

	 <b>STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Subject:</b>	Career Development Program
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<b>Signature of Approval:</b>	 <b>J. Dan Eggleston, Chief</b>	

**Purpose**

The Albemarle County Department of Fire Rescue’s Career Development Program is voluntary in nature and designed to recognize and reward employees for their training and job related achievements; maximize employee potential and promote growth and development within the Department; and enhance the credibility of the Department by providing the highest level of professional service to the community.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all members of the Albemarle County Department of Fire Rescue.

**Policy**

The following manual shall outline the department’s career development program and promotional process.

# ***FIRE RESCUE***

## ***ALBEMARLE COUNTY***

# Career Development Program



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## Introduction

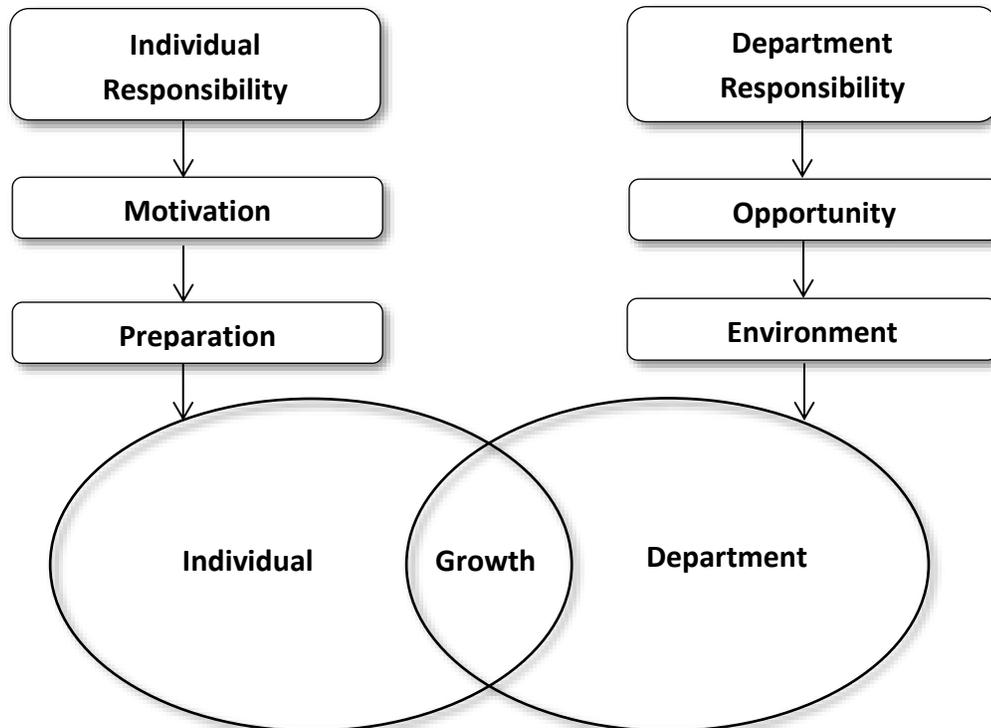
Career development provides employees with opportunities to

- increase their responsibility and authority,
- earn higher salaries, and
- ultimately grow to their full potential.

It also provides the Department with knowledgeable, effective and productive employees who are working to improve themselves and their jobs.

A well-planned career development program obviously benefits both the employee and the Department. These benefits are accompanied by certain responsibilities, best described as mutual obligations, which must be recognized and fulfilled by both the employee and the Department if career development is to occur.

The primary obligations are *motivation* and *opportunity*. The employee wishing to move ahead on the career path must have the motivation to prepare for and accept additional responsibilities and duties as provided by the Department. The Department, in turn, must contribute to an environment that fosters employee motivation, self-discipline and improvement. When established, this environment encourages participation, recognizes employer contributions and improvement efforts, and provides the opportunity for employees to develop and succeed. Recognizing and fulfilling these mutual obligations results in growth and development for the individual and the Department.



## The First Year

During the first year as a recruit and firefighter with Albemarle County Fire Rescue (ACFR) you should focus on meeting the core requirements to complete your probation, including becoming released as a firefighter, EMT, and ambulance driver. These essential functions are the gateway to the career development program and you will not be eligible to advance until they are complete. In addition, you should begin the process of educating yourself about the Department and gaining the institutional knowledge required to advance further in the program.



The requirements for Firefighter include:

- Released Firefighter, EMT, and Ambulance Driver (including FF1, EMT, CPR, & EVOC 2)
- Hazardous Materials Operations
- FEMA ICS 100, 700, 800
- DFP HTR Module 1 & 2
- DFP Vehicle Rescue
- Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS)
- Safe Kids Child Safety Seat Technician
- Tactical Emergency Casualty Care

## Horizontal Development

The first opportunity for career development is horizontal or skill based. The Department has recognized that certain specialty skills are essential to our service delivery and represent a significant increase in knowledge, skills, and abilities. Accordingly, employees should be recognized and compensated for this added value. To be eligible for this first development level all probationary requirements must be completed with the exception of the 12 months of service. The recognized skills are listed below along with the requirements to be eligible. To remain on track for further development you should strive to complete Advance Life Support (ALS) or Driver Pump Operator (DPO) by the end of your second year.

