



# SACRAMENTO REGIONAL FIRE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2022


VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[myfirecareer.org](http://myfirecareer.org)



### ROADMAP TO BECOMING A FIREFIGHTER

- 1**  
Acquire Certifications
- 2**  
Testing  
Written & Physical Test
- 3**  
Oral Interview

— BECOME A FIREFIGHTER —

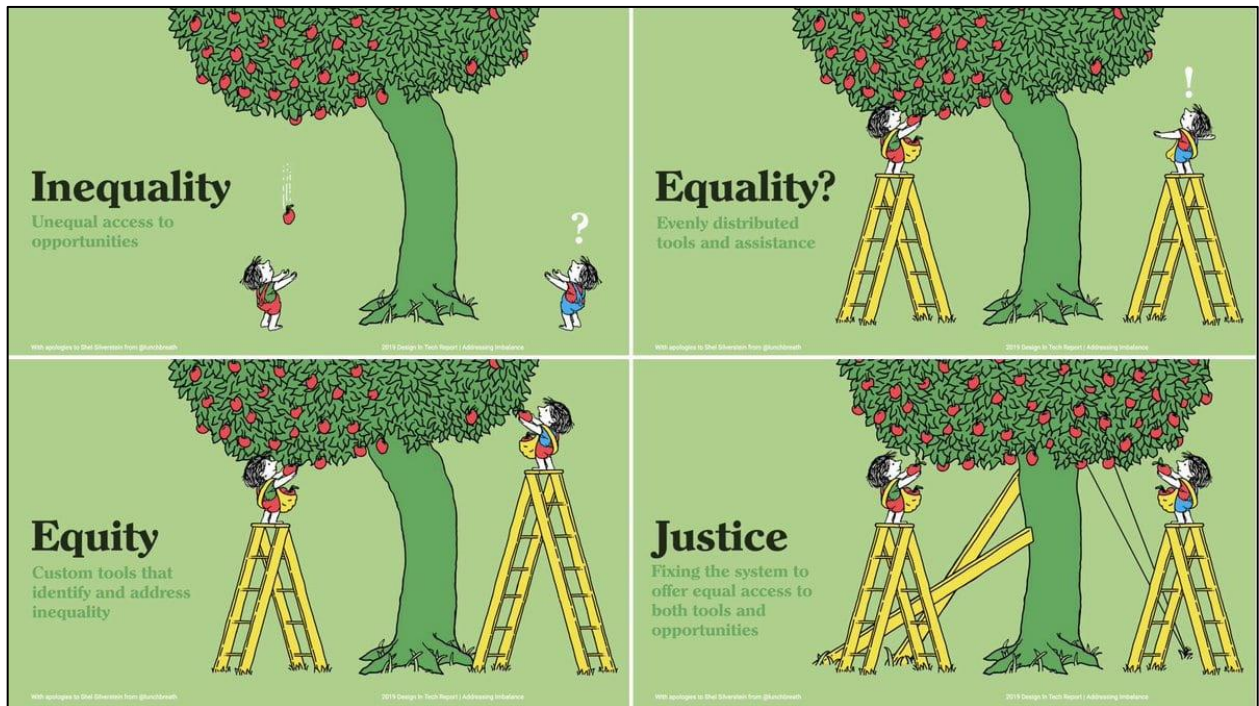
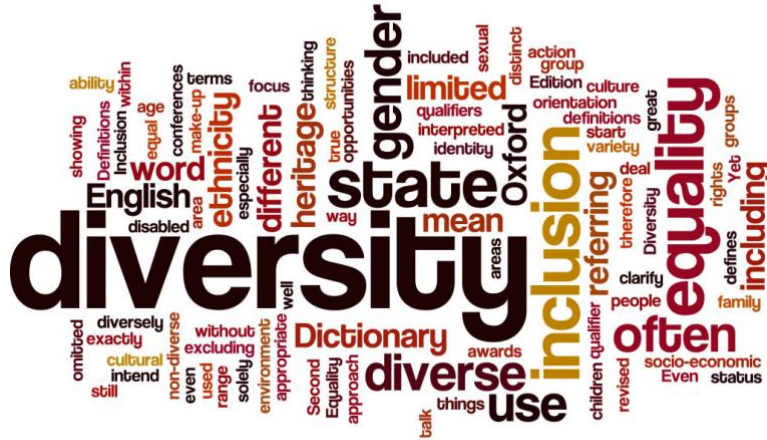


SACRAMENTO REGIONAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
**WANT YOU!**



## DEDICATION

To all who have worked tirelessly for decades to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion within the fire departments that serve our respective communities.



*“Diversity addresses the many ways in which people differ. Inclusion speaks to the extent to which people feel welcomed, respected, trusted, treated fairly, and valued. Equity reflects the ways in which we ensure equal opportunities for people to be who they are and how fairly we treat them.” – International Association of Fire Chiefs*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee, a committee of the Sacramento County Fire Chiefs Association, is pleased to present its 2022 Strategic Plan. This strategic plan is a thoughtful approach to build upon existing recruitment strengths within the Sacramento region's fire departments and develop an achievable roadmap for the future to ensure effective recruitment and retention of fire department personnel.

This strategic plan was developed following the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a noticeable call volume increase within Sacramento County and changing workforce due to the Great Resignation. Due to these factors, it is imperative to have recruitment and retention strategies that will strengthen our fire departments' workforce by aligning it with community expectations.

This strategic plan serves as a living document and a work in progress, subject to change under evolving circumstances. It is understood that a balance must exist between increasing recruitment efforts and prioritizing available financial resources. It is also understood that each fire department's governing body may implement any part of this strategic plan according to their needs.

This strategic plan was developed using various methods, including an internal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC) analysis and a community-driven strategic planning process recommended by the Center for Public Safety Excellence. The input was received from a small sample of the Sacramento region's general public and public safety-related respondents (current, retired, family, and seeking employment) via an anonymous online survey between March and April 2022. This data was used to develop strategies to align our communities with our fire departments. A total of 430 responses were received, with 165 responses from the general public.

The research conducted resulted in a noticeable difference between geographical areas and between general public respondents compared to public safety-related respondents regarding various diversity and recruitment perspectives. The differing viewpoints included ideas such as whether fire department members should reflect the community they serve, whether the respondents believed there was a lack of diversity within their local fire department, and whether they knew someone with fire service experience who could provide mentoring or guidance on how to begin a career in the fire service.

Most importantly, this strategic plan provides a realistic set of strategies, goals, and objectives for the Sacramento area fire departments to recommend to their governing bodies to support diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Sincerely,



Felipe Rodríguez

Cosumnes Fire Chief

Chairperson, Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee

## **STRATEGIC PLAN CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS**

- Felipe Rodríguez, Chairperson, Cosumnes Fire Department
- Brita Geiger, Secretary, Cosumnes Fire Department
- Susie Alcala, La Familia Counseling Center
- Rejie Baloyos, Asian Resources, Inc.
- Bernardo Buenrostro, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- Chris Costamagna, Sacramento Fire Department
- Erika Enslin, Sacramento Fire Department
- Kiah Featherstone, Elk Grove Unified School District
- Josh Freeman, Cosumnes Fire Department
- Orlando Fuentes, Cosumnes Community Services District
- Joshua Green, Cosumnes Community Services District
- Nicole Herrera, Woodland Fire Department
- Debra Howard, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Kris Hubbard, Cosumnes River College
- Mark Hull, West Sacramento Fire Department
- Kim Iannucci, Sacramento Fire Department
- Gay Jones, Sacramento Metro Fire District
- Eric Kizzie, Sacramento Regional Fire/EMS Communication Center (SRFECC)
- Dominik Martin, Sacramento Fire Department
- Jennifer Needler, Sacramento Fire Department
- Kamalpreet Padda, Sacramento Fire Department
- La Sauna Pakeman, California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee
- Jeanette Plascencia, California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee
- Dan Quiggle, Cosumnes Fire Department
- Rebecca Ramirez, Yocha Dehe Fire Department
- Julie Rider, Cosumnes Fire Department
- Jenny Saelee, Asian Resources, Inc.
- Cindy Lou Saylor, Sacramento Metro Fire District
- Corrie Stone, UC Davis Fire Department
- Lawrence Whang, Sacramento Fire Department
- Tim White, Sacramento Metro Fire District
- Betty Williams, Greater Sacramento NAACP
- Valarie Williams, Elk Grove Unified School District
- Amy Wolfe, Sacramento Regional Fire/EMS Communication Center

## COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

The Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee (“Committee”) is a standing Committee reporting directly to the Sacramento County Fire Chiefs Association through the Chair. The Committee was formed on June 5, 2017, to develop and support programs, policies, and procedures that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the fire service throughout the Sacramento region.

The Committee is comprised of members from the Fire Departments in Sacramento County and regional community stakeholders, including, but not limited to:

- Asian Resources, Inc.
- California Joint Apprenticeship Committee (Cal JAC)
- City of Folsom Fire Department
- City of Sacramento Fire Department
- Cosumnes Fire Department
- Cosumnes River College
- Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD)
- Employment Development Department (EDD)
- Greater Sacramento Urban League (GSUL)
- La Familia Counseling Center, Inc.
- League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Sacramento Branch (NAACP)
- Sacramento County Airport Fire Department
- Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Protection District
- Sacramento Regional Fire/EMS Communications Center
- U.C. Davis Fire Department
- West Sacramento Fire Department
- Woodland Fire Department
- Other organizations, as approved by the Committee

The Committee meets monthly, typically on the last Tuesday of each month, or more often as needed. Meetings are typically held in the Sacramento region and may also occur via electronic means, including teleconference calls. During the COVID-19 pandemic, monthly meetings were held on Zoom, and with and as we have transitioned into an endemic stage, monthly meetings are held in a hybrid format (in-person and online). Consensus is required for any action to be taken by the Committee, and meetings are open to any interested party.

The Chairperson of the Committee is the immediate Past Chair of the Sacramento County Fire Chiefs Association (rotation of Cosumnes Fire Department, City of Folsom Fire Department, City of Sacramento Fire Department, and Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District). The term of the Chairperson is for one calendar year, beginning in January.

The Secretary of the Committee is the Executive/Administrative Assistant of the Fire Chief, currently serving as the Chairperson. The Secretary distributes the agenda to Committee members at least 72 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting, except in an emergency.

The agenda includes, as a minimum:

- Date, time, and location of the meetings
- Roll call & establishment of a quorum
- Approval of previous meeting's minutes
- Items will be identified as being for action, information, or discussion and will include the name of the member who placed the item on the agenda
- New business
- Old business
- Good of the Order (an opportunity for each Committee member to present items of interest or concern that is not on the agenda)

Any member may place an item on the agenda by providing sufficient information to the Chairperson or Secretary at least seven days prior to the meeting, except in an emergency. Action may be taken on any item on the agenda, but only on items on the agenda, except that by a consensus of those members present agree, the Committee may take up and act upon any item, not on the agenda. Discussion is allowed and encouraged on all agenda items; however, the Chairperson may limit either or both the amount of time on an agenda item and the amount of time a speaker is allowed to speak to an agenda item.

The Secretary keeps minutes of every meeting, which will include at a minimum:

- Date, time, and location of the meetings
- Members present
- Others present
- A copy of the agenda and a list of non-agenda items discussed
- A record of action(s) taken
- A copy of the minutes from the previous meeting as approved by the Committee

Once approved by the Committee, minutes are available for review by all members. Minutes are provided to the appropriate regulatory agency upon request by that agency. As soon as practical following each meeting, the Secretary distributes a draft version of the meeting minutes for review to each Committee member.

The Committee's website can be found at: <https://www.myfirecareer.org/> and is an excellent resource for people to know of current or future fire department and fire dispatch center job openings.

All costs associated with attendance at, and participation in, the Committee are borne by the members or their agencies.

## MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

### Mission Statement

The mission is the purpose of why the Committee exists. Obtained from the Committee's Charter, the following mission statement is included within this strategic plan:

*The mission of the Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee is to develop and support programs, policies, and procedures that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the fire service throughout the Sacramento region.*

### Vision Statement

The vision is where the Committee would like to be in the future. The following vision statement is included within this strategic plan:

*The Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee will continue to intentionally promote equitable and inclusive opportunities for current and future fire service personnel within the diverse communities of the greater Sacramento area.*

### Core Values

The core values are the foundational principles that support the mission. Committee members provided input via a survey to determine the following Core Values:

***Inclusion**– We support an environment where people feel welcomed, respected, trusted, and valued.*

***Commitment**– We are dedicated to understanding the cause and committed to efforts that provide opportunity.*

***Equity**– We are dedicated to creating structural and systemic change that ensures access, impartiality, parity, and fairness.*

***Community**– We promote having a culturally competent workforce to serve and protect the community.*

***Diversity**– We value that everyone is different; with varied perspectives, we will have a more well-rounded workforce that will better serve the community.*

