



Talking Points | Ohio Task Force on Volunteer Fire Service

Task Force

- ◆ Created by Gov. Mike DeWine in April 2022 in partnership with the Ohio Department of Commerce Division of State Fire Marshal.
- ◆ The mission of the Task Force is to improve the future sustainability of volunteer fire departments in Ohio.
- ◆ Focus on four areas - recruitment / retention, response / operations, financial resources, and training.
- ◆ Task Force consists of 25 members from around the state representing local volunteer fire departments, municipalities, and state agencies.
- ◆ Recommendation Report is due to the Governor June 2023 – with a statewide listening tour, survey, and extensive task force and subcommittee work between now and then.

Volunteer Fire Service

- ◆ Ohio has 1180 fire departments with approximately 70% of the fire services to residents in the state provided by volunteers.
- ◆ Ohio's fire departments receive nearly 1.4 million calls a year.
- ◆ Volunteer fire departments protect underserved and under-resourced communities.
- ◆ Volunteer firefighters typically have full time jobs but are willing and able to be trained and called upon to assist in the event of an emergency.
- ◆ Each year, fewer volunteers are available to meet the community needs.
- ◆ Volunteer fire department's community response is most significantly impacted by staffing, training, and funding levels.
- ◆ Initial certification training for volunteer firefighters is a fast-paced curriculum in which large amounts of critical information is covered quickly and sometimes ineffectively, resulting in high failure rates.
- ◆ Continuing education requirements are perceived to be a burden and challenge for volunteer staff retention.
- ◆ Volunteer fire departments in Ohio must have secure, stable, and adequate funding to protect their communities competently and safely.



Department
of Commerce

Division of State Fire Marshal



VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE IN OHIO

Department Type*



515 Fire Departments

60 Private Fire Companies

407 Volunteer Fire Departments

198 Volunteer Private Fire Companies

All Fire Departments*

Grand Total

1180

*6.5% decrease*** in number of volunteer firefighters from 2018-2021*

9% ↑

*increase in calls from 2018-2020***

49,253
fire calls in 2018

850,137
EMS calls

1,264,303
Fire department calls

50,956
fire calls in 2019

924,330
EMS calls

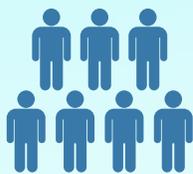
1,356,853
Fire department calls

53,878
fire calls in 2020

947,947
EMS calls

1,381,398
Fire department calls

Biggest Challenges Impacting Volunteer Fire Service in Ohio



Recruitment and retention



Time demands



Financial resources at the local level



Training Requirements

Individuals interested in becoming a volunteer firefighter should contact their local volunteer fire department or the **Ohio Fire Academy** at **614-752-7196**. Individuals must obtain a certification to provide firefighting services in the State of Ohio.

*As reported to the Division of the State Fire Marshal **Information from the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)/Ohio Fire Incident Reporting System (OFIRS) *** Ohio Emergency Medical Services



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