**Advanced Life Support-** Personnel below the rank of Deputy Chief who currently possess the following certifications are eligible.

- EMT-Paramedic (**EMT Intermediate is being phased out, each person certified as an EMT-Intermediate has an individual transition deadline**).
- Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)
- Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)

- Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS)
- Satisfactory completion of ALS release process, as defined by the Department.
- Satisfactory completion of annual competencies and/or continuing education, as defined by the Department.

**Driver Pump Operator-** Personnel below the rank of Deputy Chief who currently possess the following certifications are eligible.

- Driver Pump Operator (NFPA 1002)
- Satisfactory completion of DPO release process, as defined by the Department.
- Satisfactory completion of annual competencies and/or continuing education, as defined by the Department.

**Technical Rescue Technician-** Personnel below the rank of Deputy Chief who currently possess the following certifications are eligible.

- Ropes Level II (NFPA 1006, Technician level)
- Vehicle Level II (NFPA 1006, Technician level)
- Confined Space Level I (NFPA 1006, Operations level)
- Trench Rescue Level I (NFPA 1006, Operations level)
- Swift Water Rescue (NFPA 1006, Technician level)
- Satisfactory completion of annual competencies and/or continuing education, as defined by the Department.
- Personnel receiving TRT specialty pay are expected to assist with annual department con-ed and initial certification classes

**Hazardous Materials Technician-** Personnel below the rank of Deputy Chief who currently possess the following certification(s) are eligible.

- Hazmat Technician (NFPA 1072, Technician Level)
- **(Personnel who acquired HM Technician prior to the 2/22/2019 policy revision must achieve the requirements below by January 1, 2021 to remain eligible)**
  - One of the following:
    1. VDEM Hazmat Tech
    2. CDP Hazardous Materials Technician and Hazardous Materials Technologies: Sampling, Monitoring, and Detection
    3. IAFF Hazmat Tech
  - Federal Resources Hazmat IQ
  - Environmental Crimes or CDP Hazardous Materials Evidence Collection for CBRNE Incidents
- Satisfactory completion of annual competencies and/or continuing education, as defined by the Department.
- Personnel receiving HM specialty pay are expected to assist with annual department con-ed and initial certification classes

## Vertical Development

The second area of career development is vertical or responsibility based. This program was developed to provide employees with escalating levels of responsibility to prepare them to fill key roles in the department from Firefighter to Chief.

### Senior Firefighter

Senior Firefighter (SFF) is a career development step designed to recognize those employees that have been with the department enough time to gain the institutional knowledge that can only be obtained from experience. In addition, the SFF has gained valuable knowledge, skills, and abilities through designated certification training. The SFF's role within the department will include that of a mentor, field training officer, and group level supervisor.

The requirements for Senior Firefighter include:

- Five years of consecutive experience with ACFR
- Three years as a released DPO (OR) three years as a released Advanced Life Support provider
- Currently certified as an Instructor I (NFPA 1041, Level 1)

### Master Firefighter

Master Firefighter (MFF) is a career development step designed to provide employees an opportunity to fill a first level supervisory position on an intermittent basis once they have been qualified. In addition, they will take on an increased level of responsibility within their station or division, including but not limited to project work, organizing and leading activities, and administrative responsibilities.

The requirements for Master Firefighter include:

- Six years of consecutive experience with ACFR
- One year as a Senior Firefighter
- Officer I (NFPA 1021, Level 1)
- NFA Strategy and Tactics for the Company Officer
- Currently released as a DPO
- Successfully pass the MFF assessment
- Successfully complete the Department's MFF release process

### Captain

Captain is the first line supervisor for all divisions and is responsible for personnel management, administrative functions, and supervising significant projects or areas of responsibility.

The requirements for Captain include:

- Education and Experience:
  - Any combination of education and experience equivalent to an associate degree Fire Science Administration, EMS Management, Business Management or related field and
  - One year as a released Master Firefighter required

- Special Requirements for all Captains positions:
  - Officer 1 (NFPA 1021, Level 1)
  - FEMA Incident Command System 200
  - Advance Life Support provider for Albemarle County Fire Rescue preferred
  - NFA Incident Safety Officer
  - NFA Decision Making for Initial Company Officers
  - Instructor 2 (NFPA 1041, Level 2)
- The following special requirements may be required within one year of appointment based on assignment and area of responsibility (as courses are available):
  - Operations- ACFR Engine Company Inspections
  - Prevention- NFPA 1031 Fire Inspector, NFPA 1033 Fire Investigator
  - Training- OEMS Infection Control Designated Officer, Various instructional endorsements as deemed necessary by the department. Those may include, but are not limited to: VDFP FFI / FFII; EVOC; HMO; DPO, VAOEMS (Education Coordinator), AHA (BLS, ACLS, PALS), NAEMT (PHTLS, AMLS)

### **Captain II**

Captain II is a step in the career development program. It is designed to provide employees an opportunity to fill a middle management position on an intermittent basis once they become qualified. This role will lead to valuable incident command, complex personnel management, and high level administrative experience.

