



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DENVER FIRE
CHARTER REQUEST
AUGUST 6, 2019

- Denver Fire Department and Denver Health Paramedic Division work together to provide exceptional emergency medical care for the citizens of Denver and the surrounding communities.
 - Denver Health provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) emergency medical care and all patient transport.
 - Denver Fire provides Basic Life Support (BLS) emergency medical care.
- ALS is, by definition, is a more advanced form of medical care. Some differences between ALS and BLS include:
 - Hours of training required
 - BLS = 120-150 hours of training
 - ALS = 1,200-1,800 hours of training
 - EMTs provide BLS and Paramedics provide ALS
 - ALS involves more invasive procedures and specialized equipment

Full Scope Basic Life Support

A new program introduced late 2017 to train DFD personnel to full scope of practice has been successfully implemented so DFD firefighters can provide additional care on scene.

- Full BLS provides additional skill sets and protocols that DFD members can provide on scene.
- Built infrastructure to support DFD's use of BLS skills includes FTE's and additional technology.
- Established quality assurance/quality improvement system to make continual process improvements to ensure our citizens are receiving the highest level of patient care.

- Alternative response vehicle (piloted in 2016 and formalized in 2017) to target and relieve the workload on DFD's Fire Companies to address lower acuity medical calls in high volume areas.
- Ensures Denver Fire Department and Denver Health Paramedic resources are available for higher acuity calls.
- Med unit averaged 17 emergency medical calls per 12 hour shift in 2018.
- Currently staffed by two DFD firefighters at overtime rate.
- Staffing during peak hours Friday and Saturday from 4 pm to 4 am.



Denver Fire Emergency Medical Technician Rank

Charter Proposal to add Emergency Medical Technician as a named rank of the Denver Fire Department

- (i) *Rank: Assistant Chief, Master Mechanic, Superintendent of Fire Alarm, Assistant Superintendent of Fire Alarm, Assistant Master Mechanic, Captain, Fire Systems Technical Specialist, Mechanic, Lieutenant, Engineer, Firefighter, Emergency Medical Technician*
- EMT's will staff Med Units at a significantly lower rate, providing significant cost savings as opposed to hiring DFD firefighters at an overtime rate. Cost savings will allow for increased staffing hours.
- Benefits impact Denver Fire and Denver Health units to ensure they are available for higher acuity calls where the help is most needed.
- Potential recruiting tool for Denver Fire and Denver Health.
- Denver Health will continue to provide EMS services/ALS response, and all patient transport.

Charter Proposal to add Shift Commander as a rank on the Denver Fire Department

(C) The Chief of the fire Department may from time to time assign Assistant Chiefs to perform the duties of Shift Commander, each of whom shall perform such duties so long as the individuals services are satisfactory to the Chief of the Fire Department and the Chief shall see fit to continue such assignment.

- Denver Fire Shift Commanders decrease DFD span of control and increase efficiency within the DFD Operations Division.
- Denver Fire Shift Commanders operate as a dedicated Incident Safety Officer on significant incident scenes to ensure a higher safety margin for DFD firefighters.
- This change will mirror existing collective bargaining agreement language.

- FinGov: August 6
- Mayor-Council: August 13
- First Reading: August 19
- Final Action: August 26
- Election: November 5



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Appendix

Additional Background Info

- Denver Fire Dept. was established in 1866 and was an original element of the Charter
- Command structure and ranks and grades prescribed in the Charter through amendments over the years
- Collective Bargaining was added to the Charter in 1971

- Denver Health and Hospital Authority (former Denver General Hospital and associated clinics) was created through state legislation in 1994 as an independent statutory entity/political subdivision of the state
 - Formerly under the City’s Department of Health and Hospitals, which was repealed in 1996 Charter change and replaced with Dept. of Environmental Health (now DDPHE)
- Currently City contracts with DHHA through an annual operating agreement that defines services, including EMS
 - Core Services include: Medically Indigent Payment, Emergency Medical Services, Public Health, Denver CARES, prisoner medical services at DHHA, etc.
 - Non-Core services include: child welfare, jail medical services, marijuana public health impact monitoring and communication, etc.