



Colchester Fire & EMS Succession Planning

Executive Summary

Personnel of the Fire Department are the most valuable asset in our department. The department is committed to being a leading edge, dynamic, flexible, customer service-driven organization made up of dedicated and well-trained professionals. We recognize that recruiting, developing, and preparing personnel for advancement throughout the organization, especially in supervisory and management positions, is essential to maintaining a professional, cohesive, and effective all-hazards emergency service agency. Our organizational health and readiness depend primarily on developing our firefighters for greater leadership responsibility, a process that begins when an individual steps into the department as a Probationary Firefighter.

This plan aspires towards alignment with the International Associations of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Officer Development guidance and is intended to provide a clear pathway along the continuum of professional development to all members from Probationary Firefighter to Fire Chief, and to provide every available resource necessary for success. It is recognized that the expectations of this plan are beyond what are currently in place. It is the intention of the department to fully implement the components of the plan for the 2028 calendar year, giving current and aspiring leadership 5 years to build on their training so as to meet expectations.

Plan Elements

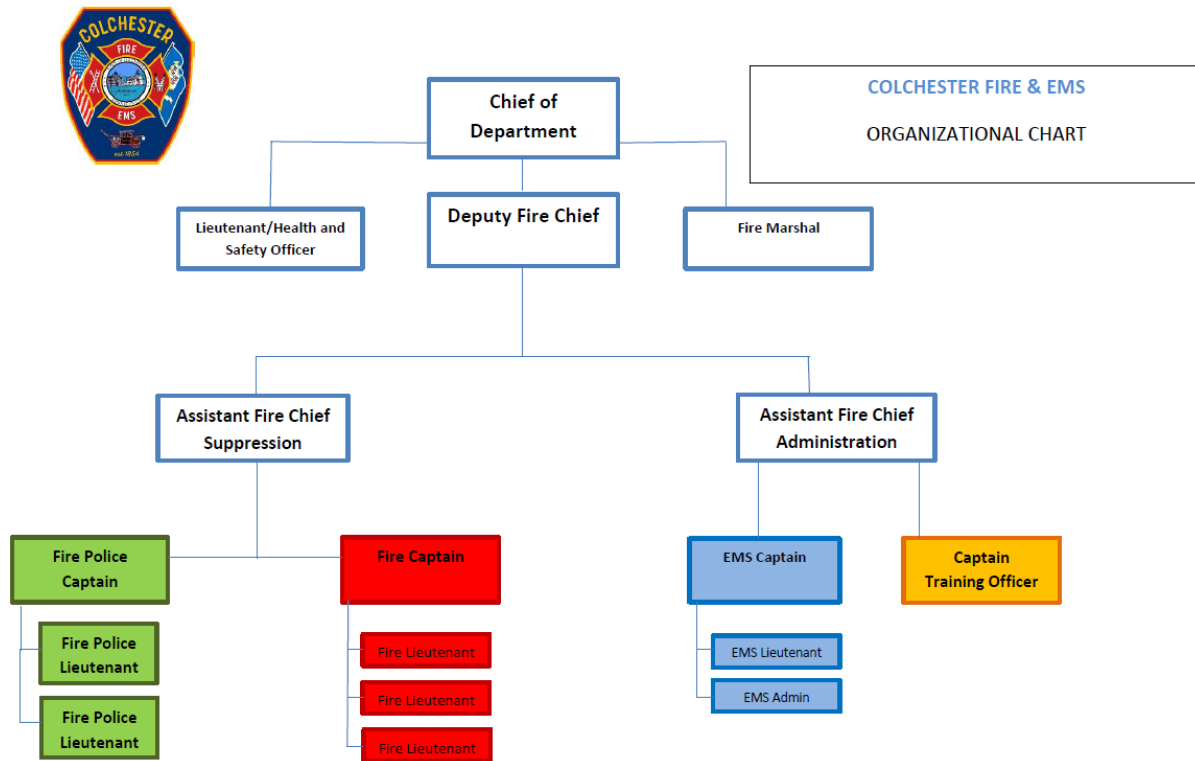
- Organizational Positions and Possibilities
- Recruitment
- Training, Certification, and Education
- Mentoring and Coaching

These elements taken in total and applied consistently provide a comprehensive, valid, and measurable system from which to produce the highest quality Firefighters, Officers, and Chief Officers. Through their application, we intend for the organization to thrive and expand operationally, grow professionally and collegially, become increasingly exemplary in Connecticut and for the services we provide to our citizens to continue to be delivered at an outstanding level. Our most important duty, and the driving force behind this plan, is to maintain the public's trust in us as service professionals.