***Fairness**– We encourage impartial actions, free from bias, with effective allocation of resources.*

***Integrity**– We are trustworthy, honest, and have the courage to effect positive change.*

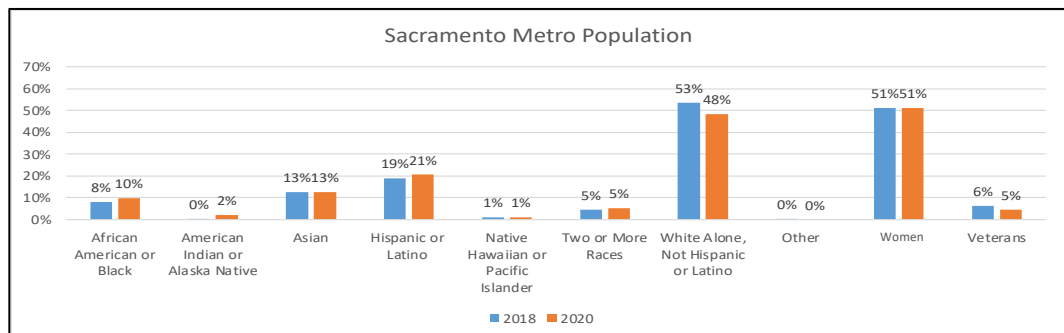
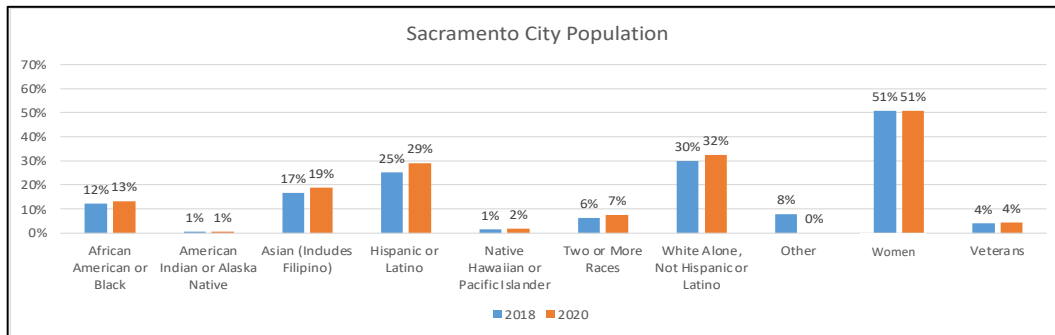
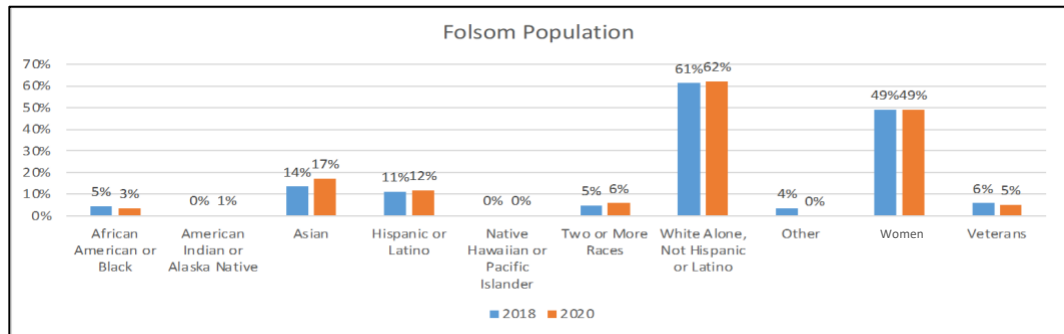
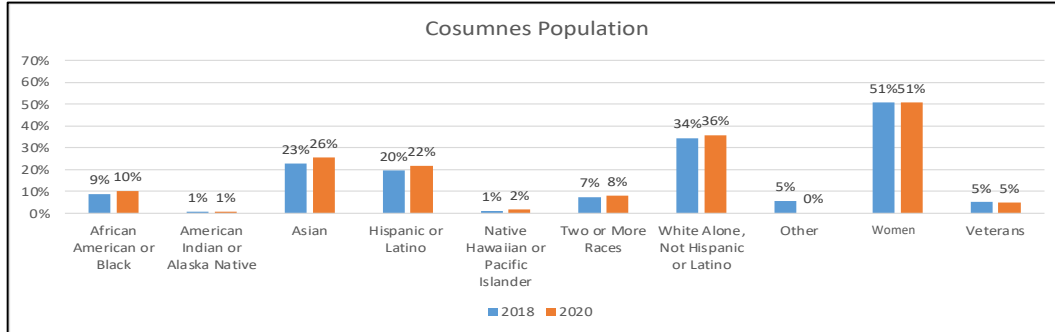
***Justice**– We are deliberate in our actions to ensure equal rights and equitable results.*

***Representation**– We will ensure that access, resources, and opportunities are provided for all to succeed, especially those who are underrepresented.*

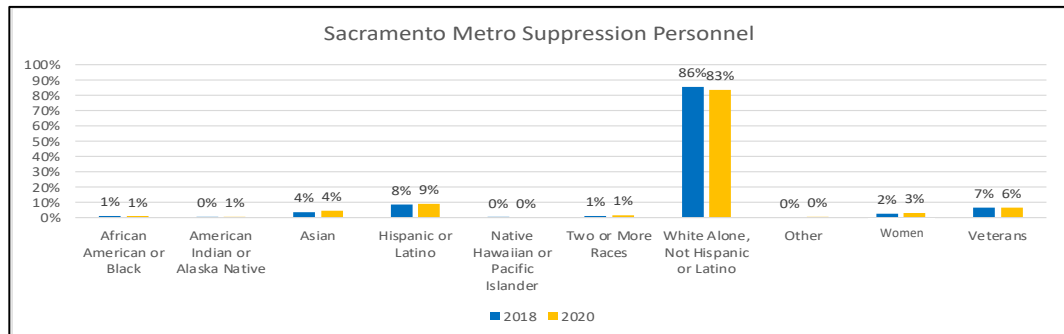
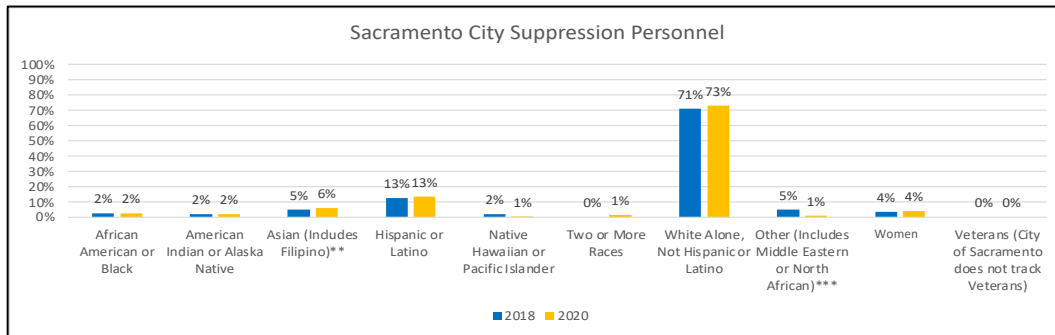
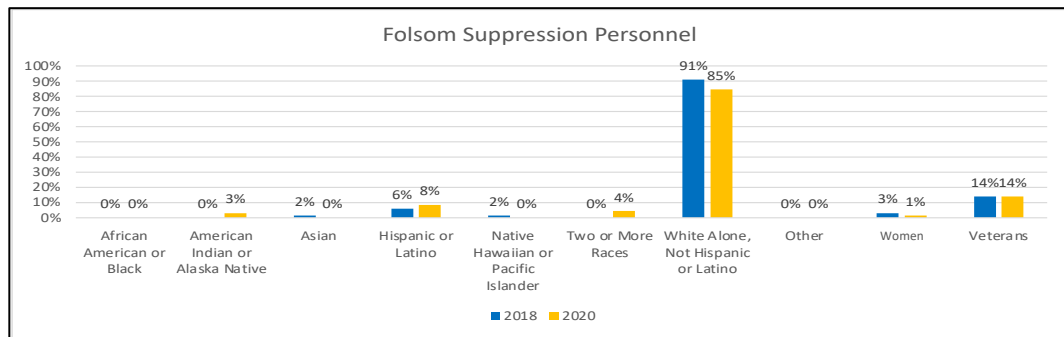
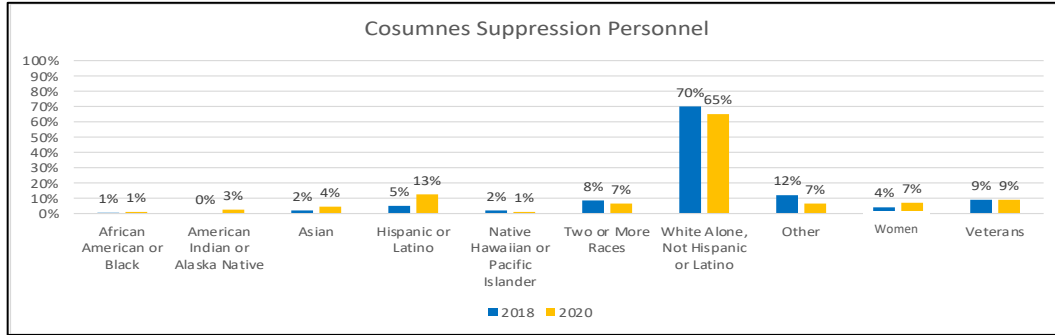


## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

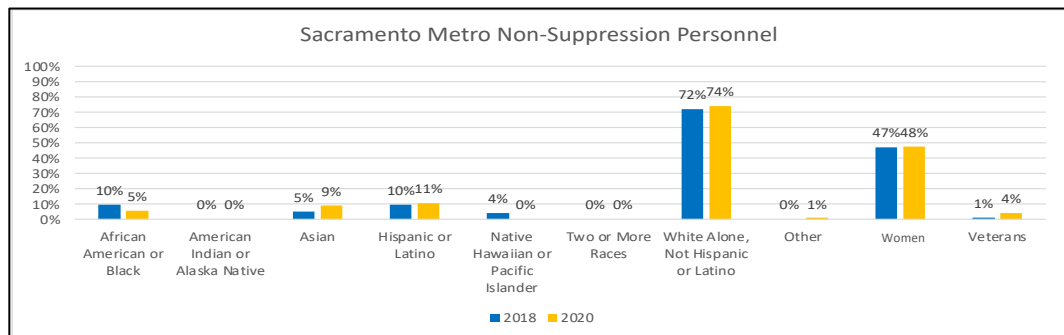
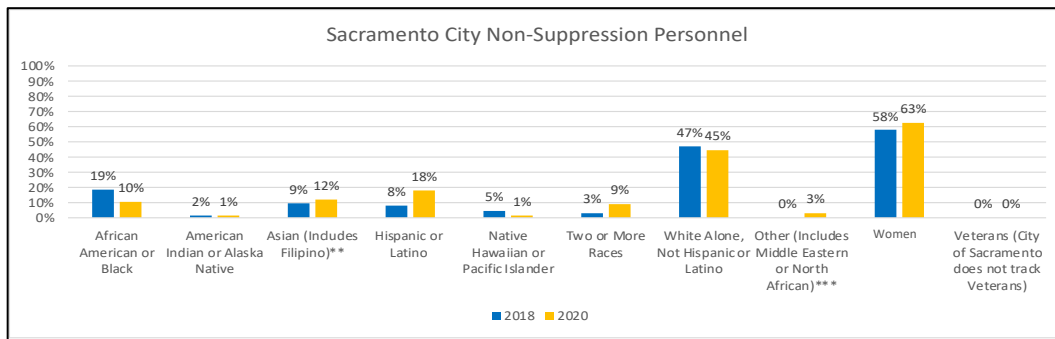
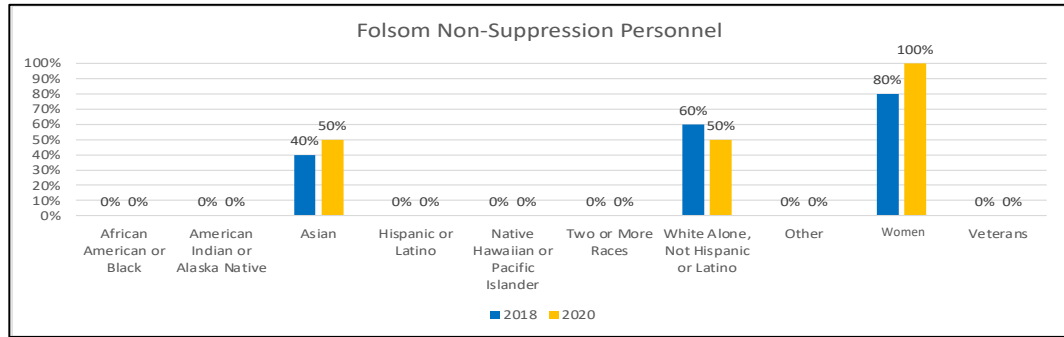
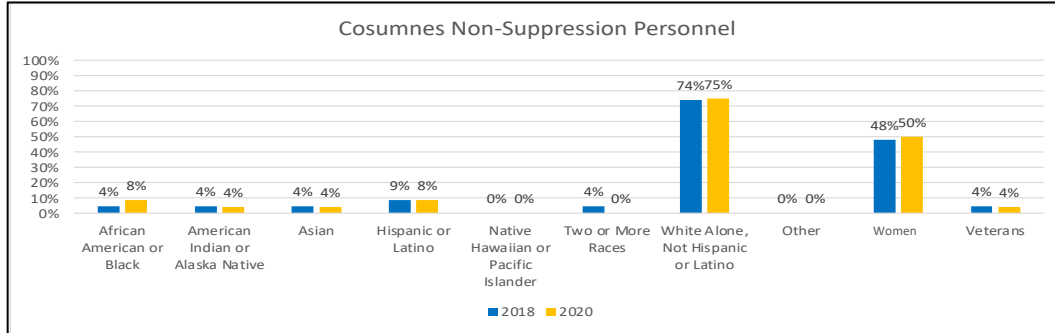
The Sacramento region’s population was analyzed in 2018 and 2020 to determine any change published by the United States Census Bureau (estimated). The percentage differences regarding race, gender, and veteran status were recorded. A comparison graph was created for the areas served by the Cosumnes Fire Department, Folsom Fire Department, Sacramento City Fire Department, and Sacramento Metro Fire District. Although other fire departments are located within the Sacramento region, only the following departments provided information for this analysis:



The Sacramento region’s fire department personnel demographics were also analyzed in 2018 and 2020 to determine if changes occurred due to the efforts of the Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee. Future fire department demographics data will be analyzed in line with United States Census Bureau updates. The following graph depicts changes within the suppression ranks, which are employees trained as firefighters.



Non-suppression personnel are employees are assigned administrative duties and do not have firefighter training. Normally, non-suppression personnel work in the Fire Administration Division, Fire Prevention Division, or provide support for other divisions within the respective fire departments.



## **STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES ANALYSIS**

An internal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) analysis of the committee was conducted to identify positive and negative attributes.

