



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Division of Fire Station Inspection Program
Program Category: Criminal Justice & Public Safety

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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Program Overview

The Henrico County Division of Fire has developed a station inspection program focuses on the global health of the facilities and the safety of the crews using them. The program provides a compromise review of all the core elements of the stations, environmental regulation requirements, and all safety aspects by the appropriate Chief Officer and Command Staff. The goal is to establish expected standards for maintenance at the station level and provide corrective processes to address all the issues at each station before they become costly problems. This program also helps to instill ownership amongst front line supervisors and staff within their working environments by clearly documenting all issues and providing expectations for corrective actions.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

In December of 2020, the Division of Fire (DOF) underwent an extensive realignment of supervisors. For several decades a “station captain”, was assigned to each station. This captain rotated between our three standard shifts so they could interact with lieutenants from each of the shifts and help oversee the facility and fleet maintenance as well as community engagement. Over time this format became ineffective, and a change occurred that removed the captains from that role.

With the removal of the captain as the singular; albeit ineffective, overseer of these rolls, less experienced lieutenants were placed in positions of responsibility with unclear expectations. The Support Services Battalion Chief, working with the Safety Battalion Chief and the DOF’s Assistant Chief for Community Protection, divided the three core responsibilities among the three shifts. Starting in 2021, the A, B, and C shift Lieutenant at each station were responsible for apparatus, building and grounds, and community risk reduction, respectively. To ensure that personnel understood and met the desired outcomes, a new program of station inspections was created to help officers understand their role.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The Division of Fire has developed one of the most robust station inspection programs in the fire service industry. This program includes the traditional interior cleanliness inspection and expands to MS4 environmental compliance, facility repairs, apparatus safety, and the equipment replacement programs. This program works in partnership with all the different internal and external county departments to provide a process for correcting any identified issues. This program also includes an extensive electronic documentation component that tracks the progress of all repairs and is accessible to all employees. This inspection program is part of a unified focus of clear expectations to provide a safe and healthy workplace that will serve the community for many years.

How Program Was Carried Out

This program identifies a single station to be inspected each Tuesday. The rotation allows every station to be inspected twice a year. The inspection is carried out by the Battalion Chiefs of Support Services, the Captain of Facilities, Safety and the on-duty Command Team. An inspection list and schedule are provided well ahead of time to help ensure that personnel are prepared and can ask questions prior to the inspection. On the day of inspection, the team will begin on the exterior of the building and work their way inside, checking for items as generic as cleanliness to items as specific as MS4 wastewater compliance. These inspections allow for early identification of problems as well as establish clear expectations of leadership and ownership at the lowest level possible. Most minor issues are immediately corrected by the crews. Any larger problems are documented in the inspection report, corrective actions are requested, and a follow up inspection is scheduled. All inspections are electronically documented and posted on the internal document library for all Division of Fire Employees to access. The inspections Program also assists the Logistical Sections with its replacement programs. During the inspections, the

condition of items such as furniture and equipment are noted. Any items that have reached the end of their service life are identified and replaced by the logistical section.

Financing and Staffing

There is no additional cost for this program other than personnel time to prepare for and conduct inspections.

Program Results

The Henrico County Division of Fire has already seen a remarkable increase in the cleanliness and maintenance of stations. Additionally, we have seen an increase in calls for support from the Captain of Facilities, indicating a renewed focus on station level accountability. The program has also generated focus and support for station level upgrades through county and private/donation support. For example, this program has been able to assist with identifying and upgrading several stations with carpet floor coverings to new vinyl tile. This new product is able to be cleaned and disinfected each day to assist which provided a healthier environment for the crews and visitors. As this program has developed, the Support Services Section has seen an increase in environmental compliance efforts by all stations, completed repairs before they developed into critical issues, identified and corrected apparatus safety issues, and redistributed unused equipment throughout the stations. All of these successes have produced a significant cost savings and improved the overall work environment for the fire fighters.

This program will allow for personnel to develop an interest in the Support Services functions of the DOF and pursue career development opportunities within this section.

Brief Summary

This program is one of a series of efforts from the DOF's Support Services section to proactively engage first line supervisors and firefighters in inspection and basic maintenance of community resources such as buildings and fleet. These efforts will help address issues early in their development when such issues are least costly.

The fire service and the DOF specifically have worked diligently to increase the diversity of our workforce. However, this diversification of personnel also means that assumptions can no longer be made regarding experience and ability. Providing inspections, and support for those inspections allows personnel who may not be familiar with things such as building and ground or apparatus maintenance a chance to gain both familiarity and confidence in these areas.