

# For Immediate Release



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## Independent Study Recommends Revised Pay Structure for City of Atlanta Firefighters

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*Global firm commissioned by the Atlanta Fire Rescue Foundation reveals a tiered comprehensive compensation system to recruit and retain a diverse and qualified talent pipeline*

**Atlanta (June 4, 2019)** –The Atlanta Fire Rescue Foundation, a nonprofit organization in support of the [Atlanta Fire Rescue Department \(AFRD\)](#), recently announced it has completed an independent pay study in partnership with Mercer. As part of its commitment to the citizens of Atlanta and as an effort to enhance public safety, AFRF worked with Mercer to prepare pay recommendations for firefighters employed by the city.

“Like any other industry, recruiting and retaining Atlanta’s top talent requires competitive salaries. With over 139 reported vacancies as of this past May, it was becoming apparent that the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department was simply falling short of its competitors. The Mercer recommendations for competitive pay ranges will support AFRD in attracting the bravest and brightest men and women”, said Shirley Anne Smith, Executive Director, Atlanta Fire Rescue Foundation.

Led and conducted by [Mercer](#), the study compares AFRD to a peer group of agencies, including talent competitors and similar agencies in terms of size and work environment. AFRD was also compared to local agencies including Sandy Springs and Cobb County fire departments as representatives. Although no peer agency exactly matches AFRD in terms of fire risk and scope responsibilities, Mercer believes that the peers selected provide a nationally representative sample that reflects AFRD’s talent needs.

With the pay study completed, AFRF is strongly encouraging the city’s administration officials and members of city council to adopt a new pay tier system for all sworn members of AFRD for FY2020. The proposed tier systems outlined in the pay study could position AFRD as the market leader in the Southeast. If adopted, AFRD would reduce essential firefighter vacancies and maximize daily staffing.

“Call volume is up and more is expected out of the members of AFRD with very little margin for error. The consequences of not sufficiently compensating the members will be dangerous. Atlanta prides itself in being the forerunner in innovation and a city far advanced ahead of peer markets. We need our first responders to reflect that same objective”, said Addison Meriwether, Chairman of the Board for the Atlanta Fire Rescue Foundation.

[Click here](#) for the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department Recommendations for Competitive Pay Ranges.

### ***About Atlanta Fire Rescue Foundation, Inc.***

The [Atlanta Fire Rescue Foundation](#) is the nonprofit support of the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department (AFRD). Our Foundation provides a platform for citizens, individuals and businesses to become engaged with AFRD's mission, program, and service delivery to those who live, work, play and fly through the City of Atlanta. As the city's budget is primarily committed to covering firefighter salaries and benefits, our Foundation provides the gap funding necessary to maintain a world-class fire and rescue institution. Support for the Foundation means Atlanta firefighters have the resources they need to keep Atlanta safe!

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