### **Strengths (Internal/Favorable)**

- Committee members are made up from a Diverse group
- Shared common interests among the committee members and the agencies they represent
- Resources available through agencies represented
- Community involvement already from outside of the Committee
- Show focus on the informal mission of the Committee
- Value input of community; provide a voice for the community and their contribution
- Focus on wanting to engage younger generations and value their input
- The Committee is purposeful

### **Weaknesses (Internal/Unfavorable)**

- Limitations of virtual meetings (capacity, number of screens that can be seen)
- Financial backing
- Overall understanding and support at all levels
- Good communication with decision makers; establishing a mission, values, and vision will help
- Need more participation from other Fire Departments; more representation on committees
- Need more participation from community organizations; can provide insight that may not come from Fire Departments

### **Opportunities (External/Favorable)**

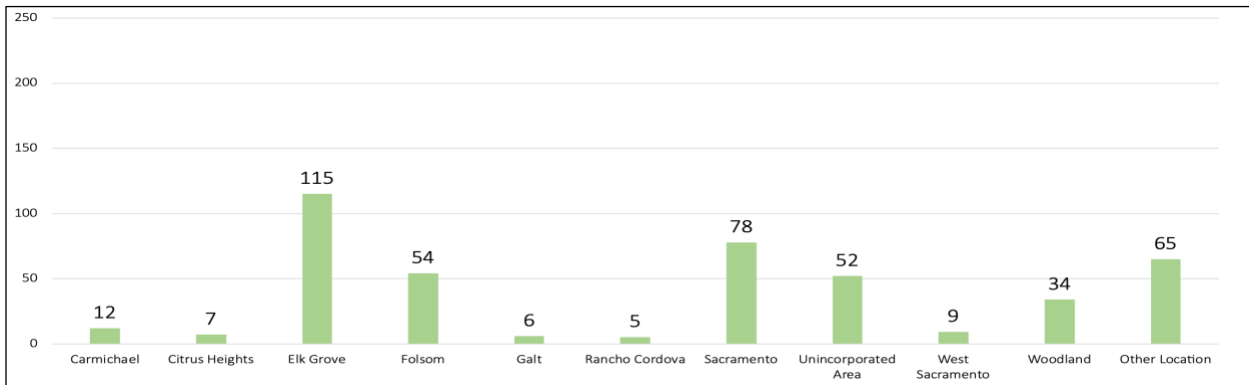
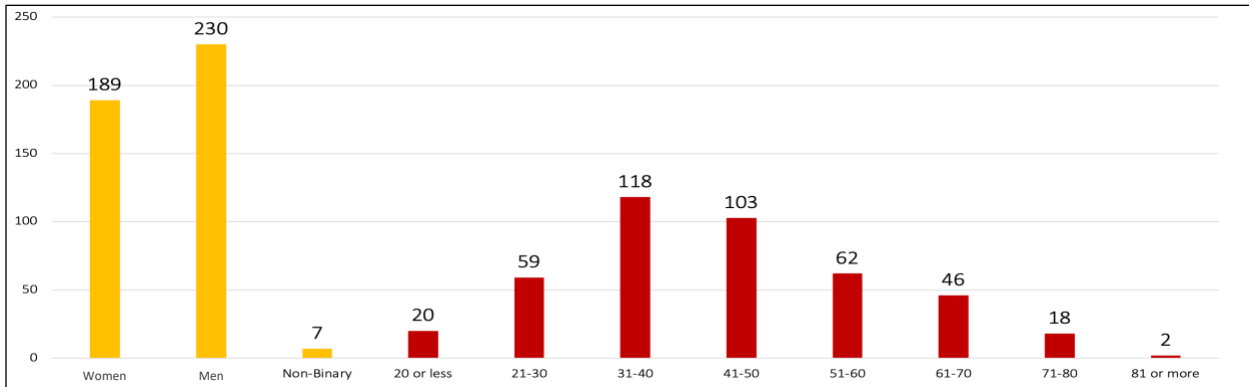
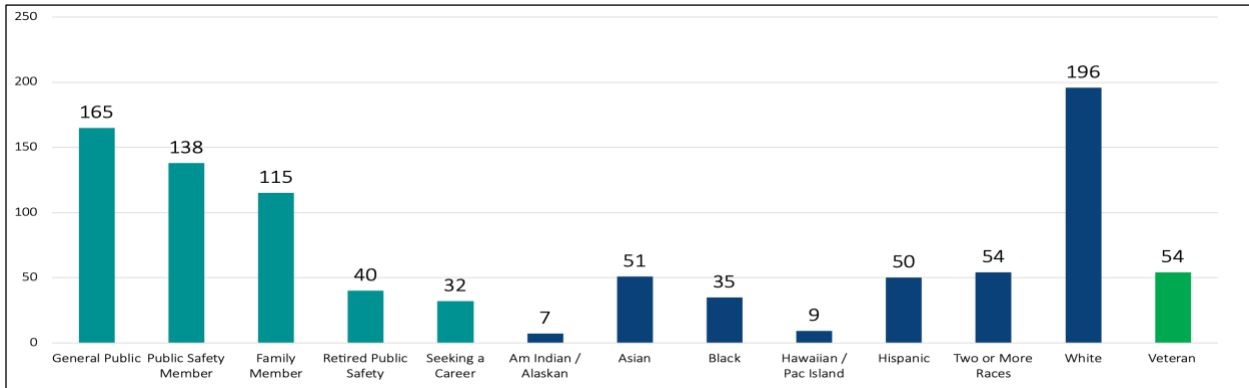
- Solidifying relationships with high schools, colleges, and community-based organizations
- Financial support; grants, support from leaders and agencies
- Individuals in the community who have been self-excluding; showing that there is an opportunity open to them

### **Challenges (External/Unfavorable)**

- Financial support; lack of funds
- Not just being a committee that checks a box; follow through and support from leadership
- Support from Human Resources

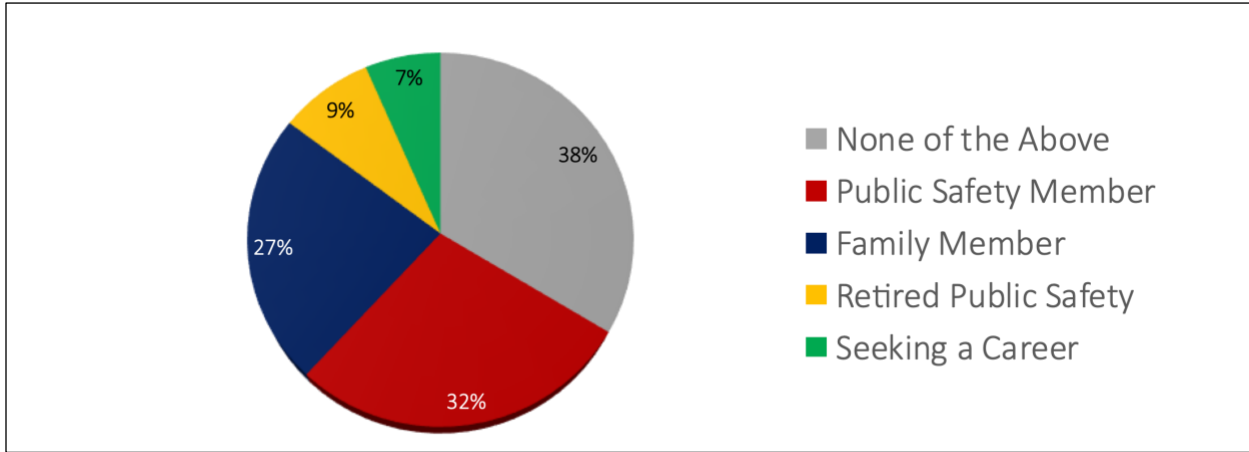
## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community feedback was obtained using a community-driven strategic planning process as recommended by the Center for Public Safety Excellence. It included input from representative groups comprised of community members, current or previous public safety personnel, family members of public safety members, and people seeking a fire service career. It was essential to receive information from the general public and public safety-related respondents (current, retired, family, and those seeking employment) to develop strategies to unite our communities with our fire departments. Assumptions are that respondents answered honestly and that they understood the questions. Limitations are that the respondents are a small representation of the various groups identified below and do not speak for the entire group or community. A total of 430 responses were received with the following graphs depicting the demographic breakdown between the respondents (some respondents were included in more than one category below):

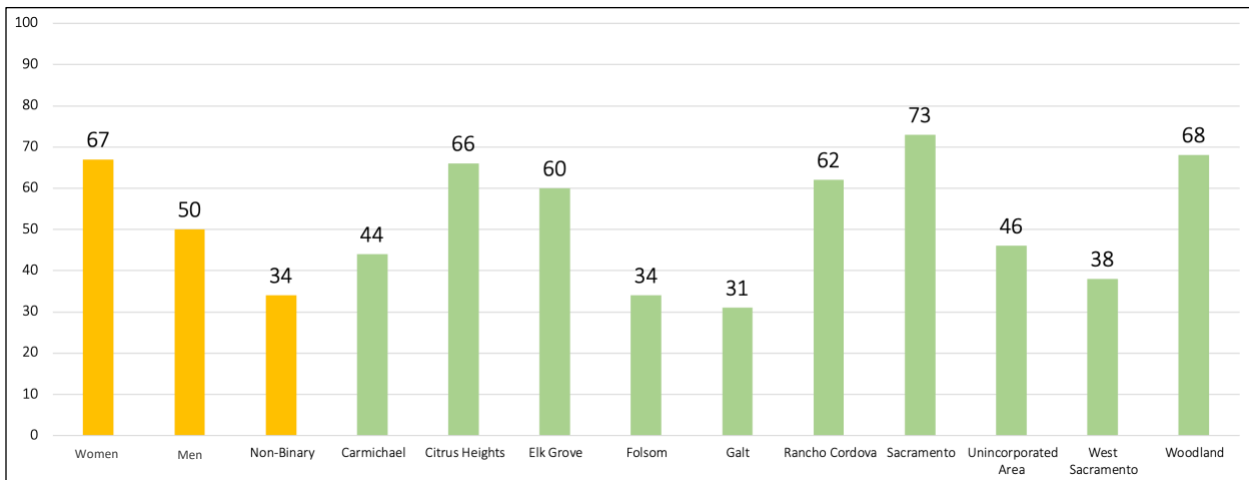
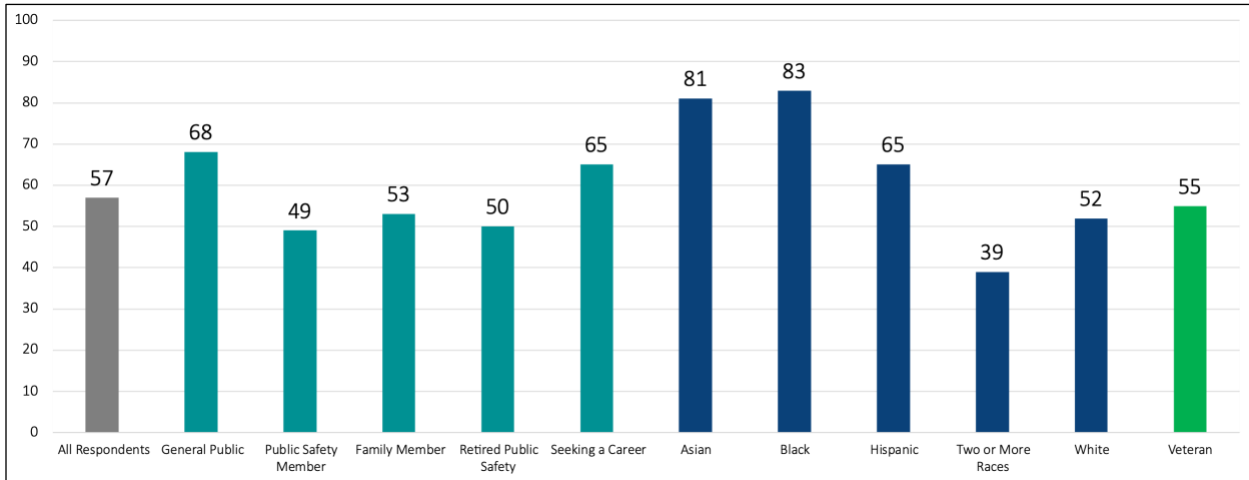


Various questions were asked, including the following:

