



JOHNS CREEK FIRE DEPARTMENT

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To: Ronnie Campbell, Finance Director & Meen Bapu, Human Resources Director

From: Chris Coons, Fire Chief

Date: 27 March 2025

Topic: FY2026 Budget-Request to increase Paramedic Bonus amount

Proposal for Paramedic Bonus Increase

Background:

Since 2016, the Johns Creek Fire Department has maintained a paramedic bonus of \$2,500. However, recruiting and retaining qualified paramedics has become increasingly challenging. The number of paramedics employed by the department has declined from over 40 to 29 due to retirements and departures, with some personnel leaving for agencies that offer more competitive compensation packages.

Challenges:

- Recruiting lateral paramedics has become more difficult.
- Encouraging current department members to pursue paramedic certification is increasingly challenging.
- The 2023 compensation study acknowledged pay disparities between FF/EMTs and FF/Paramedics but did not fully bridge the gap compared to competing departments.
- The existing paramedic bonus remains unchanged since 2016 and does not reflect current market conditions.

Proposal:

To address these challenges and improve retention and recruitment, it is proposed to increase the annual paramedic bonus from \$2,500 to \$5,000 for all certified paramedics in the Johns Creek Fire Department.

Rationale:

- A higher paramedic bonus will provide a stronger financial incentive for department members to pursue and maintain paramedic certification.
- Increasing the bonus will help attract lateral paramedics from other agencies.
- Retaining experienced paramedics will enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of emergency medical services within the department.

- A competitive bonus structure aligns with industry standards and helps ensure the department remains an attractive employer for skilled professionals.

Conclusion:

By implementing this proposed increase, the Johns Creek Fire Department will strengthen its ability to recruit and retain skilled paramedics, ultimately enhancing the quality of emergency medical services provided to the community. We recommend approval of this proposal to support the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the department's paramedic workforce.