<p>(1) 2.5% x Average Pay x Years of Creditable Service up to 20; plus (2) 2.0% x Average Pay x Years of Creditable Service in excess of 20 Years, to a maximum of 8 Years. (3) 2.0% x Average Pay x Years of Creditable Service for unused sick leave.</p>	<p>2.5% of the member's average final compensation multiplied by the number of years of creditable service not to exceed twenty (20) years plus 2.0% of their average final compensation multiplied by the years of creditable service in excess of twenty (20). An allowance equal to 3% of their final average compensation multiplied by the number of years of creditable service in excess of thirty (30), up to a maximum of one hundred percent.</p>	<p><b>Before Social Security*</b> 2.5% x AFE x years of CS (years 1–20) + 2.0% x AFE x years of CS (years 21–31) + 2.0% x AFE x sick leave credits used for credited service in excess of 20 years (up to 2 years*).</p> <p><b>After Social Security*</b> 1.71875% x AFE x first 20 years of CS (years 1–20) + 1.3750% x AFE x next 11 years of CS (years 21–31) + 1.3750% x AFE x sick leave credits used for credited service in excess of 20 years (up to 2 years*).</p>	<p>2.5% x Average Annual Compensation x years of service employees may earn additional 2.5% x years after normal retirement up to max 10 years.</p>	<p>Normal Retirement Benefit is determined by multiplying your Average Compensation by a percentage. The percentage is based on the number of years of Creditable Service. 20 years = 50%, 25 years = 65%, 30 years = 70%. Less than 20 years of creditable service equals 2.5% of average compensation X years of service.</p>	<p><b>Defined Benefit Plan</b> Average final compensation x retirement multiplier the plan (1%) x total years of creditable service at retirement Annual benefit amount ÷ 12 = Monthly benefit amount before tax and other deductions</p>
<p>Normal Retirement Benefit</p>	<p>At least age 55 with 15 years of eligibility service.</p>	<p>Age sixty (60) with at least ten (10) years of creditable service.</p>	<p>Not Available</p>	<p>First day of any month prior to a Participant's Normal Retirement Date as of which he has both attained age 50 and completed 20 years of Credited Service.</p>	<p>Not Available</p>	<p>Age 60 with at least 10 years of creditable service.</p>
<p>Normal Retirement Benefit</p>	<p>5 years</p>	<p>10 years</p>	<p>5 years</p>	<p>5 years</p>	<p>5 years</p>	<p>5 years</p>
<p>Ordinary Disability Retirement Eligibility</p>	<p>Permanently and totally disabled after 5 years of eligibility service.</p>	<p>Eligibility for ordinary disability retirement will be based on ten (10) years of creditable service.</p>	<p>Non-service connected begins after 5 years of creditable service. Service connected immediately upon hire.</p>	<p>Non-service connected begins after 5 years of creditable service. Service connected immediately upon hire.</p>	<p>Have at least five years of creditable service at the time of your disability, have a total and permanent disability, and not have a line-of-duty disability.</p>	<p>If you are a state employee in VRS Plan 2 or the Hybrid Retirement Plan, the State Police Officer Retirement System (SPORS) or the Virginia Law Officers' Retirement System (VaLORS), you are enrolled automatically in the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP) upon employment.</p>



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<p>inary Disability irement Benefit</p>	<p>Service retirement benefit with creditable service projected to age 55.</p>	<p>The contribution rate would be a flat seven percent (7%) of base salary.</p>	<p><b>Non-Service Connected:</b> amount calculated under normal pension benefits or 33 1/3% of final earnings whichever is greater. <b>Service Connected:</b> 55 1/2% of final enringing or the amount calculated under regular pension. If greater than the regular pension, employee will receive 70% of final earnings if the disability would meet social security requirements for disability.</p>	<p>Monthly benefit equal to one-twelfth of 55% of his Average Annual Compensation. Such benefit shall be payable whether this Disability Retirement Date occurs prior to or after his Normal Retirement Date.  An Employee who is permanently and totally disabled in the line of duty such that he is unable to perform the duties of any occupation will receive a 90% disability benefit regardless of years of service.</p>	<p>20% of Average Compensation.</p>	<p>Upon Employmen</p>
<p>idental Disability irement Eligibility</p>	<p>Permanently and totally disabled arising out of or in the performance of duty; no service requirement.</p>	<p>A member shall be eligible to receive a full accident disability allowance, regardless of age, if the member has sustained an impairment or impairments to the extent listed below under "schedule of impairments" as a direct result of the actual performance of duties with the county and which has permanently incapacitated the member for the further performance of the duties of the member's job classification.</p>	<p>Non-service connected begins after 5 years of creditable service. Service connected immediately upon hire.</p>	<p>Non-service connected begins after 5 years of creditable service. Service connected immediately upon hire.</p>	<p>Total and permanent disability incurred because of an accident or injury sustained as a Covered Employee and have a ruling of compensability under the Maryland Workers' Compensation Act.</p>	<p>After one year of employment.</p>