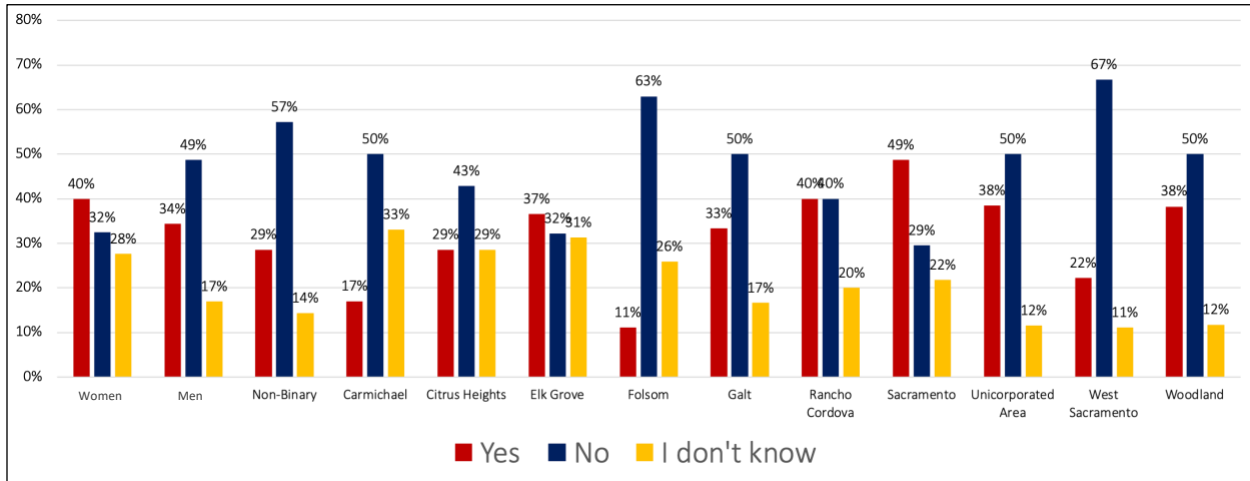
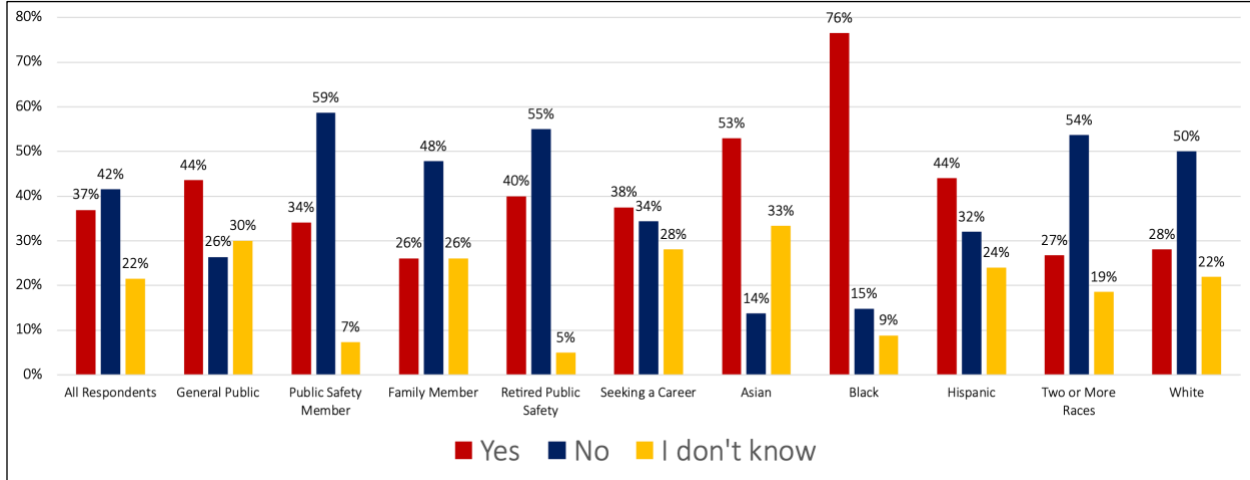
1. Do you or a family member work in a public safety profession? (430 Respondents)



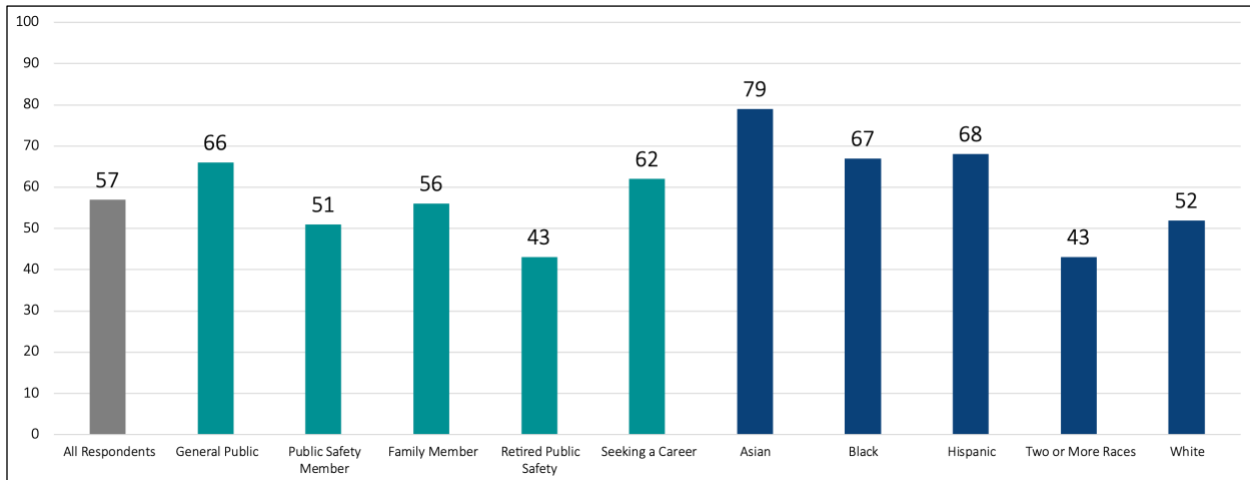
2. How important is it to you for fire department members to reflect the community they serve? Maximum Score = 100 (424 Respondents)

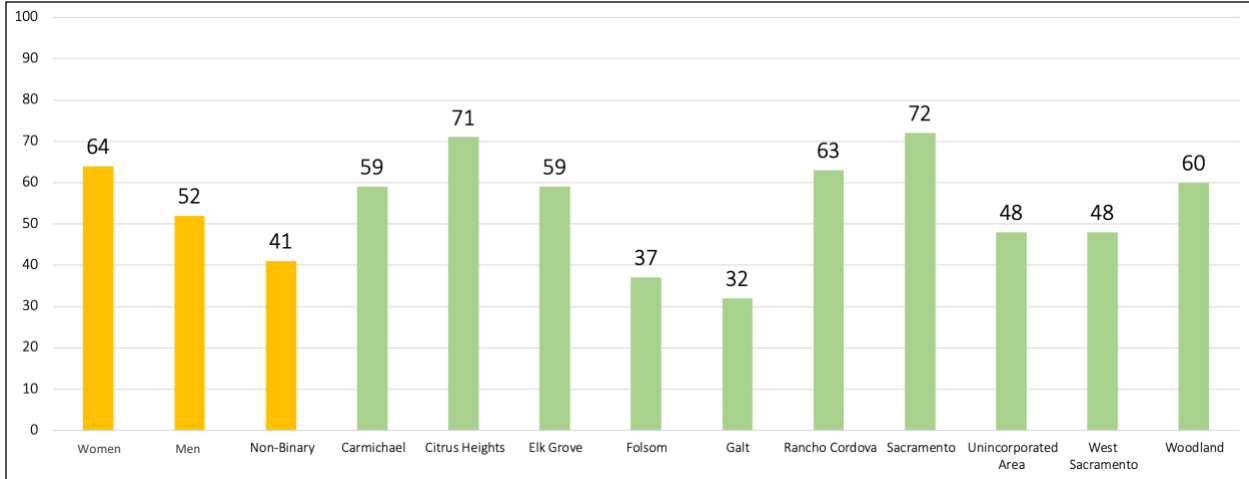


3. Do you believe there is a lack of diversity within your local fire department? (428 Respondents)

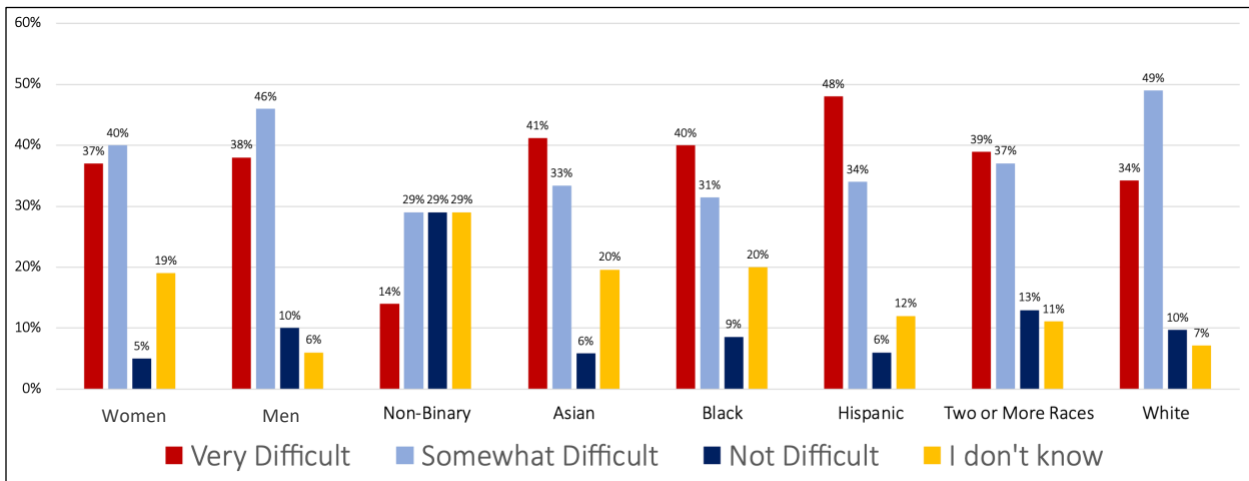
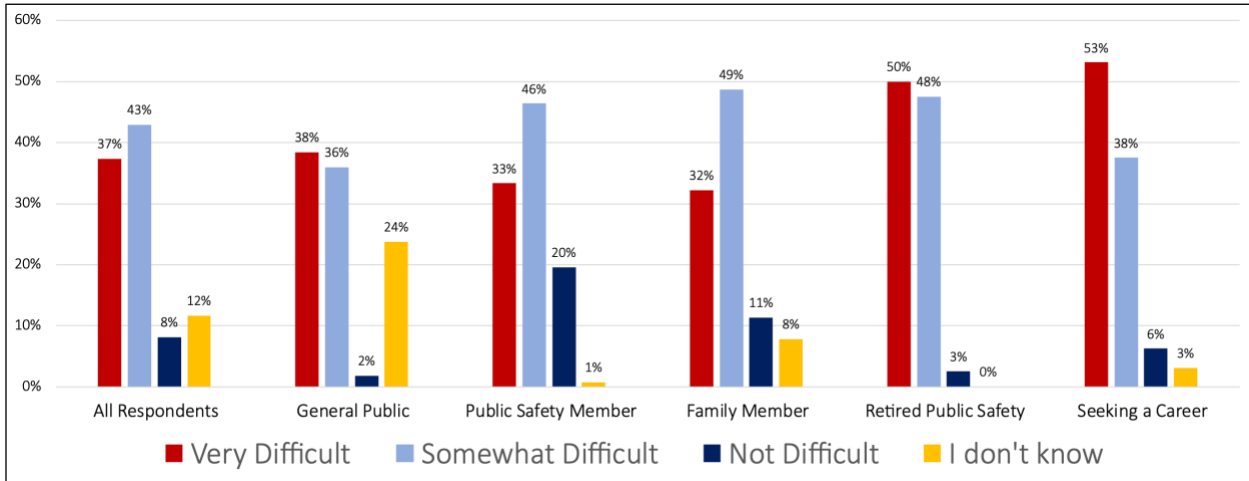


4. How important is it to you for fire personnel to speak the different languages spoken within their community? Maximum Score = 100 (423 Respondents)



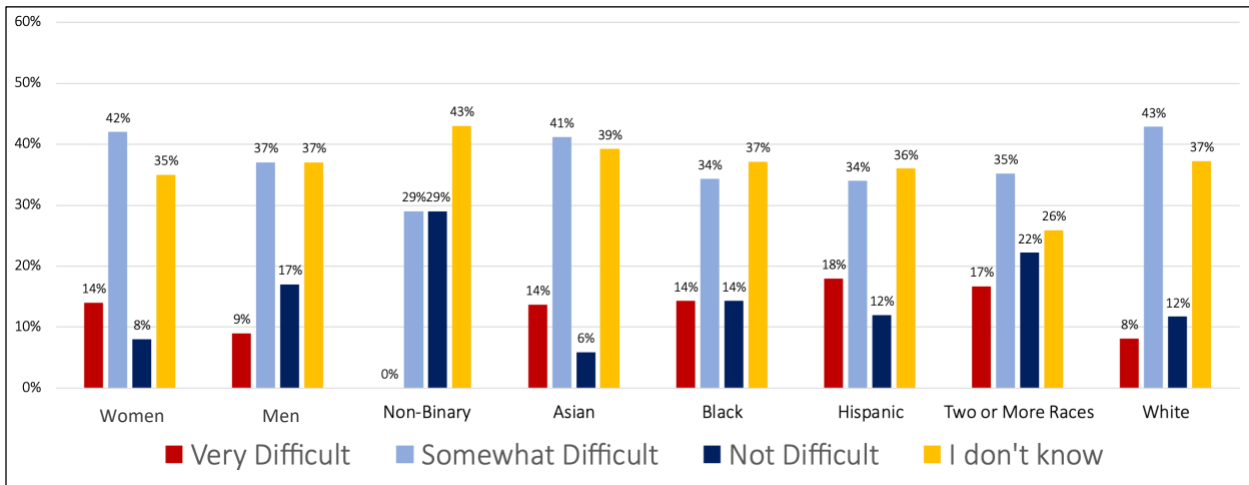
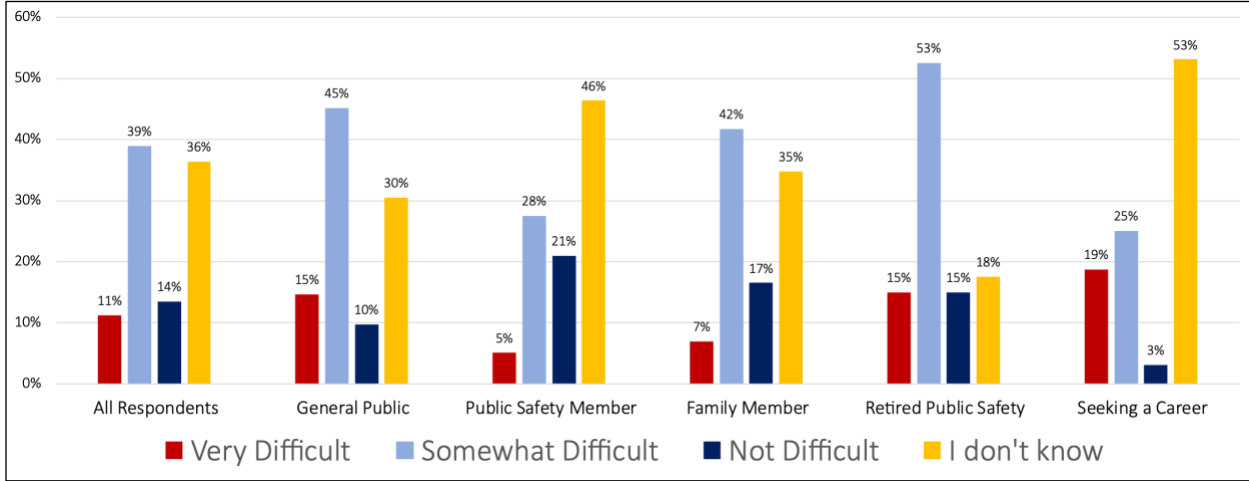


