



Conducting a Recruitment and Retention Needs Assessment

Note: The following is an outline of different factors that an agency may want to consider in developing a recruitment and retention needs assessment. None of the elements listed below are “required” in order to conduct a needs assessment. Agencies looking for a more comprehensive assessment guide should reference the [Commission on Fire Accreditation International’s Standards of Cover](#).

Step 1

Community Risk Analysis: Identify the fire, rescue, EMS and disaster risks for your community. Consider factors such as:

- Geospatial Characteristics
- Topography
- Transportation Infrastructure
- Climate
- Disaster Exposure
- Development and Population Growth, including:
 - o Development and density
 - o Economic breakdown
 - o Age (specifically identify areas where there may be a concentration of young or older populations)
 - o “At risk” areas with vulnerable populations such as schools, assisted living or retirement communities, apartment complexes, etc.
 - o Other demographics

Step 2

Current Deployment Analysis: Understand the services provided by your department, and your community’s expectations of that service. Consider the following:

- Services Provided
 - o Identify all of the services currently provided by your department.
 - o Establish a performance baseline for each service by reviewing call data from the past 3-5 years.
 - o Document your current delivery system:
 - Points of service (stations)
 - Resources deployed
 - Staffing capabilities
 - First-due areas
- Community Expectations
 - o Identify what the community expects with regard to response.

Step 3

Critical Task Analysis: Determine each of the critical tasks that need to be performed at various types of emergency incidents that your fire department responds to and determine an appropriate minimum number of responders to each task.

Step 4

Staffing Needs: Use the results of Steps 1-3 to determine what your staffing needs are. Consider the following:

- Does your department have enough staff to deliver adequate personnel to the scene of an emergency in a timely manner?
 - o Are there particular times of day and/or days of the week when your department struggles to do this?

- Are there particular types of calls that your department struggles to do this for?
- Would your department struggle with maintaining adequate deployment if your call volume increased and/or you lost staff?

If you determine that your department has unmet staffing needs you should create or update a recruitment and retention plan. [Click here for tips on developing a recruitment and retention plan.](#)