

Conducting Stay & Exit Surveys:

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

General Information

- It is critical to have leadership buy-in when administering stay and exit surveys. Responses may be pleasant or unpleasant, but there must be a willingness to make positive changes based on these surveys. A lack of engagement could lead to a break in trust and impact member retention.
- When conducting a survey, be aware that how your members prefer to take a survey may be different. Survey options could include hard copies, mobile friendly surveys, or phone calls.
- Consider who hosts your survey, specifically for the exit survey. If possible, have a neutral party connect with the departing member and administer the survey to improve the level of trust.

Stay Survey

How to Use Stay Surveys:

- Focus on understanding what motivates volunteers to stay with the fire department, what they value most, and any potential obstacles to their satisfaction and engagement.
- Use insights to refine department policies, improve team dynamics, and enhance retention strategies.

Frequency of Conducting Stay Surveys:

- Conduct at least once annually for all volunteers, with semi-annual or quarterly interviews for high performing volunteers as a retention tool. These can be scheduled during regular check-ins to promote open dialogue and engagement.

Exit Survey

How to Use Exit Surveys:

- Aim to gather honest feedback on why the volunteer decided to leave as well as their overall experience with the department.
- Identify trends or recurring themes in departures.

Frequency of Conducting Exit Surveys:

- When possible, try to conduct a survey for every departing volunteer. Timing is crucial, so ensure the survey or interview takes place when the volunteer feels comfortable.

The Stay and Exit Survey responses are in, now what?

Take Action!

- Develop actionable strategies based on feedback, such as developing leadership training and mentorship initiatives.
- Prioritize addressing problems or challenges that are frequently mentioned or significantly impact retention and recruitment.
- Share improvements with volunteers to show that their feedback is valued and acted upon.
- Use this transparency to build trust and foster a culture of continuous improvement within the department.
- Revisit and adjust your approach to stay and exit surveys annually to ensure they remain effective and aligned with the department's retention and recruitment goals.