5. In your opinion, how difficult is it to become a firefighter? (429 Respondents)

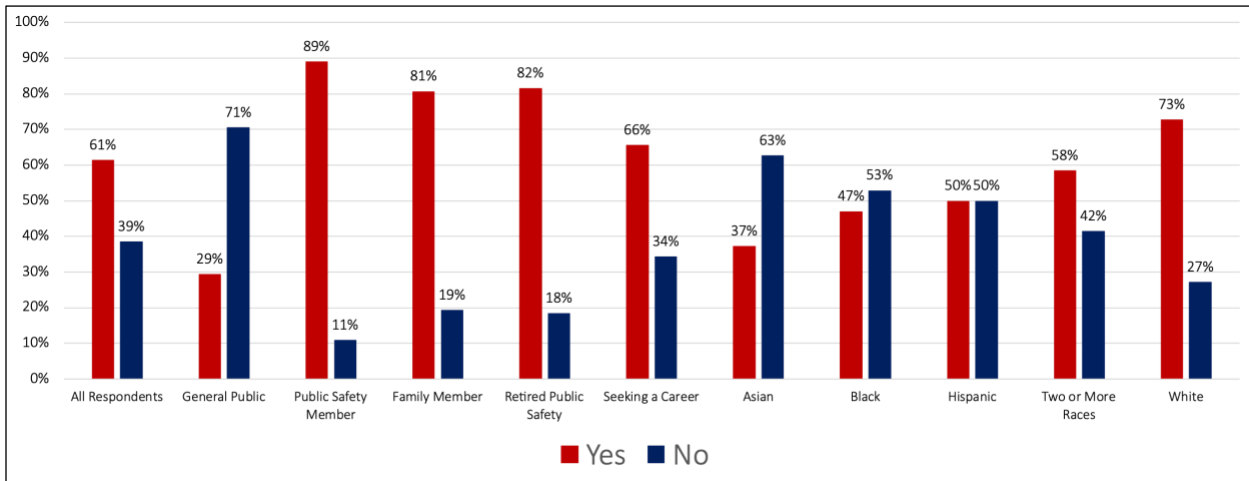


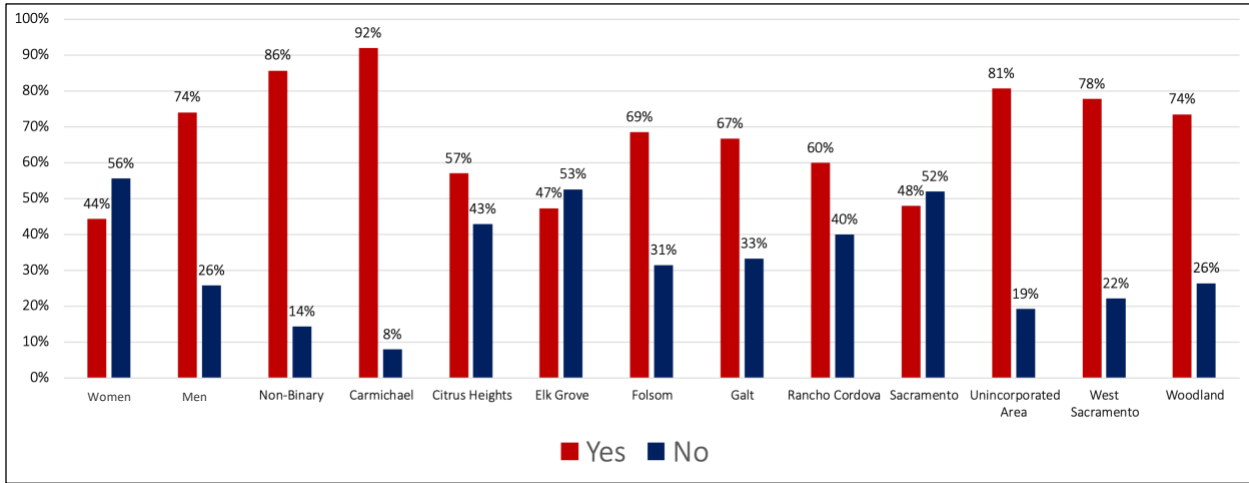


6. In your opinion, how difficult is it to become a fire dispatcher? (429 Respondents)

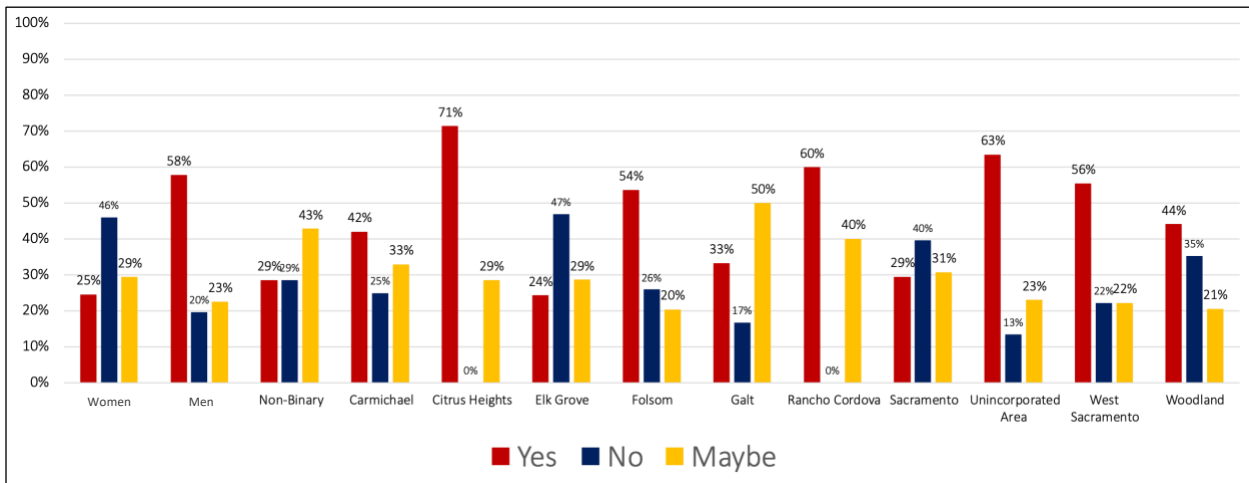
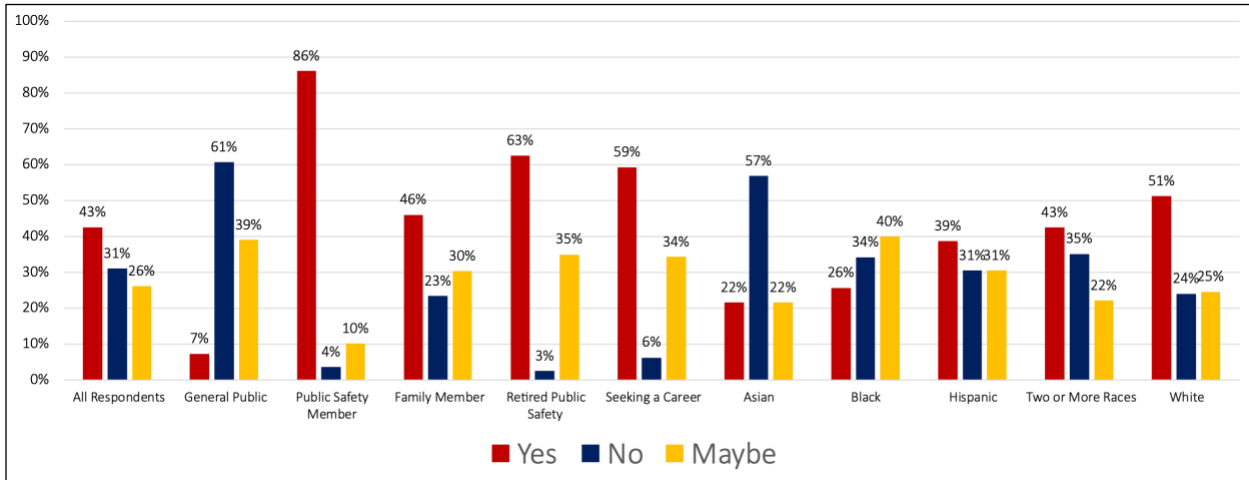


7. Do you know someone with fire service experience who can provide mentoring/guidance on how to begin a career in the fire service? (425 Respondents)

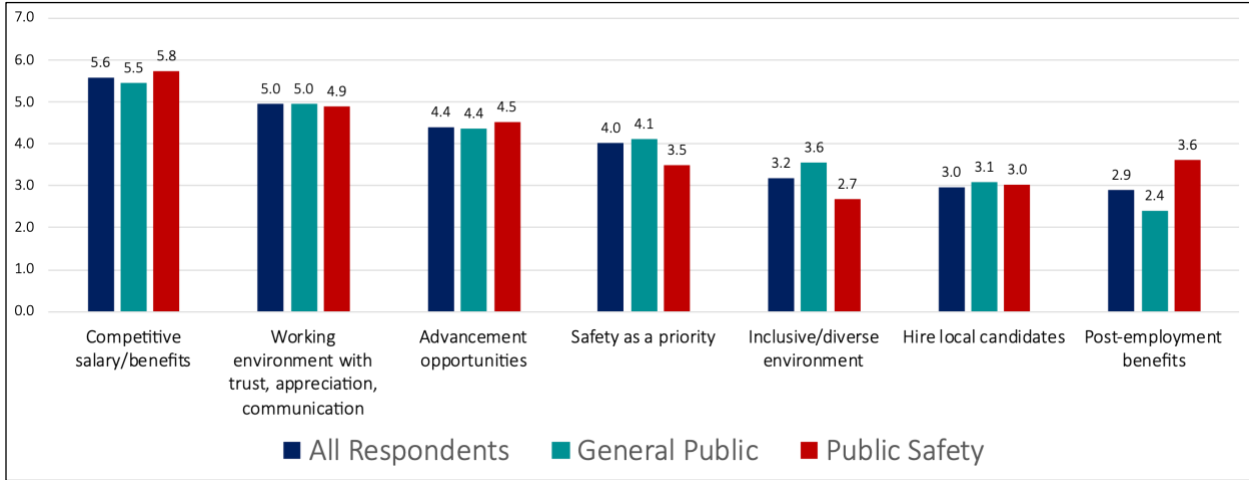




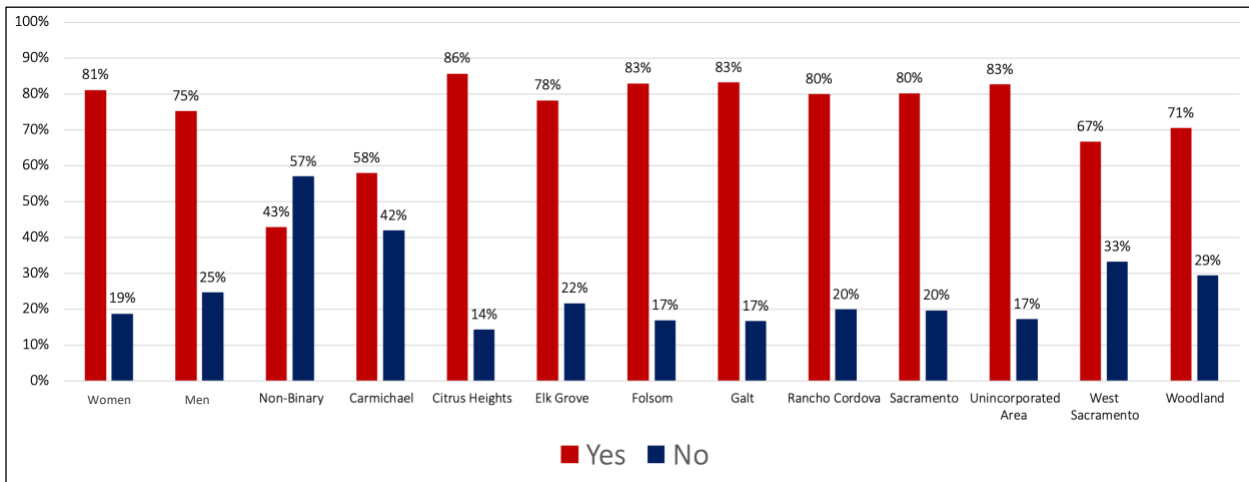
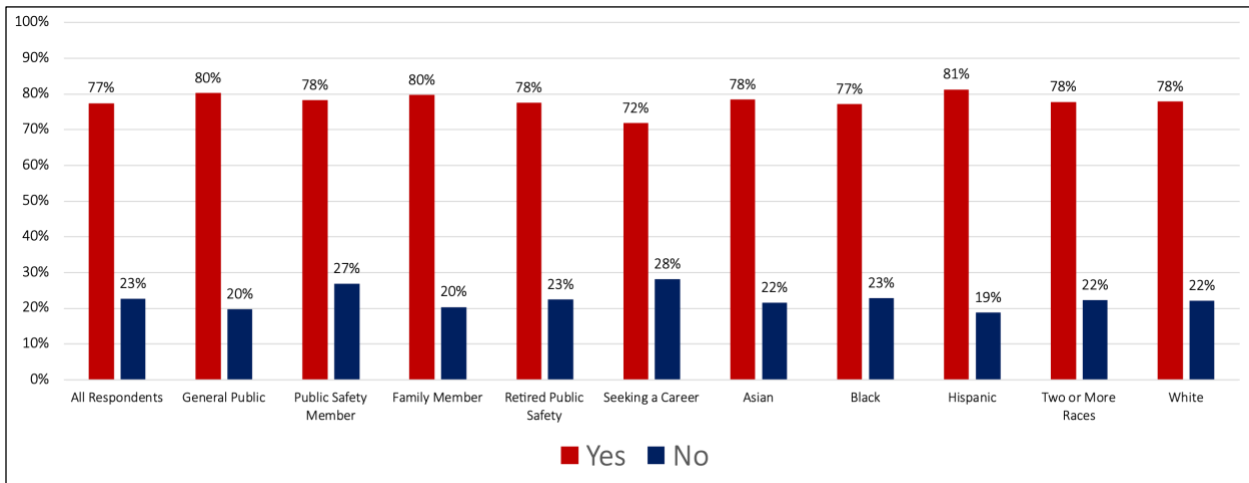
8. Do you know the required steps to enter a career in the fire service? (427 Respondents)



