

DIVISION OF FIRE

DESCRIPTION

The Henrico County Division of Fire provides fire suppression, emergency medical services, technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, fire prevention, public education, and disaster preparedness to the citizens and visitors of Henrico County.

The Division of Fire is a community-driven, professional public safety and service organization that takes pride in stewardship and innovation, while maintaining public trust. The Division is committed to, and guided by, its core values of Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, and Empathy (PRIDE).

The Division of Fire is an all-hazards department focusing on improving the quality of life for all citizens in Henrico County. The Division takes a proactive approach to reducing risk throughout the community through a wide range of planning, response, and recovery initiatives. In addition to the traditional role providing fire prevention and protection, the Division is the primary provider of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), including both first response and advanced life support (ALS) emergency transport. The Division includes several specialty teams within the operation, including hazardous materials, technical rescue, tactical medic, robotics response, marine response, and the dive team. The Division also supports state and national emergency response operations as a member of the Maritime Incident Response Team, Central Virginia Technical Rescue Team, Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Regional Hazardous Materials Team, and the Central Virginia Incident Management Team.

OBJECTIVES

- Enhance the county’s overall ability to prepare for, respond to, mitigate, and recover from emergencies and disasters by developing a community-driven service delivery model.
- Ensure a workforce that exemplifies the core values of the Division of Fire and is prepared to achieve the mission and vision.
- Ensure business procedures, data, and technology systems that support current and future requirements of the Division of Fire.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUMMARY

Description	FY23 Actual	FY24 Original	FY25 Approved	Change 24 to 25
Personnel	\$ 74,875,069	\$ 76,204,023	\$ 82,466,316	8.2%
Operation	8,393,663	7,659,784	8,632,970	12.7%
Capital	1,427,687	1,210,452	1,483,712	22.6%
Total	<u>\$ 84,696,419</u>	<u>\$ 85,074,259</u>	<u>\$ 92,582,998</u>	<u>8.8%</u>

Personnel Complement 638 650 * 677 ** 27

* Reflects 9 firefighters and 2 lieutenants for Firehouse 23, and 1 clinical coordinator.

** Reflects 14 FF for overtime, 1 Operations Medical Director, 1 Peer Recovery Specialist (Marcus Alert and Cares Teams), and 9 FF, 2 Lt., and 1 Cpt. for FH 23, One Management Specialist II (Advocate for the Aging) transferring to Resident Outreach and Engagement.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>Change 24 to 25</u>
Workload Measures				
Total Calls for Service	54,542	57,050	59,902	2,852
Total EMS and Rescue Calls for Service	45,775	48,002	50,402	2,400
Fire Incidents	8,767	9,048	9,500	452
Fires per 1,000 Population	2.36	2.16	2.26	0.10
Effectiveness Measures				
Structure Fires Contained to the Room of Origin	71%	74%	76%	2%
CPR Revival Rate	20%	20%	23%	3%

OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

- Utilize an adaptable, comprehensive, all-hazard whole community risk reduction program.
- Provide an effective and comprehensive training and certification program.
- Utilize and implement an effective and comprehensive communication plan for the Division of Fire.
- Ensure a responsive, sustainable logistics program is in place to comprehensively address the current and future needs of the Division of Fire.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Division of Fire's FY25 budget is \$92,582,998, which is an increase of \$7,508,739, or 8.8%. The personnel component, which is 89% of the total budget, is \$82,466,316, an increase of \$6,262,293, or 8.2% due to the addition of 23 firefighters (9 for Firehouse 23 and 14 for overtime relief), 1 captain and 2 lieutenants for Firehouse 23, a Medical Operations Director, and a Peer Recovery Specialist for Marcus Alert and the CARES team and increases in benefit rate changes. A Management Specialist II (Advocate for the Aging) is transferred to the new Resident Outreach and Engagement agency.

The operating component is \$8,632,790, an increase of \$973,186, or 12.7% due to increases to contractual services for critical response items, required protective equipment and uniforms for new positions, and the implementation of the Cradle Point system, which is designed to maximize communication and data reliability for division apparatus. Funding for the Tier II hazardous and toxic chemical reporting system, \$6,000, is moved to Emergency Management and Workplace Safety.

The capital component is \$1,483,712, an increase of \$273,260, or 22.6%, due to the Special Operations equipment replacement plan, which provides an organized approach to maintaining and replacing specialized equipment. Computer equipment decreased by \$500, or 11.1%, telecommunication equipment and furniture lines were unchanged.