The requirements for Captain II include:

- One year as a Captain
- Officer 2 (NFPA 1021, Level 2)
- Released as an Advance Life Support provider for Albemarle County Fire Rescue
- FEMA Incident Command System 300
- Successfully pass the Captain II assessment
- Successfully complete the Department's Captain II release process

### **Battalion Chief**

Battalion Chief is part of the senior command staff, leads a major division or battalion and is exposed to a wide variety of administrative, management, and supervisory functions.

The requirements for Battalion Chief include:

- Education and Experience:
  - Any combination of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in Fire Science Administration, EMS Management, Business Management or related field and
  - One year as a Captain II required

- Special Requirements for all Battalion Chief positions:
  - Officer 2 (NFPA 1021, Level 2)
  - EMT-Paramedic Certification
  - FEMA Incident Command System 300
- The following special requirements may be required within one year of appointment based on assignment and area of responsibility (as courses are available):
  - Operations- OEMS Infection Control Designated Officer, NFA Arson Detection for the First Responder, Released as an Advance Life Support provider for Albemarle County Fire Rescue (pre-requisite for assignment)
  - Prevention- NFPA 1031 and 1033; Law Enforcement course approved by the Department of Fire Programs and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services as required by 27.34.2 of the Code of Virginia
  - Training- Released as an Advance Life Support provider for Albemarle County Fire Rescue (pre-requisite for assignment), NFPA 1041 Instructor 3, and various instructional endorsements as deemed necessary by the department. Those may include, but are not limited to: FF I/II, Officer I, EVOC, Instructor I, NFA Safety Officer)

### **Deputy Chief**

Deputy Chief is an executive level position that manages one of three major areas of the department, operations, administration, and volunteer services. This position is comprised of a variety of high level responsibilities including administrative, management, and supervisory functions.

The requirements for Deputy Chief include:

- Education and Experience:
  - Any combination of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in Fire Science Administration, EMS Management, Business Management or related field and
  - One year experience as a senior chief officer required
- Special Requirements for Deputy Chief positions:
  - Officer 3 (NFPA 1021, Level 3)
  - FEMA Incident Command System 400
  - Advance Life Support Certified (EMT I or P)
  - NFA Executive Fire Officer or Chief Fire Officer designation preferred

### **Fire Chief**

The Chief of the department is the chief executive officer and is responsible for management and oversight of all fire and EMS services provided in Albemarle County.

The requirements for Fire Chief include:

- Education and Experience:
  - Any combination of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in Fire Science Administration, EMS Management, Business Management or related field required with a Master's Degree preferred

- Candidate must have a total of 15 years fire rescue experience with a minimum of 5 years at the senior management level
- Experience in a combination fire and EMS system required
- Special Requirements for Fire Chief:
  - Officer 4 (NFPA 1021, Level 4)
  - FEMA Incident Command System 400
  - Emergency Medical Technician
  - NREMT-Paramedic preferred
  - NFA Executive Fire Officer or Chief Fire Officer designation preferred

## Mentoring

Mentoring is the most frequent form of career development we can provide. It provides valuable on the job training and guidance from a more experienced or senior member of the department. Every member should consider themselves part of this mentoring process; teaching members at lower levels to excel in their current position and preparing them for the next one. This will require personnel to entrust newer members with added responsibility, providing constructive feedback, and supporting them if they fail. This process not only provides valuable experiences for each member but breathes innovation into the department as new methods to accomplish tasks are developed.

## Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is an opportunity for you to partner with a member in another area of the department or County for a short period to gain a better understanding of what their job entails.

Within Fire Rescue, job shadowing allows personnel to explore positions that are available to them through lateral transfer. This results in a better understanding of how other positions impact their work and in some cases, may lead to future interest in that position.

Personnel are also encouraged to take advantage of job shadowing opportunities throughout the rest of the County departments. This provides valuable networking experience and an increased level of perspective of how they fit into the overall County organization. In support of the County's One Organization vision, job shadowing should be used to identify business processes that can be improved between departments. Employees interested in promotion will have an opportunity to discuss their experiences during the promotional process.

Job shadowing should be targeted and job appropriate to provide maximum benefit. Below are recommendations for each level of career development. Personnel interested in job shadowing should complete a [training application](#).