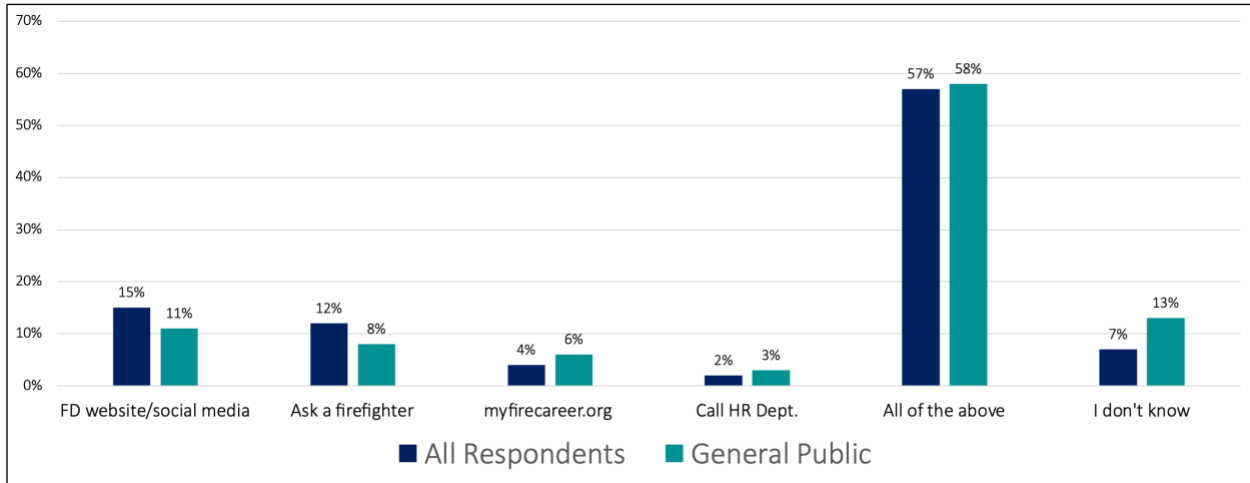
9. In your opinion, what is the best method to retain fire department personnel? (Rank in order of importance) (419 All Respondents/160 General Public/135 Public Safety)



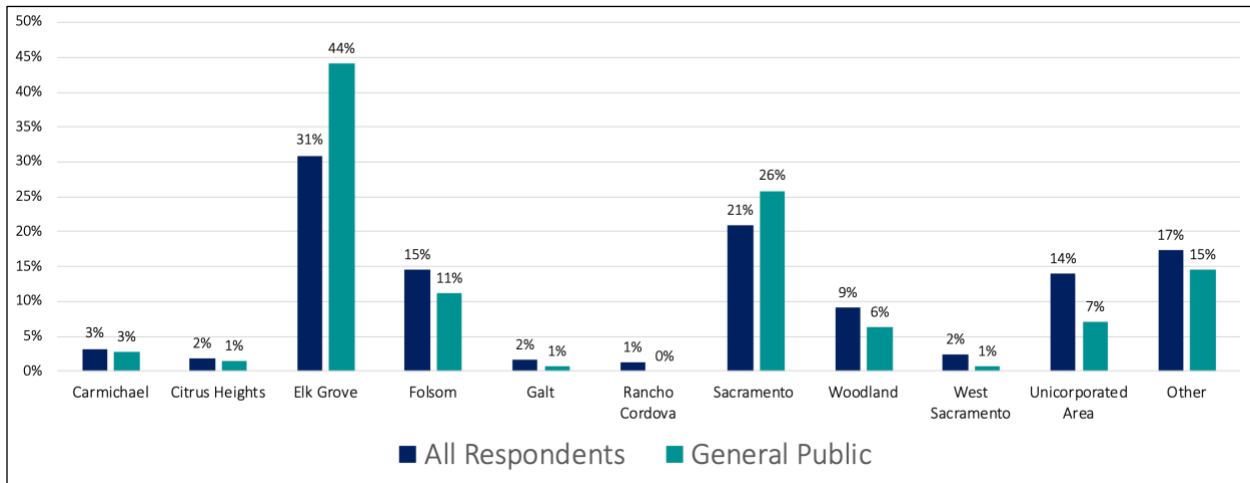
10. Should U.S. Armed Forces Veterans receive additional hiring points during the hiring process to recognize their service? (425 Respondents)



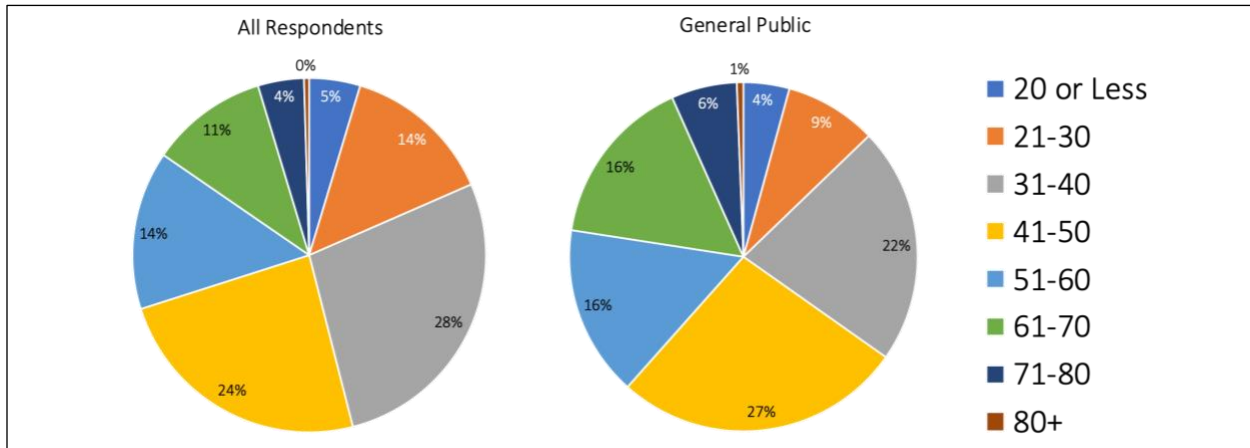
11. What is an effective way to find hiring information to become a firefighter? (424 All Respondents/160 General Public)



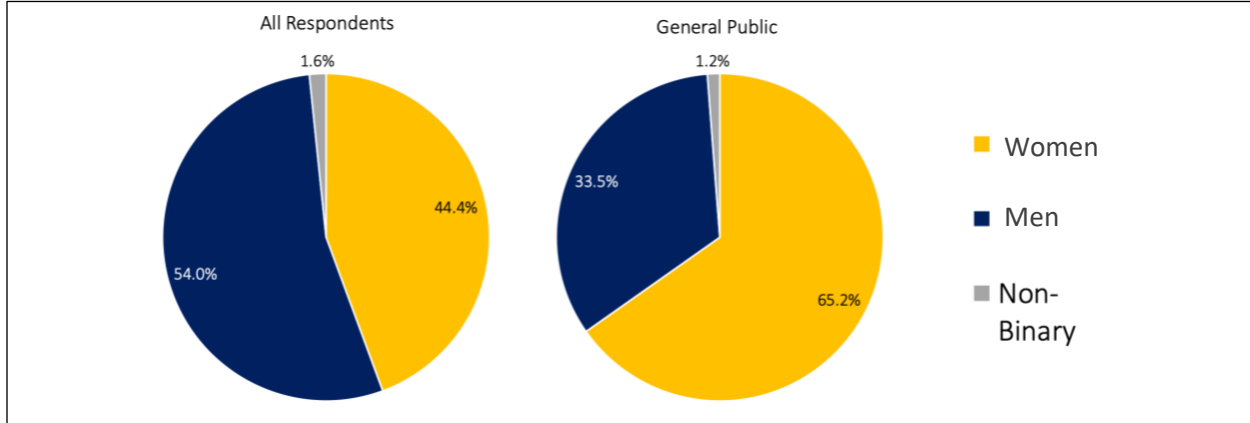
12. Which community do you live in? (372 All Respondents/143 General Public)



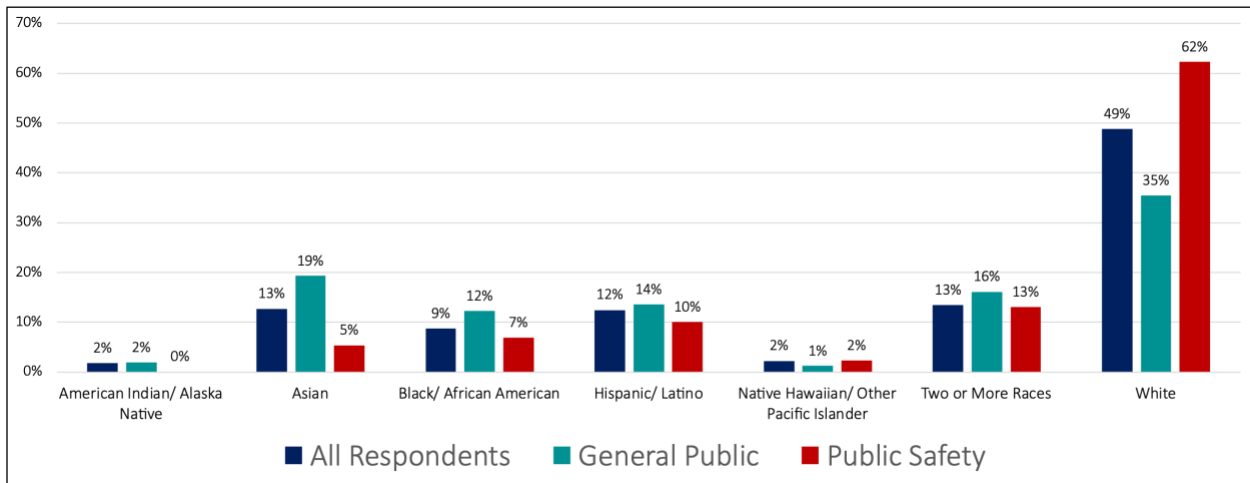
13. What is your age group? (428 All Respondents/164 General Public)



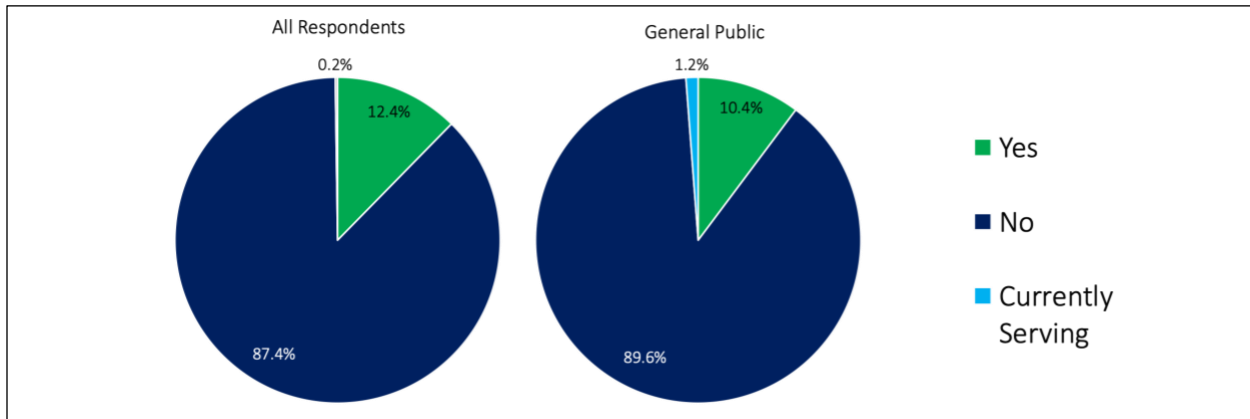
14. What is your gender? (426 All Respondents/164 General Public)



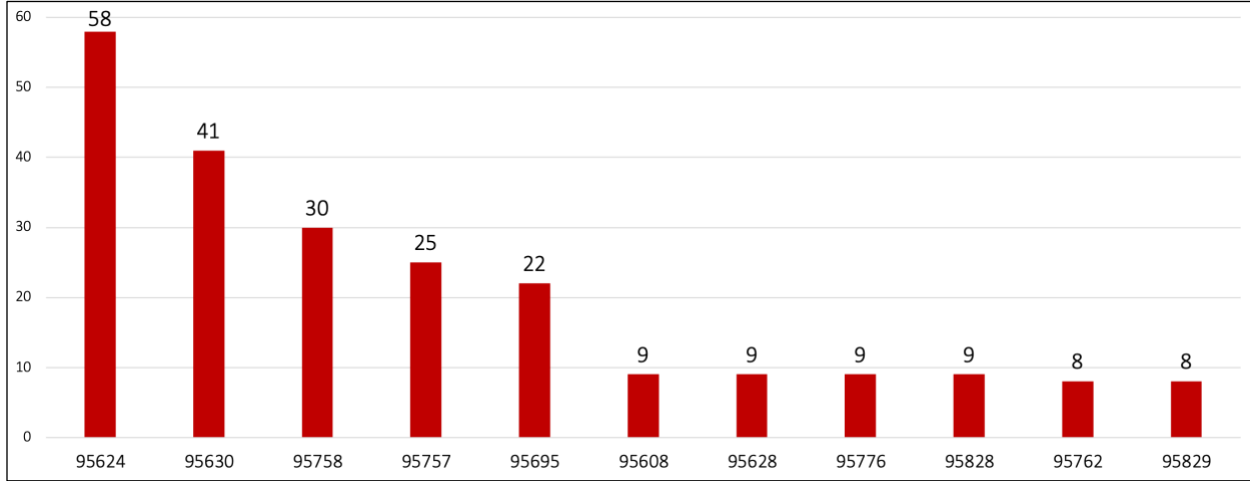
15. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (402 All Respondents/179 General Public/130 Public Safety)



16. Have you served in the military? (429 All Respondents/164 General Public)



17. In what zip code is your home located? (413 Respondents) (top results provided)



18. Please include any additional information that may assist us with the development of our strategic plan (185 Answered)

Responses varied from supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to being completely against it. Several responses were neutral and focused on providing information to the public regarding how to become a firefighter.

