

# Santa Rosa Fire Department Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan

Public Safety Subcommittee

September 25, 2020

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Fire Department

2020

## Santa Rosa Fire Department Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan



# Purpose

- The Santa Rosa Fire Department (SRFD) Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan (Plan) was born from an internal recruiting strategy document developed in 2019.
- The Plan has two concurrent strategic objectives:
  - Improve the recruitment of a sufficient number of qualified entry level employees
  - Improve the diversity of the organization to better match the diversity of the community

# Background

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- 2010 to 2015 – SRFD received **2,874** applications for Firefighter and Firefighter/Paramedic
- 2015 to 2020 – SRFD received **718** applications for Firefighter/Paramedic
- All candidates complete the following best practice steps in the recruitment process:
  - Application and minimum qualifications review;
  - Written Examination (standardized entry level firefighter exam);
  - Physical Ability Test (possession of a CPAT card);
  - Oral Interview with SRFD and City of Santa Rosa Human Resources staff;
  - Fire Chief's Oral Interview;
  - Third Party Background Investigation with polygraph;
  - Physical and Psychiatric Exams

# Current Implementation of Best Practices

- Advertising Campaigns
- Standardized Written Exams
- Standardized Physical Ability Exams
- Standardized Oral Interviews
- Application Window Time
- Open Lateral Recruitment



Figure 1: Demographics of the City of Santa Rosa, SRFD, and US Fire Departments

Ethnicity	Santa Rosa	SRFD	US Fire Depts (avg)
Asian	5.5%	1.6%	1.1%
Black	2.2%	0.8%	8.4%
Hispanic	32.8%	6.5%	8.0%
Native American	1.6%	-	-
White	54.7%	87.9%	82.5%
Other/Two or More	n/a	3.2%	n/a
Female	51.6%	4.8%	4.7%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>177,000</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>n/a</b>

# Demographics Overview

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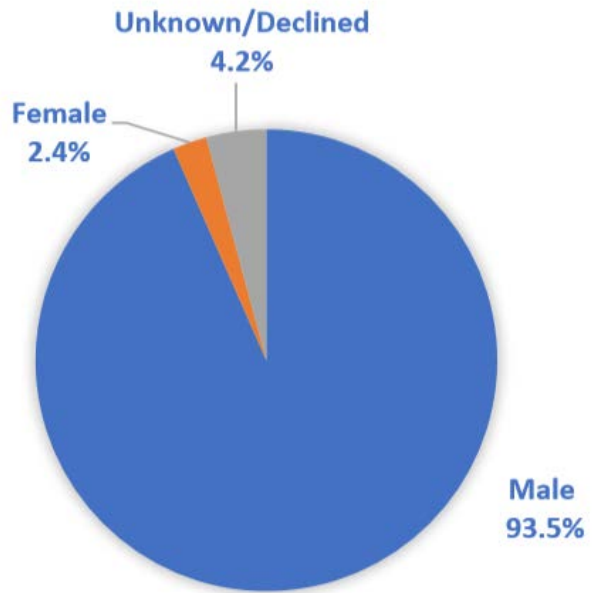