Position	Internal	External
<b>Senior Firefighter</b>	Prevention Inspector Training Instructor	Building Inspector Patrol Officer
<b>Master Fighter</b>		ECC Communications Officer Police Sergeant DSS Intake
<b>Captain</b>	Prevention Captain Training Captain	Police PIO Purchasing Agent
<b>Captain II</b>	Administrative BC	
<b>Battalion Chief</b>	Battalion Chief- Prevention Battalion Chief- Training Battalion Chief- Operations	DSS Case Worker Police Lieutenant Risk Manager Safety and Wellness Coord.
<b>Deputy Chief</b>		Emergency Management Coordinator Human Resources Manager

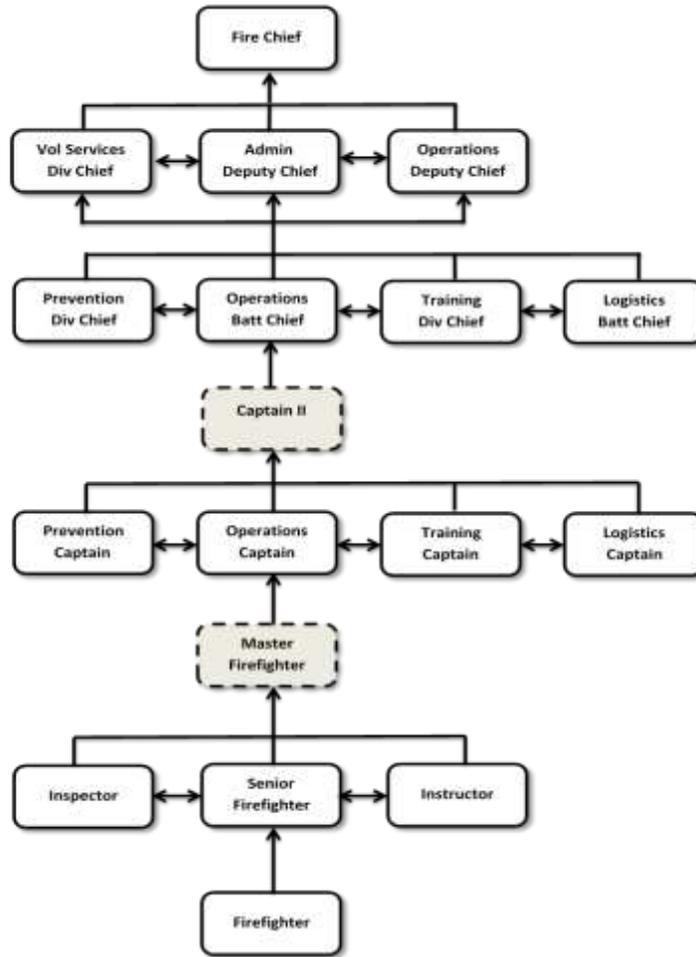
### Lateral Transfers

The career development program is designed to allow movement between divisions in order to give employees the same opportunities regardless of their assignment. This open framework provides several benefits to the employee and the department including:

- providing development opportunities that wouldn't exist in a single division;
- providing the maximum number of advancement opportunities;
- creating organizational capacity; and
- ensuring succession planning.

The figure below illustrates positions and ranks within the department and potential promotional pathways, but does not necessarily represent the department's [organizational structure](#). The white boxes represent actual positions within each division, while the grey boxes represent qualifications that can be obtained while assigned to any division.

Employees interested in transferring to another division should review the requirements for that position and include them in their individual development plan to ensure they are prepared when a position is available. Assignments should not be considered permanent and will typically last 3-5 years. Personnel interested in a lateral transfer should complete a transfer bid when positions become available.