19. Contact information (optional) (95 Respondents)

- |                      |                       |                      |                     |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| • A                  | • Makiah Ewing        | • Kay                | • Yousef Salman     |
| • Jennifer Almaguer  | • Raphaella Fontenot  | • Akram Keval        | • Arvin San Gabriel |
| • Roman Anderson     | • Orlando Fuentes     | • Michael Klein      | • Deborah Saunders  |
| • Delvon Arrington   | • G Money Retired     | • Rick Klinke        | • Simon             |
| • Santino Barajas    | • Capt.               | • Caleb Kothe        | • Jordan Simpson    |
| • Randy Bekker       | • Elvira Garcia       | • Prem Kumari        | • David Soulsby     |
| • Christina Borgman  | • Kelley Gillespie    | • Leah               | • Deena Smith       |
| • Bessie Bronson     | • Claudia Gonzalez    | • Andy Luong         | • Darin Stahl       |
| • Marklin Brown      | • Frank Gonzalez      | • Anthony McAdams    | • Steve             |
| • Manuel Burciaga    | • Good                | • Sloan McAndrew     | • Chad Tapp         |
| • Jon Burgess        | • Carolyn Granadis    | • LaTanya Mosley     | • Oliva Torres      |
| • Carina             | • Roy Griffith        | • Claudia Munoz      | • Jean Troiano      |
| • Romeo Cha          | • Robert Gross        | • Donovan Niven      | • Patrick Tucker    |
| • Raye Clendening    | • Jemal Gurdova       | • Vianey Nunez       | • Gabriel Velazquez |
| • CM                 | • Gerald Hampton      | • Brian Oliver       | • Josue Vicente     |
| • Roger Cook         | • Jeffrey Holliday    | • Flin Oshun         | • Johanna Y         |
| • Crystal            | • Ms. Patricia Holmes | • Orga Pacheco       | • Villafuerte       |
| • Jane Dailey        | • Debra Howard        | • C. Parks           | • Andrea Walker     |
| • Jesse              | • Jeremy Huynh        | • Rajeev Prakash     | • Joe Ward          |
| • Danny              | • Isaiah              | • Michelle (Shelley) | • Allison Wilcox    |
| • Diane              | • James Iwanek        | • Phillips           | • Ryan W Yam        |
| • Dylan              | • Jake                | • Ping               | • Oleksii Zaleskyi  |
| • James              | • Rob Jenkins         | • Zach Punh          | • Kat Yambalia      |
| • Karl Dirkman       | • Joan                | • Felipe Rodríguez   |                     |
| • Margarita Espinoza | • Jeff Johnston       | • Caitlin Roque      |                     |

## CRITICAL ISSUES AND GAPS

After analyzing the information obtained through the internal SWOC and external community input, a list of critical issues and gaps was developed to identify future strategies. The list (in no particular order) is as follows:

1. Racial diversity in regional fire departments is not representative of the community.
2. Gender diversity in regional fire departments is not representative of the community.
3. Internal opposition exists regarding increasing diversity in the fire service.
4. The general public's expectations must be considered regarding recruitment, understanding that reflecting the community is more important to some communities.
5. Strategies are needed to remove barriers within the hiring process.
6. Policies and practices must integrate embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and cultural competence.
7. The difficulty in being hired differs for individuals and depends on their gender, race, socioeconomic status, and geographical location.
8. Widely publicizing a career path roadmap is needed due to a lack of community outreach and education for a career in the fire service.
9. Early contact with people is important to better inform the community members regarding the fire service's hiring requirements.
10. More emphasis is required to reach out to schools and colleges to inform people regarding the requirements to become a firefighter.
11. The public favors applying military veterans' preference points during the hiring process.
12. Pay is the number one priority regarding retention, followed by fostering a working environment with trust, appreciation, and communication.
13. Adequate funding must be prioritized by the governing bodies to ensure recruitment, education, and training is implemented in a manner that results in a workforce that reflects the community.

## STRATEGIES

The critical issues and gaps were analyzed to determine specific themes for developing strategies. These strategies are the foundational elements for the various fire departments to build upon.

As specified within the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fire and Emergency Services white paper, *“Communities served have continued to become more diverse in their culture, languages spoken, and norms. The workforce of many fire and emergency services agencies no longer reflects the people they serve. A workforce demographic that mirrors the community make-up helps to build trust with the community and promotes a better understanding by the agency. While firefighting is now a relatively small part of what agencies do, it is the most technically and physically demanding. Many fire departments are working with underrepresented groups to prepare them for the rigorous testing processes of joining the fire and emergency services. If the fire and emergency services hope to attract the right workforce to deliver the services conducted, then changes in culture and current perceptions are necessary to achieve more representative service.”* (CPSE, 2021)

The following strategies were identified:

1. **Diversity-** The workforce provides the best service when it reflects the community it serves. Recruiting from a diverse, qualified group of candidates is imperative to increase the value of thinking and perspective.
2. **Equity-** Fairness, access, opportunity, and advancement for all employees (current and future) must be at the forefront. Candidates and current employees must be provided with the tools to be successful, and barriers preventing full participation must be eliminated.
3. **Inclusion-** The workplace must have a culture that encourages full participation collaboration, flexibility, and fairness in order for all employees to develop to their potential.
4. **Retention-** The employee is the most valuable resource, and the working environment must embody principles that will value each employee to retain them.
5. **Training and Education-** Internal and external training and education must create internal cultural competence amongst the employees and effective external candidate preparedness for success within the hiring process.
6. **Accountability-** Systemic barriers must be removed by embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion in policies and practices and equipping leaders with the ability to increase diversity and be accountable for the results.
7. **Sustainability-** Financial and personnel resources must be prioritized to accomplish this strategic plan’s goals and objectives.



**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

<p>Strategy #1    Diversity</p>	<p>The workforce provides the best service when it reflects the community it serves. Recruiting from a diverse, qualified group of candidates is imperative to increase the value of thinking and perspective.</p>
<p>Associated Critical Issue(s)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Racial diversity in regional fire departments is not representative of the community.</li> <li>2. Gender diversity in regional fire departments is not representative of the community.</li> <li>5. Strategies are needed to remove barriers within the hiring process.</li> <li>6. Policies and practices must integrate embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and cultural competence.</li> <li>8. Widely publicizing a career path roadmap is needed due to a lack of community outreach and education for a career in the fire service.</li> </ol>
<p>Associated Core Value(s)</p>	<p>Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, Fairness</p>
<p>Goal 1.1    Increase community outreach and engagement in the Sacramento Region.</p>	
<p>Objective 1.1.1</p>	<p>Reach at least 200 people through community events regarding a career in the fire service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At least 50% of people reached will be enrolled in Footsteps to Fire.</li> </ul>
<p>Objective 1.1.2</p>	<p>Have a presence at job fairs, high schools, EMS schools, Fire academies, and community events, specifically in underrepresented communities, with personnel educated in the current hiring process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collect information on all events attended, contacts, and interests.</li> </ul>
<p>Objective 1.1.3</p>	<p>Use social media/networking platforms to highlight our effort to increase diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruitment in the spotlight with a diverse panel – Cal-JAC</li> <li>○ Promote the <a href="http://www.myfirecareer.org">www.myfirecareer.org</a> website for recruitment</li> <li>○ Use diverse and culturally appropriate photos and videos</li> <li>○ Utilize generation-relevant social media platforms to reach a wider audience</li> </ul>

<b>Goal 1.2</b>	<b>Increase the myriad forms of diversity in the Sacramento Region.</b>
<b>Objective 1.2.1</b>	Committed departments will collaborate with community-based organizations to inform the general public (specifically women, non-binary persons, and communities of color) regarding the hiring process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Presentations about the fire service as a career and the hiring process</li><li>○ Publicized career path roadmap</li><li>○ Footsteps to Fire<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Realize a 30% increase in enrollment for Footsteps to fire compared to 2021</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Objective 1.2.2</b>	Continue or implement youth programs that can help guide youth on how to prepare to become a firefighter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Sacramento Area Girls Firefighter Camp</li><li>○ State Fire and EMS Academy</li><li>○ Sacramento Firefighter Youth Academy</li><li>○ West Sacramento Fire Camp</li><li>○ Participation in local high school fire programs; collect participant data</li><li>○ At least 250 youth will be reached through youth programs</li></ul>



Strategy #2	Equity	Fairness, access, opportunity, and advancement for all employees (current and future) must be at the forefront. Candidates and current employees must be provided with the tools to be successful, and barriers preventing full participation must be eliminated.
Associated Critical Issue(s)		<p>4. The general public’s expectations must be considered regarding recruitment, understanding that reflecting the community is more important to some communities.</p> <p>7. The difficulty in being hired differs for individuals and depends on their gender, race, socioeconomic status, and geographical location.</p> <p>9. Early contact with people is important to better inform the community members regarding the fire services hiring requirements.</p> <p>11. The public favors applying military veterans’ preference points during the hiring process.</p>
Associated Core Value(s)		Equity, Integrity, Justice, Representation
Goal 2.1	Create equitable pathways for underrepresented persons to compete for fire service jobs.	
	Objective 2.1.1	Inform the public regarding job requirements, specifically for the firefighter position, to allow all persons to be successful within the hiring process.
Goal 2.2	Provide financial assistance for socioeconomically disadvantaged persons to offset the required training costs.	
	Objective 2.2.1	Provide scholarship opportunities for EMT/Paramedic, accredited fire academies, and testing requirements (FCTC written and CPAT agility tests).
Goal 2.3	Ensure fairness for military veterans to compete for a fire service job opportunity.	
	Objective 2.3.1	Partner with veterans’ organizations and local community colleges to encourage and support veterans to successfully complete the hiring process.

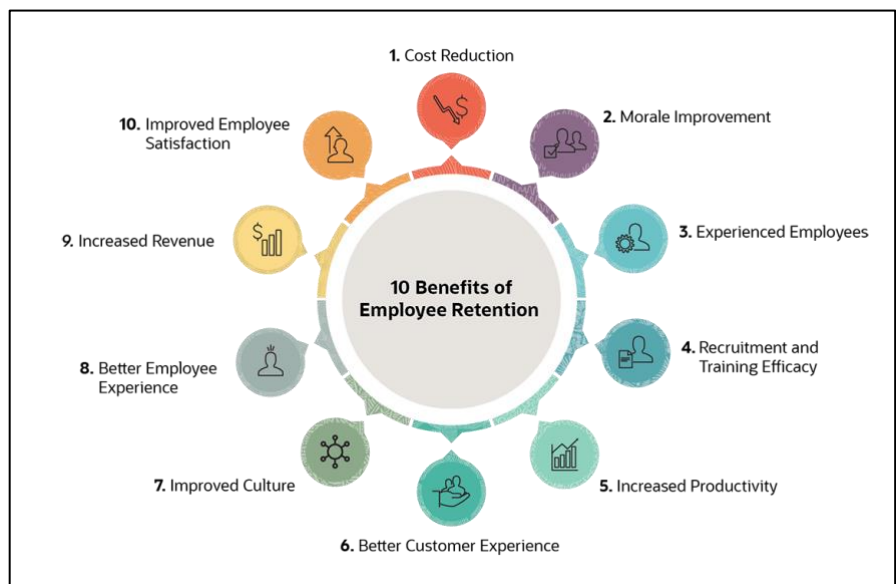


Strategy #3	Inclusion	The workplace must have a culture that encourages full participation, collaboration, flexibility, and fairness in order for all employees to develop to their potential.
Associated Critical Issue(s)		3. Internal opposition exists to increasing diversity in the fire service. 5. Strategies are needed to remove barriers within the hiring process.
Associated Core Value(s)		Inclusion, Equity, Fairness, Representation
Goal 3.1	Fire departments embrace the value of the various experiences and perspectives of all their personnel.	
	Objective 3.1.1	Provide training to fire service personnel on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
	Objective 3.1.2	Demonstrate the practical benefits of inclusion relating to personnel retention, cost savings, and increased connection with our communities.
Goal 3.2	Fire departments use effective strategies and methods of inclusion to support personnel in their organizations.	
	Objective 3.2.1	Allocate resources and opportunities as needed to create equitable hiring and career outcomes.
	Objective 3.2.2	Identify and eliminate barriers to hiring and advancement.
	Objective 3.2.3	Utilize all reasonable measures to disseminate hiring information to our communities.
	Objective 3.2.4	Partner with community-based organizations and educational institutions to generate interest among future of fire department members.
Goal 3.3	Ensure fire departments embrace the concepts of inclusion and psychological safety for all their personnel.	
	Objective 3.3.1	Connect the strength that comes from diversity with the need for inclusivity.
	Objective 3.3.2	Value all perspectives from personnel for planning and decision-making.
	Objective 3.3.3	Periodically survey personnel to measure success toward a safe and inclusive working environment.



