

Key Considerations for Diversity Recruitment and Retention

- Form Diverse Recruitment Team – if there’s not enough diversity in your organization, seek assistance from other fire departments or civilian organizations.
- Develop Long-Term Relationships with community leaders of the groups you will be recruiting from, include on team.
- Analyze Current Organizational Culture – Does it welcome diversity? If not, how do we change?
- Identify and Remove Obstacles in Selection Process
- Identify Target Groups – Youth organizations, churches, gyms, community centers, amateur sports teams...
- Market to Target Groups – Posters, brochures, career days, community center visits, church/school visits, community speaking engagements, internet, reach out to diversity organizations for assistance, develop media partnerships, etc. Keep in mind that recruiters need to look like the people you want to hire.
- Market to Fire Department Personnel – Confront & debunk myth that recruiting women and minorities means lowering standards, conduct training on benefits of diversity as it relates to customer service and to internal leadership & professional development, involve members in recruitment, develop incentives for successful recruitment, provide on-going communications to personnel about the process, etc.
- Identify and Remove Obstacles in Organizational Systems – insure performance appraisals reward desired behaviors, discipline & accountability, officer development programs, on-going human relations training for all personnel, policies and procedures, recognition & reward systems also need to reward inclusive behaviors.
- Establish Mentoring Program – This is extremely important.
 - ✓ Applicant Testing Prep (written, interviewing, agility, etc.)
 - ✓ Post Hire Support Program
 - ✓ Cultural competence training for mentors and officers is essential.
- Provide On-Going Human Relations Training for FD Members – damage control or “what not to do” training is not sufficient.
- Develop Organization Reward-Recognitions Systems for Supporting Diversity

Recruitment and Retention Working Model: Madison Fire Department

Madison Fire Department, Wisconsin: Named most diverse fire department in the United States by 2006 IAFF Study. To download a copy of the report go to:

<http://www.ci.madison.wi.us/fire/recruitment/IAFFStudyPlacesMadisonNo1.htm>

For information on Madison Fire Department’s recruitment program go to:

http://www.cityofmadison.com/fire/recruitment/recruitment_hiring.htm

Related Resources

- “Leading Diverse Communities Beyond Conflict” 16 hr. program – contact your state fire training director to request this National Fire Academy direct delivery program in your area.
- “Command Officer Training Curriculum” (COTC) with 32-hr Human Relations Module: National Fire Academy, E-mail Diane.Close@dhs.gov for state fire training representative to request curriculum.
- National Coalition Building Institute provides diversity training. www.ncbi.org
- “Recruiting and Retaining Women: A Self-Assessment Guide for Law Enforcement” www.feminist.org/police/ncwp.html
- Maryland Fire Rescue Institute EEO Officer Training program. pbrown@mfri.org
- Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Recruitment Program. Contact Richard Sweatt, EEO Officer
- International Association of Black Professional Firefighters www.iabpff.org
- National Hispanic Firefighters Assn. www.nahf.org
- National Native American Fire Chiefs Assn. 520-568-2258
- Women in the Fire Service www.wfsi.org
- Women Chief Fire Officers www.womenfireofficers.org