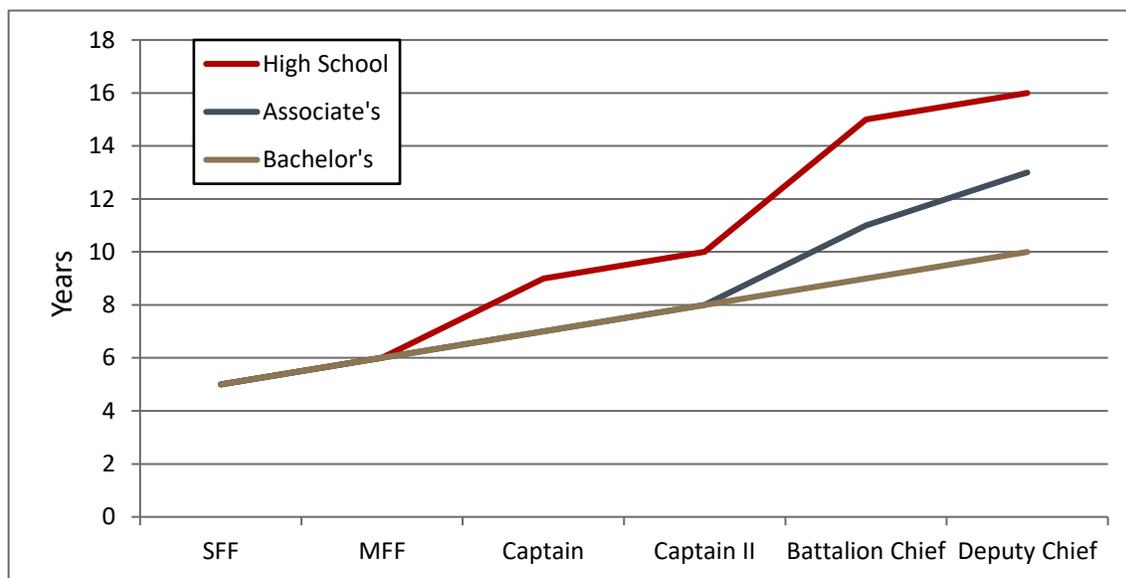


## Certification Training

Professional education opportunities are also extremely valuable in developing a member's knowledge, skills, and abilities. These courses are generally more specific to the fire and EMS service and will provide job related objectives, case studies, and projects. There are a number of quality courses available through the [Virginia Department of Fire Programs](#), [National Fire Academy](#), and other organizations. To ensure the highest standards, ACFR recognizes certifications issued through nationally recognized agencies such as [Pro-Board](#), [NREMT](#), or the [AHA](#); in addition, certifications must be recognized by the appropriate state agency (VDFP, VA-OEMS, or DCJS). Personnel interested in attending a program should submit a [training application](#) to request approval.

## Education

The department recognizes the benefit of members completing accredited college level course work and provides incentive pay for the completion of an Associate's or Bachelor's degree. It provides the member with a valuable education and helps to professionalize the fire service. Escalating educational requirements are found throughout the career development plan to encourage personnel to complete post-secondary level degrees. While career advancement can be achieved without obtaining a college degree, it will likely progress at a slower rate. The figure below compares the potential career timeline of an employee with no college education to one that meets the educational requirements. The County offers a tuition reimbursement program to all regular employees and can be accessed by completing the Human Resource Department's [Tuition Reimbursement Request](#) form. Those seeking equivalency for the education requirements can find additional information in the [promotional process](#) section.



\*Assumes promotion occurs at earliest eligibility

## Professional Credentials

A Professional Designation is recognition of broad career and educational professional accomplishments. In addition, it provides national credibility to you, the department, and the fire service. The department recognizes the [Center for Public Safety Excellence's](#) (CPSE) credentialing standards and encourages personnel to pursue the following designations based on their rank.

- Fire Officer (FO)
- Fire Marshal (FM)
- Chief Training Officer (CTO)
- Chief EMS Officer (CEMSO)
- Chief Fire Officer (CFO)

The department will reimburse personnel for all administrative costs associated with achieving or maintaining these designations and members receiving their initial designation will be recognized at the annual awards ceremony.