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<p>Identical Disability Retirement Benefit</p>	<p>2/3rds (66.7%) of Average Final Salary.<sup>19</sup></p>	<p>The full accident disability allowance under this subsection shall be an amount equal to sixty-six and two-thirds (66-2/3) percent of the member's average final compensation.</p>	<p><b>Non-Service Connected:</b> amount calculated under normal pension benefits or 33 1/3% of final earnings whichever is greater.</p> <p><b>Service Connected:</b> 55 1/2% of final earnings or the amount calculated under regular pension. If greater than the regular pension, employee will receive 70% of final earnings if the disability would meet social security requirements for disability.</p>	<p>Non-Service Connected disability benefit will be 50% of employee's average annual compensation plus 2% per year creditable service above 20 years.</p>	<p><b>Catastrophic:</b> 66 2/3% multiplied by your monthly Base Salary.</p> <p><b>Non-Catastrophic:</b> 50% multiplied by your monthly Base Salary.</p>	<p>If you go on non-work related disability after satisfying the one-year waiting period or if you go on work-related disability, you will receive income replacement equal to percent of your pre-disability income. After five years of continuous employment, you become eligible for income replacement beginning at 100 percent of your pre-disability income, which reduces to 80 percent and then 60 percent.</p>
<p>Cost of Living Adjustment to Retirement Allowance</p>	<p>Limited to 1% per year compounded annually.</p>	<p>Employees who were hired after July 1, 2007, and who retire on or after July 1, 2010 with less than 25 years of service, shall not be entitled to the retiree COLA.</p>	<p>100% of the change in the CPI for the Washington Metro Area up to 3%; and 60% of any change in the CPI greater than 3%, not to exceed a total of 7.5% for years and months of credited service before July 1, 2011. The maximum 7.5% does not apply to disability retirees or retirees over age 65 for credited service before July 1, 2011. For years and months of credited service after June 30, 2011, any adjustment will not exceed 2.5%.</p>	<p>2/3 of the total investment returns will be transferred to a post-retirement increase fund and distributed equally based on a lifetime actuarial calculation if the sum equals at least a \$10 benefit increase.</p>	<p>The Plan uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) for the Washington/Baltimore area as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to calculate the change in retiree allowances each July. The maximum increase you may receive for any year is 2%.</p>	<p>The Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) matches the first 2% increase in the CPI and half of any additional increase (to 2%), for a maximum COLA of 3%.</p>

<sup>19</sup>Conversion to normal retirement benefit: Non-catastrophic line of duty disability benefits converts to normal retirement benefits when you reach your projected Normal Retirement Date. For these purposes, your Years of Eligibility Service include the Years of Eligibility Service you would have earned if you had remained employed by the County. The normal retirement benefit is projected using the Years of Creditable Service you would have earned if your employment had not terminated due to your disability and your Average Pay, adjusted for cost of living increases.



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<p>1p Sum Death Benefit</p>	<p>If not vested, beneficiary receives employee's contributions in a lump sum payment.</p>	<p>1 X Annual Salary</p>	<p>If you die while working for the County, the Plan will pay death benefits to your spouse or domestic partner and child in the form of a joint and 100% survivor annuity. The benefit will equal the disability retirement benefit but will be at least 70% of your final earnings. Death must result from injuries received in the line of duty or be directly attributable to the inherent hazards of the duties performed, and not be due to willful negligence.</p>	<p>Employees not at eligible retirement date receive a return of contributions plus interest.</p>	<p>1 x Annual Salary with one-year creditable service or choice of lifetime annuity.</p>	<p>If an active employee dies from a non-work related cause, the beneficiary is eligible either a refund of the MCA or a monthly benefit under the defined benefit plan based on whether the employee was vested at the time of the death. If the employee was not vested and the beneficiary is the employee's spouse, minor child, or parent under the defined benefit plan, he may choose either a monthly benefit or a refund of the exclusion of an other named beneficiary.</p>
<p>time Annuity Death benefit</p>	<p>If vested or death occurs in the performance of duty, beneficiary will receive a lifetime payment from the plan based on the calculation of either a line of duty or ordinary disability.</p>	<p>After 2 years of service and death occurs in the performance of duty or not, beneficiary will receive a lifetime payment from the plan based on the calculation of either a line of duty or ordinary disability.</p>	<p>The benefit will equal the disability retirement benefit but will be at least 70% of your final earnings. Death must result from injuries received in the line of duty or be directly attributable to the inherent hazards of the duties performed, and not be due to willful negligence.</p>	<p>The spouse of a participant who dies at or after his Normal Retirement Date while an Employee shall receive a monthly benefit for the spouse's life in an amount equal to the benefit the spouse would have received if the Participant had retired on the day before he died and had elected to receive a reduced benefit for his life with a 100% Contingent Annuity benefit payable to his spouse.</p>	<p>Spouse may elect to receive a monthly benefit, which will continue over your spouse's lifetime. The benefit equals 100% of the amount that would have been paid to you had you retired on the day before your death and begun to receive your benefit as a 100% survivor annuity.</p>	<p>The monthly death-service benefit under the defined benefit plan enables the beneficiary to receive a monthly benefit equal to what the vested employee would have received if retirement had been on the date of death if 100% Survivor Option was selected.</p>
<p>verage Pay Definition</p>	<p>Average of the highest consecutive 36 months of earnings out of the members' entire work history. Plan definition of compensation excludes overtime earnings.</p>	<p>Average Final Compensation (AFC) shall mean the average earnable compensation of an employee during the twelve (12) full consecutive months affording the highest average.</p>	<p>If you belong to the mandatory integrated plan, average final earnings equal the average of annual earnings for the 36-month period before you retire (or any consecutive 36-month period, if greater), excluding overtime.</p>	<p>Average Annual Compensation means an amount computed by dividing by two the Compensation of a Participant during whatever period of twenty-four consecutive months of his Continuous Service will provide the largest total Compensation for any such period. The definition of Compensation in the plan excludes overtime.</p>	<p>Your Average Compensation is the average monthly Base Salary you receive during the highest 36 consecutive calendar months of your employment with the County. Base salary excludes definition excludes overtime.</p>	<p>Your average final compensation is the average of your 60 consecutive months the highest creditable compensation as a covered employee</p>



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<p>cial Considerations</p>		<p>BCoFD provides for partial accidental disability as well as a dismemberment/paralysis benefit.</p>	<p>* 2.5% for sick leave credits used for credited service for years 1–20. * 1.71875% for sick leave credits used for credited service for years 1–20.</p>	<p>Participants hired after June 1, 2016, may purchase additional pension credits with sick leave at a rate of 80 annual/80 sick leave equals 1 month of service.</p>	<p>You will receive Creditable Service if you have unused sick leave when you die, retire, or terminate employment as a vested participant. You will receive one month of Creditable Service for each 22 days of unused sick leave you have at termination. If after counting your sick leave in multiples of 22 days, 12 or more days remain, you will receive credit for an extra month of Creditable Service. Unused sick leave cannot be applied to Eligibility Service.</p>	<p>VRS also offers a defined contribution plan for election. If you are disabled or die in the line of duty, you or your family members may be eligible for benefit under the Virginia Liability of Duty Act.</p>
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## Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) Comparison

DROP stands for Deferred Retirement Option Program. DROP is a voluntary program that provides an alternative way for participants to earn and receive their retirement benefits. A key feature of DROP is the individual account. When a participant enters the program, a DROP account is created.