Organizational Positions and Possibilities

Firefighter: An operational position. Work involves fire suppression, rescue, administration of emergency medical service, equipment maintenance, and station duties. The Firefighter is subordinate to the Lieutenant.

Lieutenant: An operational and entry level supervisory officer position. Work involves initial company officer on the emergency scene. Responsible for company level training. The Lieutenant is directly responsible to the Captain.



Captain: An operational and managing officer position. Work involves emergency and non-emergency supervision of a crew and direction of daily station operations. Responsible for company level training. The Captain is directly responsible to the Assistant Chief.

Assistant Chief: An operational and administrative officer position. Work involves major emergency scene command, implementation of mission goals and objectives, and implementation/oversight of operational programs. The Assistant Chief is assigned specific program responsibilities (Suppression, Administration). The Assistant Chief is directly responsible to the Deputy Fire Chief.

Deputy Fire Chief: An operational and executive position responsible for providing vision, leadership, budgeting, and direction to the Fire Chief. Work involves short- and long-term strategic planning, goal setting, organizing, and directing staff in carrying out the mission. The Deputy Fire Chief is directly responsible to the Fire Chief.

Fire Chief: An executive position responsible for providing vision, leadership, budgeting, and direction to the department. Work involves short- and long-term strategic planning, goal setting, organizing, and directing staff in carrying out the mission. The Chief is directly responsible to the First Selectman.

Staff Officers: The Department maintains the following staff positions. These positions hold the rank of Captain:

EMS Operations Officer

Fire Police Captain

Training Officer

Fire Marshal

Recruitment

Maintaining a strong organizational foundation begins with our recruitment process. Firefighting has become an extremely technical and competitive profession, requiring candidates to commit the time to achieve considerable educational and experiential qualifications, as the number of non-firefighting related activities increase. The pool of candidates from which we draw our future firefighters is reduced by this fact. Recruitment of firefighters continues to decline nationwide as public service professions fall out of favor for technology-based jobs.

We consider the size of our organization, high performance expectations, operational work tempo, town demographics, and service demands in applying our recruitment strategy to ensure that we select the candidates who are best suited for carrying out our mission and vision into the future. The recruitment process must be designed with flexibility to allow for selecting candidates best suited for our organizational needs at the time of recruitment. The department has chosen a multi-prong approach, recruiting both highly qualified (lateral) candidates needing minimal training for duty and lesser qualified (entry level) candidates who the department will train more extensively for the job. The department has further committed to the proactive measure of developing the pool of candidates through maintaining a robust cadet program and through bringing firefighting as a vocation into our local public schools as an educational opportunity.

Training, Certification, and Education

To aid in professional development, the following matrices outline a balance of qualifications, including formal education, that will best position you to succeed. In planning for your professional future, you are strongly encouraged to acquire training in advance of actual promotion.

FIREFIGHTER - The primary focus during the probationary period is successful completion of Firefighter I and/or an EMT Course.

Expected Training	System	Hours	Mode
Firefighter I and/or Emergency Medical Technician	CFA	260/150	Various
Hazardous Materials Awareness	CFA	8	In Person
NIMS 700	FEMA	1	Online
NIMS 800	FEMA	1	Online
Recommended Training			
Firefighter II	Pro Board/IFSAC	40	In Person
Hazardous Materials Operations	CFA	40	In Person
ICS 100	FEMA	4	Online
ICS 200	FEMA	4	Online
Supplemental Training			

LIEUTENANT- Personnel aspiring to the *supervising fire officer* position of Lieutenant will have a minimum of three years of fire service experience at the time of application.

Expected Training	System	Hours	Mode
Fire Service Instructor I and/or EMS-I	CFA/OEMS	40	Various
Emergency Medical Technician	OEMS/NREMT	150	In Person
ICS 100	FEMA	4	Online
ICS 200	FEMA	4	Online
Recommended Training			
Fire Officer I	Pro Board/IFSAC	96	In Person
Rescue Technician – Core	CFA	48	In Person
Aerial Operator	CFA	48	In Person
Hazardous Materials Operations	CFA	40	In Person
Pump Operator	CFA	48	In Person
Supplemental Training			

CAPTAIN - Personnel aspiring to the *managing fire officer* position of Captain will have a minimum of six years of fire service experience at the time of application. You should have held the position of lieutenant for at least one year.