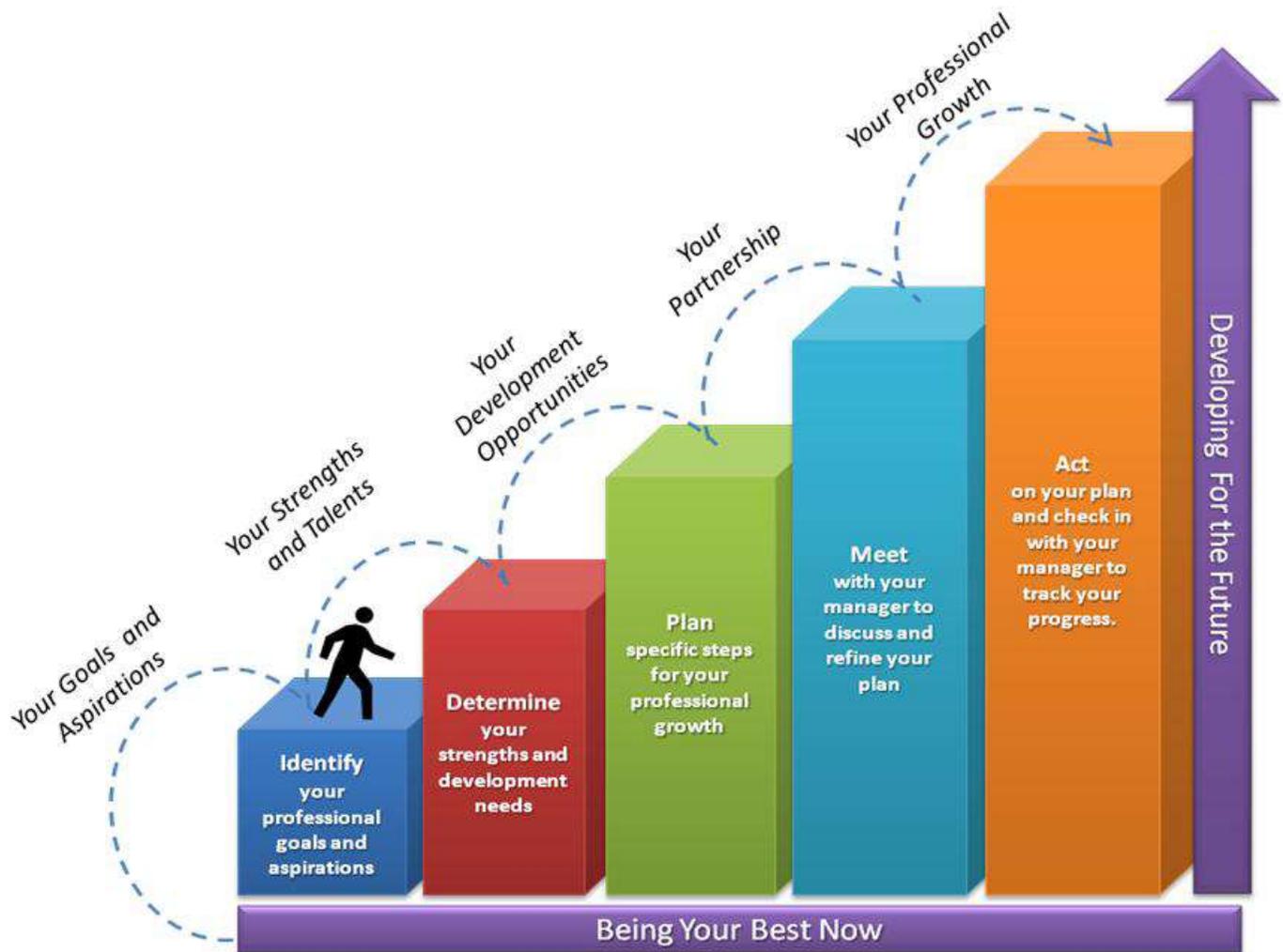
## Career Counseling

Career counseling is the process of explaining the career development program and helping the employee identify career goals and career plans. Career development begins with and success depends on effective career counseling. Career counseling focuses on the employee's career goals and the preparation of career plans. It should lead to a career plan that identifies the employee's short-term and long-term career goals, the training and development needed to achieve those goals, and the range of career options to provide flexibility for growth and development. Career counseling should be a continuous process, but should be formally reviewed at least once a year to achieve the following objectives:

- Identify an employee's strengths and weaknesses and discuss these findings with the employee
- Aid the employee in developing a plan to address areas that need improvement
- Determine the employee's goals and aspirations
- Review an employee's progress within the Career Development Program to ensure the employee is meeting the requirements necessary for advancement

The County's annual performance evaluation process is a natural opportunity to review current performance as well as future goals. This review of current performance, career goals, and current position within the career development program is the basis for your [individual development plan \(IDP\)](#).

The IDP will identify the professional goals that matter to you, determine what experiences, skills and behaviors will help you achieve those goals and then create a plan of action to achieve your goals. You will work with your supervisor to evaluate areas that have the greatest potential to pay off for you, and for the organization, in the short term and longer term. In this way, you and the department can succeed together.



### Promotional Process

The career development program is designed to prepare internal personnel to fill roles throughout the department. Therefore, it is the Department's intent to fill vacancies through internal promotional processes and not advertise externally, with the exception of the positions of Deputy Chief and Fire Chief. If an insufficient pool of qualified candidates exists for a vacancy, the Chief in his/her sole discretion may elect to advertise a position externally to ensure the health and welfare of the Department.

Promotional processes are divided into two categories, competitive and non-competitive. Non-competitive means positions are unlimited and candidates are only competing against themselves. If the position requires an assessment to qualify it will be a simple pass/fail process. In contrast, competitive processes have a limited number of openings and candidates compete against one another for an opening. Assessments are designed to be slightly more difficult in order to determine the most qualified candidate.

### Non-competitive

Non-competitive positions include the rank of Senior Firefighter, Master Firefighter, and Captain II. Personnel interested in one of these positions must meet all requirements at the time of application with the exception of the service requirement. If they will meet the service requirement prior to the next scheduled assessment opportunity then they will be allowed to participate. If successful, their promotion will become effective when the service requirement is met. There is no assessment in the case of Senior Firefighter, so candidates will be eligible for promotion as soon as they meet all requirements.

### Competitive

Competitive positions include the rank of Captain, Battalion Chief, Deputy Chief, and Chief. Personnel interested in one of these positions must meet all requirements as outlined in the job description at the time of application.

### Educational Equivalency

Candidates that don't meet the educational requirements for a position will be allowed to request equivalency based on a combination of education and work experiences. Equivalent experience, as outlined in the job description, may be substituted for each year of education required. This approach allows an employee to choose a number of combinations to meet the requirements. It should be noted, however, two additional points will be awarded to those candidates satisfying the preferred educational degree.

The following example illustrates three options to meet the education and experience requirements for Battalion Chief, but others may exist based on the individual candidate's education and experience. The same methodology can be applied for each position.

Employee	Education (Bachelor's Required)	Experience (1 year Captain II Required)	Qualified
A	Bachelor's Degree	1 Year Captain II	Yes
B	AS or 60 credits toward BS	3 Years Captain II	Yes
C	No college	5 Years Captain II	Yes

### Selection Process

#### Overview

The procedures for promoting someone into a position of Master Firefighter, Captain, Captain II, Battalion Chief, or Deputy Chief can be grouped into seven general rounds of activity.