Figure 2: % SRFD Firefighter/Paramedic Applicants by Gender: 2015-2020

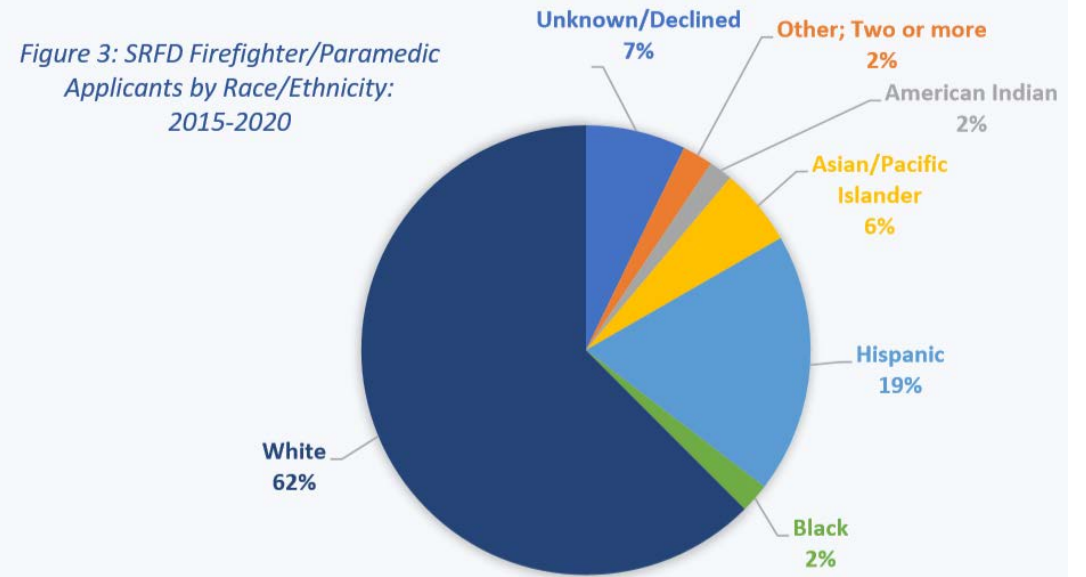


Figure 3: SRFD Firefighter/Paramedic Applicants by Race/Ethnicity: 2015-2020

# Demographics Overview

# Analytical Conclusions

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- Industrywide:

- Sharp decrease in interested and qualified candidates coupled with surplus of positions;
- Decreased interest in public safety education programs;
- Small to mid-sized organizations are at a disadvantage in recruiting;
- Lack of diversity in candidate pool in general.

- SRFD Response:

- Enhance recruiting strategies to attract a diverse talent pool of qualified candidates;
- Enhance recruiting strategies to align with current and predicted cultural and generational norms;
- Deploy a grassroots recruitment campaign to attract and develop local and diverse talent into the organization and profession.

# Strategy Outline

1. COMMUNICATIONS
2. RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS
3. SELECTION PROCESSES
4. DATA ANALYSIS
5. RECRUITMENT STAFFING





# Communications

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This strategy must look at the interests of the next generation of the workforce and adhere to the cultural norms by leveraging tools that are presently and predictably relevant. SRFD must remain nimble to constantly evolving societal and cultural norms and modes of communication.

- **Strategy 1.1 – Social Media Marketing**

- Recruiting through technology, app-based systems, and with real-time, prevalent information will be the cornerstone of these efforts.
- Utilize current social media platforms and develop content that appeals to identified target audiences using geographic and demographic targeting.

- **Strategy 1.2 – Update Website**

- Update and use the City’s website as a marketing tool with various training resources, “how-to” guides, candidate preparation instruction, and resources available for potential recruits.

# Recruitment Programs

To shift the paradigm and solve medium to long term recruiting challenges, SRFD must make a significant long-term investment in the community.

- **Strategy 2.1 – Community Engagement and Education**
  - The bedrock of this campaign is to engage with local youth and community members to educate them on what it takes to become a firefighter/paramedic, while equipping them with the tools and resources to guide them through the process.
- **Strategy 2.2 – Youth Explorer Program**
  - Develop and implement an upstream approach through the development of a Youth Explorer Program.
- **Strategy 2.3 – Mentorship Program**
  - The SRFD mentors will guide the interested youth in the community towards maintaining a clean background and towards a successful career in public safety.
- **Strategy 2.4 – Partnership with Santa Rosa Junior College**
  - Develop a sponsorship program with the SRJC that would designate positions for the SRFD in both the Firefighter and Paramedic Academies, allowing candidates to have priority access to these programs by being part of the Youth Explorer or Mentorship programs.
- **Strategy 2.5 – Women in the Fire Service Day**
  - The SRFD would partner with the SRJC and other local fire departments to develop a one-day, annual event to honor women in the fire service and community members would and receive guidance and resources on how to improve from existing female firefighters.