Expected Training	System	Hours	Mode
Fire Officer I	Pro Board/IFSAC	96	In Person
Emergency Medical Technician	OEMS/NREMT	150	In Person
Incident Safety Officer	CFA	24	In Person
Rescue Technician - Core	CFA	48	In Person
Recommended Training			
ICS 300	FEMA		In Person
Fire Service Instructor II	Pro Board/IFSAC	40	In Person
Rescue Technician – Vehicle	CFA	48	In Person
Rescue Technician – Trench	CFA	56	In Person
Supplemental Training			

ASSISTANT CHIEF - Personnel aspiring to the *administrative fire officer* position of Assistant Chief will have a minimum of eight years of fire service experience at the time of application. You should have held the rank of Captain for one or more years or four or more years as a Lieutenant.

Expected Training	System	Hours	Mode
Fire Officer I	Pro Board/ IFSAC	96	In Person
Emergency Medical Technician	OEMS/NREMT	150	In Person
Fire Service Instructor II	Pro Board/IFSAC	40	In Person
ICS 300	FEMA	16	In Person
Recommended Training			
Fire Officer II	Pro Board/IFSAC	80	In Person
ICS 400	FEMA	16	In Person
Supplemental Training			
60 credits of college coursework	Various	60	Hybrid
Chief Officer Development Program	IAFC	42	In Person
Command and Control of Incident Operations	NFA	48	In Person

DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF – Qualifications for this *executive leadership* position are a culmination of knowledge, skills, and experience developed over a service career; a minimum of twelve years of fire service experience at the time of application. You should have held the position of Assistant Chief for one or more years or four or more years as Captain.

Expected Training	System	Hours	Mode
Fire Officer II	Pro Board/IFSAC	80	In Person
Fire Service Instructor II	Pro Board/IFSAC	40	In Person
Incident Safety Officer	Pro Board/IFSAC	32	In Person
Emergency Medical Technician	OEMS/NREMT	150	Hybrid
ICS 400	FEMA		In Person
Recommended Training			
Fire Officer III	Pro Board/IFSAC	56	In Person
Supplemental Training			
90 credits of college coursework	Various	90	Hybrid
Executive Officer Development Program	IAFC	42	In Person
Executive Fire Officer Program (EFO)	NFA	160+	Hybrid

FIRE CHIEF – Qualifications for this *executive leadership* position are a culmination of knowledge, skills, and experience developed over a service career; a minimum of twelve years of fire service experience at the time of application. You should have held the position of Assistant Chief for one or more years or four or more years as Captain.

Expected Training	System	Hours	Mode
Fire Officer III	Pro Board/IFSAC	56	In Person
Incident Safety Officer	Pro Board/IFSAC	32	In Person
Emergency Medical Technician	OEMS/NREMT	150	Hybrid
ICS 400	FEMA	16	In Person
Recommended Training			
Fire Officer IV	Pro Board/IFSAC	40	Hybrid
Supplemental Training			
Bachelor degree	Various	4 Years	Hybrid
Executive Officer Development Program	IAFC	18	In Person
Executive Fire Officer Program (EFO)	NFA	160+	Hybrid

In addition to the above, the fire chief position requires additional management and leadership competency at the executive level, which may be obtained through a variety of educational and experiential means obtained throughout one’s service career.

Mentoring and Coaching

A vital aspect of developing and preparing personnel for advancement is to provide for observation and learning directly alongside a mentor. Through the mentoring process, existing leaders identify and develop personnel (emerging leaders) via demonstration, observation, co-performance, and evaluation. The existing leadership of the department (Chief, Chief Officers, and Company Officers) is committed to investing in personnel leadership development and will engage directly in mentoring.

Personnel desiring to promote may select a mentor to aid and guide them toward his/her goals. A mentor may also be assigned based on the needs of the organization. The expectation of the mentor/mentee relationship is one of mutual interaction in which the mentor’s skills and resources are shared, and by which the mentee develops and expands his/her skills. To be selected as a mentor is an honor and those selected are expected to treat the privilege as such by making themselves open and available to their mentee as often as possible and to the degree sought.

Such direct involvement also provides an opportunity for coaching members toward successful advancement. Direct input into the positive and negative performance aspects of an individual is an essential tool in developing skills and abilities. Coaching is expected not only of a mentor, but also of all department personnel as they interact and influence those seeking promotion. This process is so vital to our future that the department is committed to leadership development.