



Volunteer Firefighter and EMS

Reward Those Dedicating Their Lives to Service



Our Goal

Volunteer firefighters and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel are the backbone of emergency response in communities across New York. Yet in recent years, volunteer ranks have **declined** dramatically, threatening timely access to life-saving care and putting the safety of residents at greater risk.

The Assembly Republican Conference is committed to working across party lines to strengthen the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel. Our proposal would create meaningful incentives, recognize and reward service, and ensure stronger protections for those who devote their time and risk their safety for others. By supporting those who answer the call, we can rebuild the volunteer force and guarantee that every New Yorker has access to dependable, life-saving emergency care.

State of Affairs



Serving Our Communities

90.8% of fire departments in New York State are registered as fully volunteer



Crisis in Numbers

Two-thirds of EMS agencies **reported** a decrease in volunteers



Major Savings

According to **FASNY**, volunteer fire services save New Yorkers more than \$3 billion annually

Our Plan

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Enhance Recruitment & Retention

- Create tuition forgiveness programs and provide municipal health benefits to volunteer fire and EMS
- Provide youth training opportunities
- Allow SUNY and CUNY to provide college credits for service learning programs
- Increase incentives to attract future volunteer fire and EMS recruits

Reward Our Volunteers

- Free use of state parks and campsites for volunteer fire and EMS
- Tax breaks for volunteer fire and EMS and for employers who hire them
- Increase reimbursement for personal protective equipment

Protect First Responders

- Prevent harassment of volunteer fire and EMS
- Protect first responders from exposure to dangerous drugs like fentanyl
- Ensure punishment for those purposely targeting first responders and volunteer fire and EMS when committing crimes