In recent years, many retirement plans, particularly those operated by state and local governments, have adopted some form of deferred retirement option, or “DROP,” plans. In its simplest terms, a DROP plan is an arrangement under which an employee who would otherwise be entitled to retire and receive benefits under an employer’s defined benefit retirement plan instead continues working. However, instead of having the continued compensation and additional years of service considered for purposes of the defined benefit plan formula, the employee has a sum of money credited during each year of the continued employment to a separate account under the employer’s retirement plan. The account earns interest (either at a rate stated in the plan or based on the earnings of the trust underlying the retirement plan). The account is paid to the employee, in addition to whatever benefit the employee has acquired under the defined benefit plan based on earlier years of service, when the employee eventually retires.

To the extent that employers are initiating DROP plans, the major reason is a concern about the ability to retain valued employees who are eligible to retire. Many governmental plans, either as a matter of plan design or due to inadvertence, contain substantial incentives for employees to retire early.

Without the inclusion of a DROP plan, FCDFRS’s retirement plan is less comparable to the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. While the specifics of the retirement plan are very similar in vesting, computation of benefit pay out, and plan construction, the benefit a DROP plan provides leaves FCDFRS with a plan that offers less.

The jurisdictions that offer DROP plans are listed in the following figure.



Figure 72: Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—DROP

Jurisdictional Fringe Benefit Comparison Chart—Deferred Retirement Option Plan						
	Frederick County, MD	Baltimore County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Prince George's County, MD	Howard County, MD	Loudoun County, VA
DROP Plan	No	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>20</sup>	Yes	No
Eligibility	N/A	32 years	Normal Retirement	22 years	25 years	N/A
Plan Contributions/Funding	N/A	Employee Funded	Employee Funded	N/A	Cost Neutral Employee Funded	N/A
Number of Years in Plan	N/A	3,3.5,4,4.5,5-year options	Up to 3 years	Up to 3 years	Min 2 years up to 5 years	N/A
Interest Earned	N/A	The greater of the rate of return on the actuarial value of assets from the prior year, minus 50 basis points, or 5% per year.	7.5%	Interest is paid monthly based on the 10-year treasury bond.	Equal to the Plan's assumed investment return rate (currently 7.5% annually), minus 4%. Currently 3.5% will not drop below 1.5%	N/A
COLA	N/A	Includes COLA adjustments during the DROP Period.	Does not include COLA adjustments during the DROP Period.	Includes COLA adjustments during the DROP Period.	Does not include COLA adjustments during the DROP Period.	N/A
Benefit Payout	N/A	Lump Sum or Rolled over to an eligible plan.	Lump Sum, Annuity, or Rolled over to an eligible plan.	Not specified		N/A

**Recommendation:**

FCDFRS should consider establishing a DROP plan to compete with the local market for retirement benefits.

<sup>20</sup> Prince George's County has approved a DROP program to be implemented in January of 2019. Prince George's County Human Resources did not have official documents for request at the time of the report.



## Qualification Comparison

Each of the organizations chosen for benchmarking sets their own standards for obtaining rank through meeting specific established qualifications. While national consensus standards such as NFPA 1021, *Standard for Professional Fire Officer Qualifications* recommend specific training requirements for Fire Officers, not all organizations recognize or follow these standards. Furthermore, not all organizations' daily operations and job performance requirements warrant these exact recommendations. Because of this, many organizations will adjust or alter these recommended requisite knowledge and skills to meet their needs. As the pay and benefit analysis was completed the classifications included were compared to ensure knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as qualifications and certification requirements were equal.

During the analysis one point that was identified was the disparity between the use of the Deputy Chief rank amongst the organizations in the surrounding area. Throughout Maryland and the geographical area, the Deputy Chief rank is used as a high level administrative chief officer and across the state line in Virginia it is common to see the Assistant Chief title used for that position. In large organizations the need can also give way to the use of both ranks with one or the other higher in the chain of command. A quick look at associated job duties and functions can illustrate this.

The differences and similarities between these two ranks can be seen in the following condensed comparison of essential job functions and responsibilities.

### FCDFRS Deputy Chief

- Serve as Deputy Chief of FCDFRS responsible for the all operational functions of fire and rescue services in Frederick County including emergency incident operations, fire and injury/illness prevention programs, training and education programs, and administrative support including planning, payroll, purchasing, and personnel functions.
- Perform duties, responsibilities, and operates under the authority outlined in Article IV-Fire and Rescue Services Code of Frederick County, Maryland.
- In conjunction with the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board, develop, implement, and review policies, procedures, and standards related to all areas of fire and rescue services; recommend policies and procedures to the County Executive, when applicable.
- With advice from the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board and in consultation with other agencies/organizations, develop and implement short and long-term goals and strategic plans for the provision of fire and rescue services.
- Prepare, monitor, administer, and justify the DFRS annual budget; account for expenditures of funds.
- Establish overall work objectives for staff, assign, coordinate, review and evaluate work performance of staff, complete performance evaluations, administer employee disciplinary actions.
- Initiate the development of training programs and instruction of personnel in methods of firefighting, emergency medical services, hazardous materials handling, and proper use of equipment.
- Promote disaster preparedness activities, and fire and injury prevention and safety campaigns
- Serve as the Staff Duty Officer responsible for an assigned shift, or as necessary.
- Respond to emergency incidents, assume command of the incident and direct emergency incident operations, when warranted.



- Develop programs to provide the efficient use of fire and rescue personnel and equipment within the County's Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Planning to minimize losses in Frederick County.
- Evaluate and make recommendations for construction of fire stations, apparatus acquisitions, and equipment purchase.
- Represent Frederick County Fire and Rescue Services, Frederick County Government, and the County Executive to civic groups, committees, boards, organizations, and other groups; attend meetings and conferences and make public presentations.
- Perform other related duties as required.

