



PRESS RELEASE – Oct. 5, 2017

Fire Department: 972-625-3944

TCFD to add paramedic-only personnel

Unique move designed to bolster all aspects of department services

THE COLONY, TX – [The Colony City Council](#) has approved a new program within [The Colony Fire Department](#) that allows for the hiring of paramedic-only personnel. Traditionally, all TCFD personnel were required to be both firefighters and paramedics but the new program will create additional tiers of expertise within the department.

[Fire Chief Scott Thompson](#) said the department is always looking for opportunities to improve its delivery of fire, rescue, and emergency medical services (EMS). This change has been two years in the making and allows TCFD to maximize its potential in all areas by adding layers of specialization.



“As a suburban department serving an ever-changing community in terms of both new construction and an aging population, we realized we don’t have to be medical experts, but rather the best emergency medical provider we can be,” Thompson said. “However, we *do* have to be the fire suppression experts for the City of The Colony. With all the new buildings going up, we need firefighters focused on being experts at firefighting.”

Thompson said firefighter-paramedics are in high demand, so hiring personnel who are paramedics only also opens up the department to a huge candidate pool of high-quality individuals. This is particularly important in light of Fire Station No. 4’s pending construction, which will require the hiring of 18 new personnel. “This is another way in which we can continue to hire the best people available,” Thompson said.

The new paramedics would be required to have at least three years of experience in the field and still conform with the culture of the fire services. In other words, they won’t just be transport medics,

Thompson said. They would, however, be encouraged to take ownership of the department's EMS operations in a whole new way.

“It'll be another link in the organization that will make an outstanding system even better,” Thompson said, adding that he believes TCFD may be the only department of its size in the state taking this next step in EMS operations.

Plans are for the new paramedics to begin mentoring in the department by February 2018. They will be staffed on the ambulances throughout the city's fire stations. Firefighters will still be assigned to ambulances approximately 20 percent of the time, as opposed to 80 percent as things stand now.

Thompson said he looks forward to the ways this realignment will assist with ongoing training exercises, which is a vital part of the department's operations. Currently, training is often interrupted or delayed while personnel are returning from the hospital.

“Most people in the fire services have a passion for either firefighting or EMS. They do the other because it is required,” Thompson said. “But both aspects have become increasingly complex to the point it's almost a full-time commitment to stay exceptional in one or the other.

“Our guys do an outstanding job but we have a whole new city we're learning to protect. This new structure will allow our members to excel at their passion.”

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