- Application Process
- Practical Exercises
- Interview Panel Process
- Executive Interview
- Background Investigation
- Fire Chief's Appointment
- Probationary Period

### Application Process

- In order to provide candidates the ability to plan for upcoming promotional processes, the following schedule has been determined. At times it may be necessary to deviate from this schedule in order to meet department needs.
  - Master Firefighter – every 12 months
  - Captain – as vacancy occurs
  - Captain II – every 12 months
  - Battalion Chief – as vacancy occurs
  - Deputy Chief – as vacancy occurs
  
- Promotional processes will be well communicated to all staff providing at least thirty (30) days of written advanced notice.
- All applicants must notify the Human Resources Department (HRD) by utilizing the online application system by the official closing date. Notifications should include a cover letter.
- All applications will be reviewed by the Battalion Chief of Training and the HRD to ensure that the eligibility requirements are met.
- HRD will oversee all promotional processes and provide guidance to the design of each element. HRD will not be an assessing member of the panel unless requested by the Fire Chief.
- The Fire Chief shall select individuals to design the specific elements to be used in the course of the promotional process, and to determine the eligibility list. These individuals will be required to agree in writing to maintain the confidentiality of the process.
- Participation as an assessor shall include representatives of equal or higher rank and will derive from the Department and in the case of competitive processes external departments.
- HRD's leadership role shall include:
  - Orienting the members to their task and providing support services.
  - Assuring that the same structured format is followed within the same time limits, and the same questions are asked of each candidate for the promotion under consideration.
  - Reminding each candidate that they should not discuss any of the questions posed to them or their responses with anyone without release from the Fire Chief or designee from the confidentiality agreement.

### Assessment Center Elements

- Interview Panel Process:
  - The Panel will ask each candidate the same questions in a methodical and equitable manner.
  - The Panel shall individually grade each candidate on their responses.
  - The Panel shall ask follow-up questions regarding candidate responses as necessary.

- Interview response forms shall be collected from the Panel to be stored as per County/HRD guidelines.

#### Practical Exercises

- The promotional process design group is responsible for designing the specific details of the practical exercises including:
  - Written Exercise- The written exercise is designed to evaluate the candidates writing ability along with their critical thinking. The candidate will be provided information to review and asked to complete a writing assignment that may consist of, but not limited to a memo, letter, evaluation, accident report, or personnel investigation.
  - Incident Management- The incident management exercise is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to safely and effectively manage an emergency incident. The level of complexity should be consistent with the position sought and may include any type of emergency incident, completing an incident report and/or a media interview.
  - Personnel Management- The personnel management exercise is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to effectively manage assigned personnel. It may consist of, but not limited to coaching, mentoring, disciplinary action, and personnel evaluations.
  - Time Management- The time management exercise is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to manage a number of tasks simultaneously through prioritization and delegation. The candidate is expected to not only complete tasks effectively, but to maintain a high quality of work. It may consist of, but not limited to phone calls, information requests, and staffing.

#### Executive Interview

- The purpose of the Executive Interview (EI) is to provide the Fire Chief and Deputy Chiefs the opportunity to contribute to the promotional process. The EI scores will contribute to the candidate's final score. The EI process will include:
  - Several interview questions reviewed by the HRD.
  - Review of contributions to the department throughout career.
  - Participants include the Fire Chief and Deputy Chiefs.
  - Interview response forms shall be collected from the EI to be stored as per County/HRD guidelines.

### Scoring Methodology

- The following scoring methodology will be utilized to rank candidates on the eligibility list. In the case of non-competitive processes, a candidate is required to score a 70 or greater to be successful.

Position	Written Exercise	Incident Management	Personnel Management	Time Management	Panel Interview	Executive Interview
Master FF	N/A	80%	N/A	N/A	20%	N/A
Captain	10%	25%	15%	10%	15%	25%
Captain II	10%	50%	N/A	10%	10%	20%
Battalion Chief	10%	25%	15%	10%	15%	25%

### Background Investigation

- Background checks will be conducted by the HRD on each candidate prior to promotion.
- Background checks shall not weigh into the ranking of the eligibility list.
- Background checks will include the following:
  - Interviews with supervisors, peer, and/or subordinates and consist of at least four contacts.
  - Review of any letters of reprimand in the previous twenty-four (24) months.
  - Review of multiple instances of documented performance issues in the previous thirty-six (36) months.
  - Review of annual performance evaluation scores over the previous thirty-six (36) months.
- Background checks will only impact one's promotion if the investigation's findings illuminate job-related deficiencies.

### Eligibility Lists

- Eligibility lists will be used for Captain, and Battalion Chief processes.
- All eligible employees who successfully complete the promotional process will be included on the eligibility list. Employees will be ranked.
- Eligibility list ranking will be based solely on scoring from the element(s) of the process.
- The eligibility list will not be published, but candidates will be informed of their position on the eligibility list.
- The eligibility list will remain in effect for a maximum of 12 months or until the next promotional process is announced at the Fire Chief's discretion.

### Fire Chief's Appointment

- The Fire Chief's selection from among the candidates will be dictated by the eligibility list and, if applicable the findings of the background check.
- Should a candidate be passed over or refuse promotion for any reason they will retain their ranking on the list and the Fire Chief will consider the candidate with the next highest ranking.