#### **BCoFD Assistant Chief**

- Plans, develops, and directs the activities of the Emergency Operations Bureau or the Emergency Medical Services Administration and all other support divisions.
- Supervises Division Fire Chiefs in administering fire suppression, rescue, and emergency medical operations of the division.
- Supervises the administration of the Fire-Rescue Academy, Fire Dispatch, and emergency medical services policy. Supervises the administration of Safety, Supply, and Staffing functions. Coordinates the work of the divisions with each other and with other agencies and divisions of the department.
- Assists the Fire Chief in the organizational management of the department. Assists in the administration and formulation of departmental rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Develops and implements changes to programs, policies and operational procedures. Interprets and applies relevant statutes. Resolves complex technical and policy issues.
- Prepares, reviews, and directs the preparation and review of reports and correspondence regarding bureau and departmental activities. Analyzes reports and makes recommendations to the Fire Chief. Reviews and evaluates new programs, procedures, and equipment.
- Assists the Fire Chief in conducting strategic planning for the department. Represents the department at meetings. Serves on inter-departmental committees.
- Acts for and performs the duties of the Chief of the Fire Department in his or her absence.

The required qualifications for each of the classification groups of FCDFRS versus the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking are illustrated in the following figures.



**Figure 73: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Deputy Chief**

Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison	
Qualification Requirements for Deputy Chief	
<b>Frederick County, MD</b>	Bachelor's degree in Fire Administration, Public Administration, Business Administration or a related field; Minimum 12 years progressive responsible fire and rescue services work experience which must include extensive supervisory, budgetary, and administrative work experience; 5 years at the level of Battalion Chief or higher, additional years of work experience or national certification as Executive Fire Officer or similar certification may substitute for a portion of the educational requirement Nationally certified Firefighter II, Fire Officer I and Instructor Level II or ability to obtain the listed certifications within 6 months of hire; Valid Maryland State EMT-B certification or equivalent certification from another state with ability to obtain the specified certification within 6 months of hire possession of a valid automobile operator's license with ability to obtain a Frederick County Employee Driving Permit.
<b>Strom County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Montgomery County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Prince George's County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Howard County, MD</b>	Bachelor's degree and 8 years of related experience. Class C Maryland Driver's License or equivalent issued by state of residence.
<b>Stafford County, VA</b>	Any combination of education and experience equivalent to a High School diploma or GED and 13 years' experience in public or fire administration or related field, including 2 years' experience in the position of Battalion Chief or higher. Prefer combination of education and experience equivalent to a master's degree in assigned or related field and seven years administrative experience requiring the application of general County procedural knowledge and advanced social skill, in the planning, organizing, coordinating, directing and/or control of agency activities, procedures and practices, to handle a variety of assignments and/or problems independently. Valid driver's license, NFPA Fire Officer III, NFPA Fire Instructor II, OSHA Hazardous Materials Operations-Level Responder, Virginia EMT-B (or equivalent from another state, but must obtain reciprocity within one year of employment), EVOC.



**Figure 74: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Assistant Chief**

Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison	
Qualification Requirements for Assistant Chief	
<b>derick County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>timore County, MD</b>	Three years of combined experience as a Division Fire Chief and/or Battalion Fire Chief and/or Fire Director in the Baltimore County Fire Department; plus, current employment as a Division Fire Chief, Battalion Fire Chief, or Fire Director in the Baltimore County Fire Department plus, possession of a Fire Officer IV certificate. (Completion of sixty credits at an accredited college or university may be substituted for one year of the required experience.)
<b>ntgomery County, MD</b>	Experience: Two (2) years of career experience as Fire/Rescue Battalion Chief in the Montgomery County Division of Fire and Rescue Service. Education: Successful completion of ninety (90) semester hours in a degree program at an accredited college or university. Training: Successful completion of all training courses and certifications required for this class by the Fire and Rescue Service.
<b>nce George's County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>ward County, MD</b>	One hundred five (105) semester-based credits (or 158 quarter-based credits towards a degree program at an accredited post-secondary institution and at least three (3) semester-based college credits (or 5 quarter-based credits) achieved by successful course completion at that institution in the previous 12 months from list eligibility. No experience equivalency. Five (5) years credible service classified as a HCDFRS Fire Captain and/or HCDFRS Battalion Chief; OR Four (4) years credible service classified as a HCDFRS Fire Captain and/or HCDFRS Battalion Chief AND Master's degree.
<b>idoun County, VA</b>	Education and experience needed to carry out this performance plan: Requires any combination of education and experience equivalent to High School diploma and a minimum of 16 years of experience in fire administration; prefer a Master's degree in Fire, Emergency Medical Services Administration, Public Administration, or a public safety related field with 10 years of applicable experience. Requires two years of Incident Command level experience which includes comprehensive fire/rescue operational knowledge, as well as senior management experience managing multiple station operations in a combined career and volunteer staffed fire & rescue system; and should include experience in planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, and/or control of agency activities, procedures and practices, in order to handle variety of assignments and/or problems independently. Certification or licensure required by federal, state or local regulations: Valid driver license, NFPA Fire Officer III, NFPA Fire Instructor II, OSHA Hazardous Materials Operations-Level Responder, NREMT or Virginia EMT (or equivalent from another state, reciprocity must be obtained within one year of employment). NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, 800 is required within one year of employment. Professional certifications requested (not mandated by governmental regulations): National Fire Academy (NFA)—Executive Fire Officer (EFO) certification. Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE)—Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Chief EMS Officer (CEMSO) or Chief Training Officer (CTO) professional designation highly desirable.



