



# City of Huntington Beach

**File #:** 20-1704

**MEETING DATE:** 6/15/2020

## REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

**SUBMITTED TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**SUBMITTED BY:** Oliver Chi, City Manager

**PREPARED BY:** Travis Hopkins, Assistant City Manager

**Subject:**

**Approve the addition of Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee to the Temporary Position Listing, and the Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee Employment Agreement Form**

**Statement of Issue:**

In order to reduce costs, while also providing growth opportunities for part-time employees, staff is requesting approval of a Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee temporary position and employment agreement. Because the position has been structured as temporary in nature, it would fall outside of the competitive service system, and staff is correspondingly seeking approval of an at-will employment agreement to specify job duties and confer benefits. Approval of this position and employment agreement would create opportunity pathways for future Huntington Beach Firefighters and Firefighter Paramedics, and result in considerable salary and benefit savings during the training process.

**Financial Impact:**

The Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee position is proposed to fall under Part-Time Level 20 of the City's Pay Schedule for Part-time Non-Permanent and Non-Classified Employee listing. The pay range at this level is between \$21.82 / hour and \$27.04 / hour. Comparatively, the Firefighter position salary ranges between \$34.97 / hour and \$43.30 / hour. Recruiting employees into the Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee position while they are being trained, rather than straight into the Firefighter position, would result in significant salary savings during the training period.

Firefighters also receive a wide range of benefits as specified in the Huntington Beach Firefighters' Association Memorandum of Understanding. The proposed employment agreement for the Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee position would provide a more limited range of benefits as outlined in Exhibit B of Attachment #2.

**Recommended Action:**

A) Approve the addition of Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee to the "City of Huntington Beach Pay Schedule for Part-Time Non-Permanent and Non-Classified Employees;" and,

B) Approve the attached Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee Employment Agreement approved as to form by the City Attorney, and authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute the document.

**Alternative Action(s):**

Do not approve the Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee Employment Agreement, and direct staff accordingly.

**Analysis:**

Currently, the City hires new employees into sworn Firefighter positions, and the employees then complete the eight-week Huntington Beach Fire Department Fire Academy. For individuals looking to advance into the Firefighter / Paramedic role, employees may also attend and complete a six-month long accredited California Paramedic Program. Together, these training programs take around eight months to complete.

The Fire Chief has requested a Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee position be created and added to the City's temporary position listing, formally known as the City's Pay Schedule for Part-time Non-Permanent and Non-Classified Employee listing (Attachment #1). Pursuant to Huntington Beach Municipal Code section 2.76.010(h), temporary employees are exempt from the competitive service system and are not part of any recognized bargaining unit in Huntington Beach.

The Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee will provide a clear pathway for qualified City staff, particularly for City Ambulance Operators and Lifeguards, to receive the necessary training to become Firefighters and Firefighter Paramedics. This full-time temporary position, lasting approximately eight months, would result in significant salary and benefits savings to the City, while Trainees attend and complete an accredited CA Paramedic Program and the Huntington Beach Fire Department Fire Academy. Furthermore, the Trainee position would help the City attract and retain talented employees, who may otherwise leave for full-time positions with other Orange County Fire Departments, with whom we compete.

City Council approval of the Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee Employment Agreement would allow the hiring of temporary employees into these positions using this template. Any future modifications to the agreement would be brought back for City Council approval.

**Environmental Status:**

Not applicable.

**Strategic Plan Goal:**

Enhance and modernize public safety service delivery

**Attachment(s):**

1. City of Huntington Beach Pay Schedule for Part-Time Non-Permanent and Non-Classified Employees
2. Firefighter / Paramedic Trainee Employment Agreement, including Exhibit A (Job Duties) and Exhibit B (Benefits)