### Promotional Probationary Period

- All newly promoted personnel will have a one-year probationary period.
- During this period there will be a 6-month Supervisory Probation Review by their immediate supervisor and a final Supervisory Probation Review after the one year probationary period has ended.
- The Supervisory Probation Review Form is on SharePoint and it is not a substitute for the annual Albemarle County Employee Performance Evaluation Form.
- At any point during the probationary period, if the employee's performance is unsatisfactory the employee will be considered for any vacancies at their previous rank.
- The promotional probationary period is not applied similarly to that of the probationary period for new employees in that it:
  - Does not prevent them from participating in the annual merit process
  - May be grieved
  - May not result in immediate dismissal unless infractions warrant

## Compensation

Once an employee successfully completes a portion of the career program, as described above it will be their responsibility to notify their supervisor and submit a [Pay Change Request](#) form. The Deputy Chief shall determine whether the employee has satisfactorily met the criteria and if applicable, notify the Human Resources Department of the change in compensation and effective date of such change.

**Educational Incentive** – Employees that hold a college degree from an accredited institution will receive additional pay as outlined below:

Degree	Additional Pay
Associate's Degree	\$1000
Bachelor's Degree	\$2000

**Horizontal Development** - Eligible employees shall receive additional pay for each specialty achieved as outlined below:

Specialty	Additional Pay (or specialty pay)
Advance Life Support	\$8500
Driver Pump Operator	\$1000
Technical Rescue Technician	\$1000
Hazardous Material Technician	\$1000

**Vertical Development** - Compensation shall increase according to the County's Public Safety Pay Plan. The rank of Deputy Chief and Chief will be administered according to the Classified Pay Plan and are not eligible for specialty pay.

Position	Percent Increase for Promotion	Additional Pay Eligible
Firefighter	5%	Yes
Senior Firefighter	5%	Yes
Master Firefighter	5%	Yes
Captain	15%	Yes
Captain II	5%	Yes
Battalion Chief	15%	Yes

Employees utilized in a higher position for greater than ten (10) consecutive days will receive acting pay consistent with [County Policy P-60](#).

## Remediation/Demotion

### Remediation

At times, instances of gross poor technical performance may be identified and must be remediated. The intent of remediation is to ensure that the integrity of the career development program is maintained. Minor deficiencies are expected and are handled through training and performance management. Gross deficiencies shall be handled through remediation.

The intent of the remediation process is to bring a previously high performing employee back to performing at an adequate level after deficiencies have been identified.

The remediation process allows an interim step before an employee loses specialty pay or is demoted. An employee in remediation can work to eliminate knowledge, skills, and/or abilities deficiencies and reach an adequate level of performance. If successful, the employee avoids losing specialty pay and/or being demoted.

The following procedure shall be used for remediation:

- Individuals in remediation will work directly with his/her supervisor to remediate; working on refining knowledge/skills/abilities specific to his/her identified deficiency.
- An employee in remediation has sixty (60) calendar days to successfully pass a reassessment.
- At least two, opportunities shall be made available by the department to an individual for reassessment.

The Department has identified two specific skill sets as requiring regular practice to maintain proficiency – Advanced Life Support and Driver Pump Operator. Therefore, any employee not regularly practicing/performing in these roles for a period greater than 12 months will be required to undergo reassessment prior to being released to practice at that level again.

### **Demotion**

If an employee fails to remediate poor technical performance and/or engages in misconduct, inconsistent with the County's and the Department's standards of conduct or any other relevant policies, the Fire Chief reserves the right to demote employees in the career development program to lower levels and/or remove specialty pay as necessary.

The following procedures shall be used for reducing an employee's compensation when demoted.

- Removal of the specialty pay from the employee's annual salary.
- If an employee's rank is dependent on the specialty removed, the employee will be moved to the highest eligible rank on the public safety pay plan.
- Performance or conduct based demotions will result in a decrease in salary consistent with [County Policy P-60](#) and any other relevant factors.

### **Separation of Employment**

Employees who have a separation of employment from ACFR for any reason, including resignation, termination, or transfer to another County department will forfeit their standing within the career development program and any associated pay.

If an employee returns to ACFR after a separation they will be reset at their hired position and will have to reestablish any vertical growth based on the current requirements. Specialty pay may be immediately reinstated if the separation is less than twelve (12) months and no deficiencies are noted in the employee's work history. A skill assessment may be conducted at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

## Job Descriptions

This document is the official source for career development step requirements including Senior Firefighter, Master Firefighter, and Captain II. Although the requirements for non-career development positions including Firefighter, Captain, Battalion Chief, Deputy Chief, and Fire Chief are included in this document, the Albemarle County Human Resources Department maintains the official job descriptions and requirements. The official job descriptions can be located utilizing the links below.

[Firefighter / Emergency Medical Technician](#)

[Fire Captain](#)

[Fire Rescue Battalion Chief \(exempt\)](#)

[Fire Rescue Battalion Chief \(non-exempt\)](#)

[Deputy Chief of Fire Rescue](#)

[Chief of Fire Rescue](#)