**Figure 75: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Division Chief**

<b>Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison</b>	
<b>Qualification Requirements for Division Chief</b>	
<b>Frederick County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Baltimore County, MD</b>	Training and Experience: Two years of experience as, and current employment as, a Battalion Fire Chief or Fire Director in the Baltimore County Fire Department; plus, possession of a Fire Officer IV Certificate or a Maryland Emergency Medical Technician P Paramedic license (Completion of sixty credits at an accredited college or university may be substituted for one year of the required experience.)
<b>Montgomery County, MD</b>	Experience: Two (2) years of career experience as an Assistant Fire/Rescue Chief in the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service. Education: Bachelor's degree, or at least one hundred twenty (120) semester hours in a degree program from an accredited college or university. Training: Successful completion of all training courses and certifications required for this class by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service. License: Possession and maintenance at all times of a valid Class "C" (or equivalent) driver's license from the applicant's state of residence required by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. Maintenance of State of Maryland certification as EMT-B. Maintenance of all other certifications as required by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.
<b>Prince George's County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Howard County, MD</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Stafford County, VA</b>	Not Applicable



**Figure 76: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Battalion Chief**

<b>Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison</b>	
<b>Qualification Requirements for Battalion Chief</b>	
<b>Frederick County, MD</b>	a. Meets requirements for rank of Captain. b. The last three (3) consecutive Years as a Captain. c. Possess EMT-B, EMT-I or EMT-P. d. Possess current CPR for the Professional Rescuer certification. e. Completion of DFRS Annual Compliance Training. f. Valid Class C, Maryland vehicle driver's license or equivalent and Frederick County Employee Driving Permit. g. Successful completion of Fire Officer III, HazMat Incident Commander, NIMS 400. h. Successful completion of DFRS promotional process, satisfactory evaluation of performance.
<b>Baltimore County, MD</b>	One year of experience as, and current employment as, a Fire Captain or Emergency Medical Services Captain in the Baltimore County Fire Department; plus, possession of a Fire Officer III.
<b>Montgomery County, MD</b>	Experience: Satisfactory completion of two (2) years of career experience as a Montgomery County Division of Fire and Rescue Services Fire/Rescue Captain. Education: Associate degree, or successful completion of sixty (60) semester hours in a degree program at an accredited college or university. Training: Successful completion of all training courses and certifications required for promotion to this class by the Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue Services. License and Certification Requirements: Possession and maintenance at all times of a valid Class "C" (or equivalent) driver's license from the applicant's state of residence as required by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. Maintenance of State of Maryland certification as EMT-B. Maintenance of all other certifications as required by the Department of Fire/Rescue Services.
<b>Prince George's County, MD</b>	PGFD Career Recruit School for Fire Fighters, Classified as a Captain (Y05) for a period of not less than two (2) years as of 1/01/15, National Certification Fire Officer IV, 60 college credits to include:* English Composition II or equivalent Mathematics for the Liberal Arts or College Algebra or equivalent, Public Speaking or Business Communications or equivalent, Social Science or equivalent Human Resource Management or equivalent, Principles of Management or equivalent, Managing Workplace Diversity or equivalent, Leadership Development or equivalent
<b>Howard County, MD</b>	Seventy-five (75) semester-based credits (or 113 quarter-based credits) towards a degree program at an accredited post-secondary institution and at least three (3) semester-based college credits (or 5 quarter-based credits) achieved by successful course completion at that institution in the previous 12 months from list eligibility. No experience equivalency. Two (2) years credible service classified as a HCDFRS Fire Captain OR One (1) year credible service classified as a HCDFRS Fire Captain AND Master's degree.
<b>Stafford County, VA</b>	Education and experience needed to carry out this performance plan: High School diploma/GED and any combination totaling eight years as a career LCFR Firefighter/EMT, LCFR Technician, LCFR Assistant Fire Marshal, LCFR Lieutenant, or LCFR Captain with at least two years as a career LCFR Captain. Certification or licensure required by federal, state or local regulations: NFPA 1001 Fire Fighter II, Virginia EMT-B, NFPA 1002 EVOC III, NFPA 472 Hazardous Materials Operations, NFPA 1002 Driver/Operator-Pumper, NFPA 1021 Fire Officer III, NFPA 1041 Fire Instructor II.

**Figure 77: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Captain**

<b>Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison</b>	
<b>Qualification Requirements for Captain</b>	
<b>Frederick County, MD</b>	Meet the training and education requirements for Lieutenant, Minimum of last 3 consecutive years of work experience as a full-time Frederick County Fire Lieutenant, Current satisfactory performance evaluation, Current Maryland State EMT-B, EMT-I or EMT-P and current CPR - Professional Rescuer certification as accepted by the Division, Successful completion of the DFRS annual compliance training, Certification as a NFPA 1021 – Fire Officer II (MFSPQB or NFSPQB), Certification as a NFPA 1041-2 – Instructor II (MFSPQB or NFSPQB), Successful completion of National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) ICS 300, Possession of a valid class B driver's license (or an equivalent license)—must be maintained throughout employment, Successful completion of the current Frederick County DFRS Captain promotional process
<b>Baltimore County, MD</b>	One year of experience as, and current employment as, a Fire Lieutenant or Emergency Medical Services Lieutenant in the Baltimore County Fire Department; plus, possession of a Fire Officer II certificate.



Montgomery County, MD	Experience: Satisfactory completion of two (2) years of career experience as a Montgomery County Division of Fire and Rescue Services Fire/Rescue Lieutenant. Education: Successful completion of thirty (30) semester hours in a degree program at an accredited college or university. Training: Successful completion of all training courses and certifications required for promotion to this class by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service. License and Certification Requirements: Possession and maintenance at all times of a valid Class "C" (or equivalent) driver's license from the applicant's state of residence as required by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. Maintenance of State of Maryland certification as EMT-B. Maintenance of all other certifications as required by the Fire/Rescue Service. For EMS Only: Possession of State of Maryland certification as Emergency Medical Technician (EMT-P).
Prince George's County, MD	PGFD Career Recruit School for Fire Fighters, classified as a Lieutenant (Y04) for a period of not less than two (2) years as of 1/01/10, National Certification Fire Officer II, 30 college credits to include*, English Composition II or equivalent, Mathematics for the Liberal Arts or College Algebra or equivalent, Public Speaking or Business Communications or equivalent, Social Science or equivalent.
Howard County, MD	Forty-five (45) semester-based credits (or 68 quarter-based credits) and at least three (3) college credits (or 5 quarter-based credits) or achieved by successful course completion at an accredited post-secondary institution in the previous 12 months from list eligibility. No experience equivalency. Two (2) years credible service classified as a HCDFRS Firefighter Lieutenant; OR One (1) year credible service classified as a HCDFRS Firefighter Lieutenant AND Bachelor's Degree. Possession of a valid Class B driver's license issued by the State of Maryland or equivalent issued by state of residence. Minimum Maryland certification as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic. Paramedic option requires certification as a National Registry, Maryland State certification EMT-P. Paramedic option requires CPR instructor certification. May require level II instructor depending on work assignment. Completion of a Howard County or MFRI Fire Officer II – Program.
Stafford County, VA	High School Diploma/GED and any combination totaling six years as a career LCFR Firefighter/EMT, LCFR Technician, LCFR Assistant Fire Marshal, or LCFR Lieutenant with at least two years as a LCFR Lieutenant, on or before the posted closing date of job ad. NFPA 1001 Firefighter II, Virginia EMT-B, NFPA 1002 EVOC III, NFPA 472 Hazardous Materials Operations, NFPA 1002 Driver/Operator-Pumper, NFPA 1021 Fire Officer II, NFPA 1041 Fire Instructor II.