In September 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved \$350,000 in funding for the Division of Fire Special Operations. This funding supports both equipment in the capital component and repair and maintenance of

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specialty shop equipment in the operating component, which are annual costs to support active procurement and maintenance schedules, keeping this necessary equipment available and prepared for use.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

In FY25, the Division of Fire will focus on expanding the quality of existing programs as well as continuing to provide a consistently high level of service to the citizens of the county while improving efficiency and effectiveness. Examples of these programs include enhancing firefighter safety, building upon Basic Life Support (BLS), Community Assistance Resources, and Education (CARE) programs launched in 2018, along with expanded and targeted prevention efforts in the community. These will be accomplished in an environment of increasing calls, particularly EMS and Rescue calls. Staples Mill Fire Station 20 became the twenty-second operational firehouse in 2023, and Fire Station 23 is slated for completion in 2025. The new stations provide increased efficiency to busy service areas.

The Division continues to be a leader providing emergency medical services. In FY25, General Fund support will provide medical supplies, fuel, and insurance premium payments for two volunteer rescue squads. This is in addition to “Four for Life” funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia, which flows through the Division’s budget and is disbursed to the volunteer rescue squads to reimburse for qualifying expenses. Between the “Four for Life” and General Fund Support, over \$500,000 is provided to Lakeside and Tuckahoe volunteer rescue squads.

FIREFIGHTER SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Firefighter safety and wellness is a top priority for the Division. Proper equipment and apparatus are vital to the safety of firefighters and the FY25 budget allocates resources to ensure a systematic replacement approach. In addition to exceptional equipment, the Division recognizes the importance of routine screenings to assist in identifying health risks prior to incidents, which includes cancer screenings that began in FY23. In the past two years, the entire sworn staff have been given the opportunity to schedule their cancer screening, and over half the department has been screened to date. The performed screenings have uncovered health concerns being addressed preventatively.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

The Division has continued to successfully self-certify paramedics at its training facilities. EMS continuing education for over 220 Advance Life Support providers is on track this fiscal year. Training for both experienced and new Rapid Sequence Induction (RSI) paramedics was completed with virtual learning and in person training, which helped keep the high acuity program operating as normal. The Division continues to train its members in live fire scenarios, maintaining their skills to meet the national standard. The development and career development of fire officers is a top priority, accomplished through the Henrico Fire Officers’ Academy (HFOA), which provides an excellent opportunity for front-line and aspiring officers to learn valuable leadership skills.

COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

In FY25, the Division will continue to enhance the Special Operations response programs through sound fiscal decision making and seeking external grant opportunities. These specialty teams provide an all-hazards approach to emergency response. The Dive Team is responsible for 7.5 miles of the James River in the western part of the county, over five miles above Boshers’ Dam, and is a member of the Division’s Swift Water Team. The Marine Team is part

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of the Maritime Incident Response Team as an extension of the Virginia Port of Authority in Hampton Roads. This team is responsible for a wide array of emergency services covering an area from Rockett's Landing to the Appomattox River. The Hazardous Materials Team responds to most of Central Virginia through a contract with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and has one of the largest teams in the State with 60 members trained, certified, and available to respond. The Robotics Response Team provides unmanned aerial systems coverage and supports the Henrico County Sheriff's Office Project Lifesaver Program with additional response resources to locate missing at-risk individuals. The Henrico Technical Rescue Team provides services throughout greater Central Virginia as an integral part of the Central Virginia Technical Rescue Team.

During FY24, the Division was successful in obtaining Homeland Security grant funding to support All-Hazards response preparation. These grant awards were successful in purchasing and deploying equipment for hazmat response and technical rescue efforts. With successful grant opportunities in FY25, the division will utilize funding to maintain, repair, and replace Special Operations gear to be prepared for any manmade or natural disasters.

SPECIALTY REPAIR SHOP PROGRAM

The Division operates a specialty repair shop program. By assigning firefighters to these shops in addition to their normal duties, equipment is maintained at a lower cost and with less down time than if the county had to purchase these services from an outside vendor. There are more than ten specialty shops ranging from the hose and nozzle shop to the thermal imaging shop.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

The Division expects to face several challenges over the coming years. Some of these challenges include increased service demands due to an expanding and aging population, personnel turnover due to retirements, challenges in training and retaining ALS providers, and the continued development of mixed use, high density, and high service demand properties such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and commercial and residential mixed-use buildings. The Division continues to actively review and plan for these challenges.