Strategy #4	Retention	The employee is the most valuable resource, and the working environment must embody principles that will value each employee to retain them.
Associated Critical Issue(s)		2. Gender diversity in regional fire departments is not representative of the community. 6. Policies and practices must integrate embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and cultural competence. 12. Pay is the number one priority regarding retention, followed by fostering a working environment with trust, appreciation, and communication.
Associated Core Value(s)		Commitment, Community, Inclusion
Goal 4.1	Encourage and support professional development as an organizational priority.	
	Objective 4.1.1	Provide opportunities and funding to attend trainings, seminars, symposiums, etc.
	Objective 4.1.2	Incentivize education and certification with pay or promotional opportunities.
	Objective 4.1.3	Ensure opportunities exist to be part of cross-functional teams/committees.
Goal 4.2	Ensure succession management and promotions occur internally as an organizational priority.	
	Objective 4.2.1	Establish a mentor program and ensure organizational buy-in.
	Objective 4.2.2	Regularly schedule promotional exams and encouragement to participate.
Goal 4.3	Create and organizational culture where employees are part of the change.	
	Objective 4.3.1	Encourage idea sharing through regular communications, surveys, suggestion boxes, etc.
	Objective 4.3.2	Ensure suggestions are evaluated and considered, and feedback is given.
Goal 4.4	Support employees who need reasonable accommodations related to medical conditions (including pregnancy) as an organizational priority.	
	Objective 4.4.1	Provide appropriate physically-appropriate assignments during maternity leave to ensure equity related to career and promotional opportunities.

Objective 4.4.2	Ensure an appropriate transition regarding re-entry and circulation back to previous job duties. e.g., A firefighter receives an effective transition between light-duty, maternity leave, and re-entry to full-duty due to the missed time online.
Objective 4.4.3	Ensure options for assignments, facilities, and deployment conducive and appropriate to support lactation needs are provided.
Goal 4.5	Allocate sufficient financial resources to ensure fair and competitive salaries as an organizational priority.
Objective 4.5.1	Regularly scheduled compensation studies to ensure appropriate salaries and benefits are offered.



Strategy #5	Training and Education	Internal and external training and education must create internal cultural competence amongst the employees and effective external candidate preparedness for success within the hiring process.
Associated Critical Issue(s)		<p>6. Policies and practices must integrate embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competence.</p> <p>7. The difficulty in being hired differs for individuals and depends on their gender, race, socioeconomic status, and geographical location.</p> <p>9. Early contact with people is important to better inform the community members regarding the fire service’s hiring requirements.</p> <p>10. More emphasis is required to reach out to schools and colleges to inform people regarding the requirements to become a firefighter.</p>
Associated Core Value(s)		Inclusion, Commitment, Equity, Community, Diversity, Fairness, Integrity, Justice, Representation
Goal 5.1	Develop compulsory training for all fire department personnel who hire or supervise others, providing clear race/gender equity and inclusion expectations.	
	Objective 5.1.1	Secure annual funding for diversity, equity, and inclusion training programs.
	Objective 5.1.2	Provide reimbursement opportunities for all personnel seeking outside diversity, equity, and inclusion training.
Goal 5.2	Assign dedicated personnel to educate, coach, and train internal department personnel on diversity, equity, and inclusion annually.	
	Objective 5.2.1	Secure funding for position(s) dedicated to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
	Objective 5.2.2	Encourage departmentwide participation in the formation of training programs for community informational hiring.
Goal 5.3	Develop transparent hiring practices with access to information during all phases of the hiring process.	
	Objective 5.3.1	Educate department hiring personnel in diversity, equity, and inclusion, emphasizing multiple types of bias that can be present in the hiring process.
	Objective 5.3.2	Provide interested community members with practice materials, access to department-specific physical testing, mentoring opportunities, and a POC for needed support during the hiring process.

Strategy #6	Accountability	Systemic barriers must be removed by embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion in policies and practices and equipping leaders with the ability to increase diversity and be accountable for the results.
Associated Critical Issue(s)		<p>4. The general public’s expectations must be considered regarding recruitment, understanding that reflecting the community is more important to some communities.</p> <p>5. Strategies are needed to remove barriers within the hiring process.</p> <p>6. Policies and practices must integrate embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and cultural competence.</p> <p>11. The public favors applying military veterans’ preference points during the hiring process.</p>
Associated Core Value(s)		Commitment, Fairness, Integrity, Justice, Representation
Goal 6.1	Create policies and procedures that remove obstacles related to improving diversity, equity, and inclusion as expected by the respective community.	
	Objective 6.1.1	Ensure accountability, at all levels of the organization, regarding carrying out strategic planning efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Goal 6.2	Empower leadership personnel to make decisions that positively affect change within their respective organization.	
	Objective 6.2.1	Create a culture that embraces diversity within each respective organization.
Goal 6.3	Ensure veterans’ preference is provided within the hiring process.	
	Objective 6.3.1	Update Human Resources hiring policies to include military veterans’ preference points during the recruitment process.





Strategy #7	Sustainability	Financial and personnel resources must be prioritized to accomplish this strategic plan's goals and objectives.
Associated Critical Issue(s)		6. Policies and practices must integrate embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and cultural competence. 13. Adequate funding must be prioritized by the governing bodies to ensure recruitment, education, and training is implemented in a manner that results in a workforce that reflects the community.
Associated Core Value(s)		Commitment, Equity
Goal 7.1	The Fire Departments will authentically need to be personally invested in ensuring that recruitment efforts are accomplished.	
Objective 7.1.1	Educate Fire departments on the impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs.	
Objective 7.1.2	Share reports on the metrics/data of the program with the Committee every three years.	
Goal 7.2	The Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee will be allocated a defined budget to move forward with successful recruitment strategies.	
Objective 7.2.1	Develop a budget with line items for outreach, programming, personnel, etc.	
Objective 7.2.2	Individual fire departments will contribute an annual financial amount to the Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee budget with a percentage based on their approved full-time positions.	
Goal 7.3	The Fire Departments will assign sufficient personnel to implement successful recruitment programs.	
Objective 7.3.1	Ensure that administrative personnel are assigned to a recruitment team who will not be reassigned to firefighter duties.	
Objective 7.3.2	Individual fire departments will allocate sufficient financial resources within their respective department to fund a recruitment team.	



**PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS**

Performance indicators are presented as supporting the strategies, goals, and objectives of this Strategic Plan. They are quantified by a numeric, percentage, or specific achievement. The respective fire departments are expected to further refine this plan’s strategies, goals, and objectives to include specific tasks assigned to key personnel and have realistic timelines to accomplish. The information within this plan is intended to guide individual organizations, understanding that each organization and community will have different expectations depending upon their geographic location and demographic makeup. Although many other workload and performance measures can be examined, these represent a sampling of key indicators that allow the respective fire departments a set of benchmarks. Each fire department should strive to achieve at least the provided performance indicators and may add additional performance indicators to meet its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
Performance Indicator	Performance Measurement Goal
Compare demographic information for each fire department	Review demographic information and provide updated data to the Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee no later than every three years
Improve recruitment strategies to provide fair opportunities	Participate in recruitment efforts at least two times per year
Ensure an inclusive and respectful work environment	Provide ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion training and education for all employees and ensure 100% compliance with California AB1825
Partner with community groups that support diversity efforts	Attend 100% of Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee monthly meetings
Strive to be more reflective of the community	Be intentional in aligning department demographics with the percentages within the respective communities

## COMMITMENT

The Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee approached its desire to develop and implement a strategic plan by asking for and receiving input from the community and Committee members during the development stage of the planning process. The success of this strategic plan will not be measured by the implementation of goals and objectives but rather from the realization of the Committee's vision and the support received from the governing bodies of the respective fire departments, members of each organization, and the community-at-large. This vested interest, support, and constant communication will enable the Committee and each Fire Department to carry forth this plan.

This strategic plan was developed with the intent of realizing action that can be quantified. This strategic plan is expected to inspire others to develop their own strategic plan and improve upon the strategies, goals, and objectives set forth by the Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee. The information within this strategic plan may be used or improved upon by any person or organization to better serve their community through diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.



## EQUITY STATEMENT

The Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee will:

*Ensure equity and inclusion in recruitments and hiring processes.  
Support a climate that is welcoming and conducive to the success of all employees through respect, inclusion, equity, and cultural awareness.  
Promote equitable access to services, events, and activities that further develop diversity and inclusion in our community.*

## REFERENCES

21<sup>st</sup> Century Fire and Emergency Services white paper

<https://www.cpse.org/projects/21st-century/>

California Assembly Bill 1825

[http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/03-04/bill/asm/ab\\_1801-1850/ab\\_1825\\_bill\\_20040930\\_chaptered.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/03-04/bill/asm/ab_1801-1850/ab_1825_bill_20040930_chaptered.html)

Center for Public Safety Excellence

<https://www.cpse.org/>

International Associations of Fire Chiefs

Guide for Creating a Diverse and Inclusive Department

<https://www.iafc.org/docs/default-source/1vcos/iafc-diversity-guide-ebook-final-08212020.pdf>

Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee

<https://www.myfirecareer.org/>

United States Census Bureau

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221>

## **Appendix A- Recommended Best Practices for Hiring Diverse, Equitable, & Inclusive Fire Departments**

The steps along the career path leading to permanent employment include career awareness, pre-employment education and certification, hiring process preparation, agency recruitment, agency hiring, initial (academy) training, and the probationary employment period. Throughout these steps, proactive action should be taken to ensure inclusion. Annual gathering of a department demographics can help determine if forward progress is being made regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion and provide indicators of potential needs for change in practices.

### **DATA TRACKING:**

- Maintain or develop a Fire Department demographic tracking system that includes veterans, race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
- Departments should gather data annually.

### **CAREER AWARENESS:**

- Leverage public education opportunities (School presentations, etc.) to discuss future fire service careers.
- Provide opportunities for career awareness throughout the community and specifically to underrepresented groups. Include materials and presentations in languages other than English.
- Starts early: Pre-school to college level. Partner to create age-appropriate workshops and lessons that introduce children, youth, and young adults to the Fire Profession
- Develop age-appropriate information and materials that include photos of diverse firefighters.

### **RECRUITMENT:**

- Develop, communicate, and practice policies and value statements regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Engage a diverse group of motivated employees in your recruitment efforts and partner with other agencies and stakeholders. These employees are ideal candidates for Regional Fire Diversity Committee participation.
- Partner with other fire departments at career fairs, Cal-JAC events, etc., to highlight teamwork and share booth costs.
- Partner with agencies to create career forums and informational workshops working directly with local community-based organizations to inform diverse communities of the steps to take to become firefighters. Footsteps to Fire is an example.

### **PRE-EMPLOYMENT EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION:**

- Recognize the effects of pre-employment education and certification requirements. For example, if paramedic certification is required, the hiring pool will be subjected to inclusion barriers due to a limited number of paramedic schools and the cost to obtain certification and/or licensing.
- Consider if a percentage of Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) personnel can be hired instead of hiring only paramedic firefighters. An appropriate percentage of EMT

firefighters that allows for sufficient rotation of all firefighters between an ambulance and a fire engine or truck is approximately 20%. The percentage can be increased if the department staffs their fire engines and trucks with paramedic captains or paramedic engineers.

- Consider the financial and time hardship of Paramedic School and explore agency support options for internships, school sponsorship grants, precepting, etc.
- Set rigid minimum qualifications to periods beyond application dates, i.e., EMT/CPAT, etc., by the start of the academy or age 21 by completion of the academy.

### **HIRING PROCESS PREPARATION:**

- Seek outside input (from community-based organizations and stakeholders) on hiring practices to find missed or additional recruitment opportunities.
- Identify the steps and requirements of your hiring process. They should be communicated on published material and easily obtained on agency websites. Use multiple websites/social media. The [myfirecareer.org](http://myfirecareer.org) website should be updated as needed.
- Provide and communicate opportunities for hiring process preparation throughout your community and specifically to underrepresented groups.
- As the application process approaches, hold local hiring workshops for qualified candidates to prepare for success.

### **HIRING PROCESS:**

- Provide hiring points for honorably discharged military veterans and bilingual candidates. Veterans must meet all other minimum requirements for employment.
- Provide hiring points and a financial incentive for bi-lingual candidates. Language certifications should demonstrate the minimum level of bilingual proficiency. Bi-lingual candidates must meet all other minimum requirements for employment.
- Consider residency points for local community members.
- Each hiring stage should involve different personnel. Recognize the risk of having the same individuals potentially eliminating candidates at multiple steps in the hiring process. The Academy cadre should not be part of the hiring process!
- Educate personnel involved in the hiring process about inclusion and bias.
- Train and build a diverse team that makes agency recommendations on diversity, equity, and inclusion. These members can become active members of the Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee representing their fire department.
- Be aware of your practices at each step in the hiring process. Where could the unintentional bias of one person, or a small group, impact who is successful in your hiring process? Pay particular attention to steps where candidates are eliminated from the process. Each step should have different individuals screened out.
- Track and compare your community's demographics, applicant pool, and successful applicants through the hiring process with other local fire agencies. Awareness helps bring understanding.
- Consider including non-fire personnel or other stakeholders to bring another perspective to your practices and decisions.
- Interview panels should be diverse and may include individuals from the community or other stakeholder groups.

- Be aware of the tendency to hire for culture fit vs. values fit. Place more focus on candidates' potential vs. prior experience and be mindful of hiring panel tendencies to hire someone that fits into the perceived ideal firefighter box.
- Be aware of internal fire personnel's implicit bias, i.e., too much ownership in how the candidates scored and shock talk when hired candidates were deemed "not a fit."

**ACADEMY TRAINING:**

- Training cadre should not be part of the hiring process.
- Be aware that bias of recruit ability may carry from the academy training period into the probationary employment period.
- The confidentiality of candidates and the information that the cadre can access must be separated. Examples include details from the background process, medications, applications, etc. These are all examples of confidential human resource concerns.
- Cadre should have diversity, equity, and inclusion training and awareness.

**PROBATION:**

- Recruit reputation should not follow into probation. Coach and direct cadre to keep recruit performance professional and communicated only by assigned cadre on a need-to-know basis.
- Guest instructors should be directed to keep opinions and observations professional.

**RETENTION:**

- Train and build a diverse team that makes agency recommendations on diversity, equity, and inclusion. These members can become active members of the Regional Fire Diversity Committee representing their fire department.





# SACRAMENTO REGIONAL FIRE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Established June 5, 2017



**SACRAMENTO COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION**

**For more information about the Sacramento Regional Fire Diversity Committee, please visit our website at [www.myfirecareer.org](http://www.myfirecareer.org).**