Figure 78: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Lieutenant

Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison	
Qualification Requirements for Lieutenant	
Frederick County, MD	Meets the training and education requirements for Firefighter III or Fire Medic III or a combination of the two; The last three (3) consecutive years of the employee's time in title must be as a Frederick County Firefighter III, Fire-Medic III, Technician, Technician-Medic or a combination of the four; Possess current State of Maryland EMT-B, EMT-I or EMT-P and current CPR for the Professional Rescuer certification. Successful completion of the DFRS annual Compliance Training; Valid Class B Driver's license or equivalent and Frederick County Employee Driving Permit. Certification as a Fire Officer I – NFPA 1021; Certification as a Health and Safety Officer – NFPA 1521; Certification as an Instructor I – NFPA 1041; Certification as an Inspector I – NFPA 1031; A current satisfactory performance evaluation.
Baltimore County, MD	Five years of experience as a uniformed employee of the Baltimore County Fire Department, two years of which were as a Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician and/or Emergency Medical Technician/Firefighter and/or Fire Apparatus Driver Operator and/or Fire Specialist and/or Paramedic/Firefighter; plus, possession of a Fire Officer I certificate.
Montgomery County, MD	Experience: Satisfactory completion of two (2) years of career experience as a Montgomery County Division of Fire and Rescue Services Firefighter/Rescuer III OR completion of one (1) year of experience as a Montgomery County Division of Fire and Rescue Services Master Firefighter/Rescuer OR any combination of experience at these two ranks equivalent to two (2) years. NOTE: Effective January 1, 1998, the experience requirement for promotion to this class is as follows: Successful completion of three (3) years of career experience as a Montgomery County Firefighter/Rescuer III OR completion of two (2) years of experience as a Montgomery County Master Firefighter/Rescuer OR any combination of experience at these two ranks equivalent to three (3) years.  Education: Successful completion of fifteen (15) semester hours in a degree program at an accredited college or university. Training: Successful completion of all training courses and certifications required for promotion to this class by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service. License: Possession and maintenance at all times of a valid Class "C" (or equivalent) driver's license from the applicant's state of residence as required by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. Maintenance of State of Maryland certification as EMT-B. Maintenance of all other certifications as required by the Department of Fire/Rescue Services.
Prince George's County, MD	PGFD Career Recruit School for Fire Fighters, Time in Service of four (4) years as of 1/01/17, Classified as a Y03 as of 9/01/16, National Certification Fire Officer II, 15 college credits to include*, English Composition I or equivalent, Introduction to Mathematics or Applied Business Mathematics or equivalent, Public Speaking or Business Communications or equivalent.



ward County, MD	High School diploma or GED and meet the minimum requirements for Firefighter Recruit and 12 months experience as Firefighter Recruit following graduation from an approved fire academy. Possession of a valid Class C driver's license issued by the State of Maryland or equivalent issued by state of residence. Maryland certification as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic. Certain positions in the classification are allocated to the Advance Life Support (ALS) function under conditions specified in The Paramedic Option. Requires certification as a National Registry, Maryland State certification EMT-P if being hired to an Advanced Life Support allocated position. May require level II instructor depending on work assignment.
idoun County, VA	High School Diploma/GED and any combination totaling four years as a career LCFR Firefighter/EMT, LCFR Technician, or LCFR Assistant Fire Marshal. NFPA 1001 Firefighter II, Virginia EMT-B, NFPA 1002 EVOC III, NFPA 472 Hazardous Materials Operations, NFPA 1002 Driver/Operator-Pumper, NFPA 1021 Fire Officer I, NFPA 1041 Fire Instructor I.

Figure 79: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—FAO, Technician, Master FF, HVO

Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison	
Qualification Requirements for FAO, Technician, Master FF, HVO	
derick County, MD	Meets the training and education requirements for all ranks up to and including Firefighter III, Current Frederick County Firefighter III with one year time in grade at the closing date of the application process, Current satisfactory performance evaluation, Possession of current State of Maryland EMT-B, EMT-I or EMT-P and current CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certification, Successful completion of the DFRS annual compliance training, Possession of a valid Class B Driver's license or equivalent. Class B license must be maintained. Current certification as a NFPA 1002 – Fire Apparatus Driver Operator Pumps (MFSPQB/NFSPQB) Current certification as a NFPA 1041 – Instructor I (MFSPQB/NFSPQB) Successful completion of the Frederick County Fire/Rescue Technician competitive promotional process.
timore County, MD	Three years of experience as a uniformed employee of the Baltimore County Fire Department, two years of which were as a Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician and/or Emergency Medical Technician/Firefighter; plus, possession of a Firefighter II certificate and possession of a Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator certificate (NFPA 1002, engine, aerial, and tiller).
ntgomery County, MD	Experience: Eight (8) years of journey-level experience in the maintenance and repair of automotive or heavy mobile equipment, at least six (6) years of which involved maintenance and repair of fire/rescue apparatus, other heavy-duty vehicles and mobile equipment, or commercial transit equipment, and at least one (1) year of which must have involved lead level/supervisory and/or shop management responsibility. Education: Graduation from high school or High School Certificate completion recognized in the State of Maryland. Equivalency: An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted. Training: Successful completion of all training courses and certifications required by the Montgomery County Fire/Rescue Commission. License and Certification Requirements: Possession and maintenance at all times of a valid Class "A" or "B" (or equivalent) Commercial Driver's License from the applicant's state of residence appropriate to the equipment on which the employee works. Certification for maintenance of self-contained breathing apparatus for firefighting, if required for assigned position.
nce George's County, MD	National Certification Fire Fighter II as of 1/01/13, Completion of Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) program, Pumps and Aerial Apparatus Course or Equivalent, Introduction to Mathematics or Applied Business Mathematics or equivalent*, PGFD Career Recruit School for Fire Fighters, Time In Service of three (3) years as of 1/01/16, Classified as a Y03 as of 1/01/15, National Certification Fire Fighter II as of 1/01/15, Completion of Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) program, Pumps and Aerial Apparatus Course or Equivalent, Introduction to Mathematics or Applied Business Mathematics or equivalent*
ward County, MD	High School Diploma or GED and meet minimum requirements for Firefighter and served for 3 years beyond the Firefighter Trainee level. Possession of a valid Class C driver's license issued by the State of Maryland or equivalent issued by state of residence. Maryland certification as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic. Certain positions in the classification are allocated to the Advance Life Support (ALS) function under conditions specified in The Paramedic Option. Requires certification as a National Registry, Maryland State certification EMT-P if being hired to an Advanced Life Support allocated position. May require level II instructor depending on work assignment.
idoun County, VA	Education and experience needed to carry out this performance plan: High School Diploma/GED and Three years as a career LCFR Firefighter/EMT or LCFR Assistant Fire Marshal Certification or licensure required by federal, state or local regulations: NFPA 1001 Firefighter II, Virginia EMT-B, 1002 EVOC III, 472 Hazardous Materials Operations, NFPA 1002 Driver/Operator-Pumper.

Figure 80: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Firefighter/Paramedic

Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison	
Qualification Requirements for Firefighter/Paramedic	



<b>derick County, MD</b>	Possess current State of Maryland EMT-I or EMT-P and current CPR for the Professional Rescuer certification as accepted by the Division; Successful completion of Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS); Successful completion of Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS); Successful completion of Pre-hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) or International Trauma Life Support (ITLS); Completion of Designate Status. Must be FFI.
<b>timore County, MD</b>	Possession of a high school diploma or an appropriate equivalent, or employment as a uniformed member of the Baltimore County Fire Department; plus, possession of a Maryland Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic, Maryland Cardiac Rescue Technician certificate, or National Registry Paramedic Certificate or National Registry Emergency Medical Technician Intermediate/99 certificate.
<b>ntgomery County, MD</b>	Must complete Firefighter requirements and obtain possession of a Maryland Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic.
<b>nce George's County, MD</b>	Must be at least eighteen (18) years old. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent (GED). Must possess a valid driver's license. Must pass required examinations, including a written examination, a physical agility test, a background investigation, and examinations specified within the recruitment announcement. Must be willing to work various shifts and locations throughout the County.
<b>ward County, MD</b>	Possession of a valid Class C driver's license issued by the State of Maryland or equivalent issued by state of residence. Maryland certification as an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic. Certain positions in the classification are allocated to the Advance Life Support (ALS) function under conditions specified in The Paramedic Option. Requires certification as a National Registry, Maryland State certification EMT-P if being hired to an Advanced Life Support allocated position. May require level II instructor depending on work assignment.
<b>ldoun County, VA</b>	Any combination of education and experience equivalent to high school graduation or GED and age of 18 at time of application. Preference given to those having one or more of the following: National Certification in a primary fire and/or EMS discipline, Loudoun County Volunteer experience, Military experience, ALS certification as a National Registered or Virginia State EMT/I or P. Must have a valid driver's license. Must be FFI.