# Selection Processes

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In order to enhance the selection process to meet the enhancements of the recruitment programs, the SRFD will apply the following strategies to all hiring and promotional processes.

- **Strategy 3.1 – Implicit Bias and Cultural Competency Training**
  - This training would be required for any member that wishes to participate in the selection processes. The SRFD would continue to work with the City of Santa Rosa Inclusion Council to remain up to date with relevant protocols and training.
- **Strategy 3.2 – Use of Community Members in Oral Interviews**
  - In order to provide a community voice in the selection process of SRFD members of the future, the SRFD will begin using community members on all oral board panels.

# Data Analysis

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To better adjust and adapt to enhanced recruiting strategies, the SRFD will closely monitor metrics related to engagement and recruitment.

- **Strategy 4.1 – Tracking Engagement**

- SRFD staff will use current technology to track community engagement as it relates specifically to recruiting and education on careers in the fire service.

- **Strategy 4.2 – Tracking Effectiveness of Communications**

- SRFD staff will use social media and website usage to track and geolocate data on the effectiveness of communication strategies.

- **Strategy 4.3 – Tracking Effectiveness of Recruitment Programs**

- SRFD staff will continually monitor and adapt the effectiveness of recruitment strategies based on raw numbers of applicants *and* the diversity of the applicant pool.

# Recruitment Staffing

The SRFD does not currently have any personnel directly assigned to recruitment or diversity enhancements. This report's strategies rely on having the appropriate staff to develop, implement, and monitor programs for recruitment and diversity.

- **Strategy 5.1 – Recruitment Program Manager and Recruitment Program Coordinator**

- This position will implement a comprehensive recruitment strategy for the SRFD focused on hiring highly qualified candidates that represent the community's diverse population.
- This position will provide support to the Recruitment Program Manager by implementing data collection standards, monitoring initiatives/compliance, researching recruitment opportunities, coordinating cadre schedules, and providing consistent communication with strategic internal and external stakeholders.

- **Strategy 5.2 – Development of Recruitment Cadre**

- Establish a cadre of six (6) members of line staff (Firefighter/Engineer/Captain) that represent the diversity of the community is an essential step in building a recruitment team that will fulfill the recruitment strategies and objectives identified in this report.

- **Strategy 5.3 – Development of Recruitment Strategy Oversight Committee**

- The SRFD will develop an Oversight Committee of internal and external stakeholders. This Oversight Committee will consist of key members of the SRFD Command Staff, Santa Rosa Firefighters Local 1401, City of Santa Rosa Human Resources, and a commensurate number of community members to represent the diversity of the City.

Strategy	Timeline	Estimated Costs
Strategy 1.1 – Social Media Marketing	In progress	Staff time & \$5,000/yr content development
Strategy 1.2 – Update Website	In progress	Staff time & \$5,000/yr content development
Strategy 3.2 – Community Panelists	In progress	Staff time
Strategy 3.1 – Implicit Bias/CC Training	In progress	Staff overtime & \$10,000 one time
Strategy 2.3 – Mentorship Program	3 to 6 months	Staff time
Strategy 4.2 – Tracking Communications	3 to 6 months	Staff time
Strategy 2.1 – Community Engagement	6 to 12 months	Staff overtime (without additional staff)
Strategy 2.4 – Partner with SRJC	6 to 12 months	Staff time & \$20,000/yr scholarship program
Strategy 2.5 – Women in Fire Service Day	6 to 12 months	Staff time & \$1,000/yr logistical needs
Strategy 5.2 – Develop Recruitment Cadre	6 to 12 months	Staff overtime
Strategy 5.3 – Develop Oversight Committee	6 to 12 months	Staff time
Strategy 2.2 – Youth Explorer Program	12 to 18 months	Staff time & \$10,000/yr logistical needs
Strategy 4.1 and 4.3 – Data Analysis	12 to 18 months	Staff time
Strategy 5.1 – Addition of 2.0 FTE Staff	Budget Dependent	\$250,000 and \$105,000/yr (Leads to an acceleration of all strategies)

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Questions?