

**FY 2021-2022 Virginia Beach Budget  
Response to Council Questions**

**Question Number:** 46

**Question:** What is the number of qualified applicants and number of highly qualified candidates per paid EMS and fire fighter applicants?

**Date Requested:** 4/13/21

**Requested By:** Councilmember Moss

**Department:** EMS and Fire

**Response:** Emergency Medical Services' most recent hiring process for a career paramedic occurred in March 2021 for one vacancy. The department had 30 qualified applicants and 12 were interviewed for the position. Prior to that, in January 2020, the department sought to hire for six vacant paramedic positions that were intended for the new Burton Station Fire and EMS Station. The department was able to fill five of these positions, as one of the vacancies was eliminated due to the postponement of the ERU rate increase. For this hiring process, the department had 33 qualified applicants and interviewed 30 individuals. The department has indicated that it has never had any difficulty filling a career paramedic position.

According to the Fire Department, 611 individuals applied to attend the recruit school during the department's last hiring process. Of those, 32 were allowed into the school and 30 individuals successfully completed the training. In addition, the number of certified recruit applicants (e.g., individuals who are already firefighters in another locality) totaled 152. Of those, seven applicants entered the recruit school and all seven completed the training. In both cases, approximately 5% of the applicant pool completed the training, which, according to the department, mirrors the total average turnover rate.

Both departments indicated that there is no designation between "qualified" and "highly qualified" applicants. According to Emergency Medical Services, the department looks for qualities that support career Emergency Medical Services personnel, including individuals who work smoothly with volunteers and who have a solid ability to train and mentor volunteer EMS personnel and Fire Department personnel in the field. According to the Fire department all recruits would have similar qualifications. Certified recruits are firefighters who come from another fire department, so they would also have similar qualifications.