**Figure 81: Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison—Firefighter, Firefighter/EMT**

Jurisdictional Qualification Comparison	
Qualification Requirements for FF, FF/EMT	
<b>Frederick County, MD</b>	<p><b>Firefighter</b>—Upon graduation from the Frederick County Firefighter Recruit Academy, a Firefighter Recruit shall automatically be upgraded Firefighter I when all of the following are met: Possess current State of Maryland EMT-B, EMT-I or EMT-P and current CPR for the Professional Rescuer certification, Completion of DFRS Annual Compliance Training, Valid Class C, Maryland Vehicle Driver’s License or equivalent, and Frederick County Employee Driving Permit. Certification as a Firefighter II - NFPA 1001, Certification as a Vehicle Rescue Technician – NFPA 1006, Certification at the Hazardous Materials Operations Level – NFPA 472, Successful completion of the Emergency Vehicle Driver In-Serv (EVDIS) training course or equivalent as determined by the Division, Successful completion of the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute’s Firefighter Safety and Survival training course or equivalent as determined by the Division, Successful completion of National Incident Management System (NIMS) ICS 100, 200, ICS 700, and ICS 800 training courses.</p>
<b>Baltimore County, MD</b>	<p><b>Firefighter Specialist &amp; FF/EMT</b>—Three years of experience as a uniformed employee of the Baltimore County Fire Department, two years which were as a Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician and/or Emergency Medical Technician/Firefighter; plus, possession of a Firefighter II certificate and Fire Inspector I certificate. Successful completion of the probationary period as a uniformed employee of the Baltimore County Fire Department; plus, possession of a Firefighter II certificate and Maryland Emergency Medical Technician-Basic certificate.</p> <p><b>Firefighter</b>—Successful completion of the probationary period as a uniformed employee of the Baltimore County Fire Department; plus, possession of a Firefighter II certificate.</p>
<b>Montgomery County, MD</b>	<p><b>Firefighter</b>—Experience: None. Education: High School graduate or equivalent acceptable to the State of Maryland within two months from the time of application to a position in this class. Physical Abilities: Ability to engage in strenuous physical effort for prolonged periods as required. License and Certification Requirements: Successful completion, within one year from date of appointment, of Emergency Vehicle Operator’s course and State of Maryland certification as Emergency Medical Technician Ambulance (EMT B). Successful completion of a background investigation. A recruit must always possess and maintain a valid Class “C” (or equivalent) driver’s license from the applicant’s state of residence, as required by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. A recruit shall successfully complete and be certified to the level of NFPA Firefighter II as approved by the Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue Services before attaining permanent status. Employees hired on or after July 1, 1999 shall be tobacco free, both on and off duty, upon appointment and throughout their length of service in the Division of Fire and Rescue Services or be subject to termination.</p> <p><b>Firefighter I</b>—Experience: Satisfactory completion of one (1) year of experience as a Montgomery County Firefighter/Rescuer I (Recruit); or comparable experience as a Montgomery County fire/rescue volunteer, as determined by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services; or comparable experience as a career Firefighter in another jurisdiction, as determined by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services; or completion of the Montgomery County High School Cadet Program as approved by the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. Education: High school graduate or equivalent acceptable to the State of Maryland within two (2) months from the time of application to a position in this class. Training: Successful completion, prior to promotion to this class, of all training courses required by the Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue Services for this class. Maintenance of State of Maryland certification as Emergency Medical Technician-Ambulance (EMT-B).</p>
<b>Prince George's County, MD</b>	<p>Completion of Prince George’s Fire Department Career Recruit School for Fire Fighters. Certification as a Maryland State EMT-B. Must be at least eighteen (18) years old. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent (GED). Must possess a valid driver's license. Must pass required examinations, including a written examination, a physical agility test, a background investigation, and examinations specified within the recruitment announcement. Must be willing to work various shifts and locations throughout the County.</p>
<b>Howard County, MD</b>	<p>High School diploma or GED and minimum age of 18 years. Graduated from fire academy approved by the Howard County Chief of Fire and Rescue Services.</p>
<b>Loudoun County, VA</b>	<p>Any combination of education and experience equivalent to high school graduation or GED and age of 18 at time of application. Preference given to those having one or more of the following: National Certification in a primary fire and/or EMS discipline, Loudoun County Volunteer experience, Military experience, ALS certification as a National Registered or Virginia State EMT. Must have a valid driver's license.</p>



## FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

Although the foregoing sections of this report focused primarily on the conditions that currently exist within the FCDFRS and the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking, the intent of this study is to combine that evaluation with a look into the future and provide policy makers with information necessary to carry the system forward over the next five-to-ten years. This portion of the report provides recommendations related to the deployment of incentives and enhancements to attract and retain employees of FCDFRS.

### Short and Mid-Term Strategies

The previous sections of this report detail a considerable volume of observations relating to FCDFRS and the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking. The process of understanding, prioritizing, and implementing the recommended enhancements can be daunting, simply due to the amount of work that may be involved. To help the organization navigate through the process, the following discussion further defines the short and mid-term priorities that ESCI has identified as the most important initially.

Organizations must determine their standard on how to position themselves amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking whether it is pay and benefits or performance measures. For instance, does the organization wish to remain at the bottom of the pay scale or does it choose to be at the top? Many organizations must balance this philosophy amid political and public pressures. Once the organization determines the standard it chooses to adopt the pay and benefits can be adjusted accordingly. Once decided the plan can be developed and rolled out through the organization.

The development and movement of employees through the established pay plan is important. Employees should understand how they may advance so that they can believe that they have a future in the organization and feel valued. As part of this study, we recommend that FCG and FCDFRS consider these concepts in the adoption of a formal compensation standard.

### Short-Term

Many of the key recommendations can be implemented in the short and mid-term timeframes. The short-term recommendations are as follows:

- FCDFRS should develop a special pay incentive plan for all ranks to earn extra incentive pay for specific job functions and tasks and implement it through the negotiation process.
- Address rates of pay to employees for the job classes of Firefighter and Captain. These two classifications are the lowest paid of all the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking.
- Using the essential job duties and responsibilities, define the standard for the nature of the job class requirements and aggressively recruit qualified candidates.
- Establish a competitive standard position of pay and benefits amongst the jurisdictions chosen for benchmarking that is fiscally responsible with public resources but achieves organizational goals and objectives.
- Continue to maintain the system of pay grades that state the minimum and maximum rates that the County will pay individuals within a job class.
- Maintain the pay plan to ensure the percentage of spread and growth inside each grade is competitive but incentivizes progression for employees.



- Ensure employees understand the compensation program.

### Mid-Term

After these short-term recommendations are implemented focus can be shifted to mid-term and long range goals. Some mid-term recommendations include:

- Establish common qualifications for each rank among jurisdictions surrounding FCDFRS as outlined in NFPA 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*.
- Conduct a staffing study to ensure proper staffing levels are achieved and ensure that understaffing is not attributing to the perception of compression issues with pay.
- Develop measures to reduce overtime or identify ways to balance the amount each employee earns.

### Recommended Long-Term Strategies

The short and mid-term strategies discussed will move the organization forward substantially. A longer-term, high-level view of future needs is also important to provide a “big picture” perspective of how the organization needs to continue with future initiatives. Primarily, long-term strategies are centered on community growth and related workload and how both impact the future deployment of FCDFRS and personnel.

Some of these long-term strategies and recommendations are as follows:

- FCDFRS should consider establishing a DROP plan to compete with the local market for retirement benefits.



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## CONCLUSION

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The ESCI project team began collecting information concerning the FCDFRS services in October 2018. The team members recognize this report contains a large amount of information and ESCI would like to thank Frederick County Council, Frederick County Administration, Frederick County Human Resources Division, and the personnel of Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services for their tireless efforts in bringing this project to fruition. ESCI would also like to thank the various individuals and external organizations for their input, opinions, and candid conversations throughout this process. It is ESCI's sincere hope the information contained in this report is used to its fullest extent and the emergency services provided to the citizens of Frederick County and the surrounding area will be improved by its implementation.



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