



Subject: Forest Park Fire Department Employee Referral Program – Executive Offices

Submitted By: Ricky L. Clark, Jr., City Manager

Date Submitted: July 12, 2023

Work Session Date: July 17, 2023

Council Meeting Date: June 17, 2023

Background/History:

Faced with a competitive labor market in both the public and private sectors, the City Manager sought out a creative way to stand out to potential employees. After brainstorming with the Command Staff of the Forest Park Fire Department, in an effort to ensure we attract the very best fire personnel, we are recommending the implementation of an employee referral program. The employee referral program is designed as a partnership between the City and its most valued asset and best recruiters, our employees.

As governments all across our region experience a diminished pool of well-qualified candidates, we recognize that our number one hiring tool is our employees. There is substantial competition amongst cities, counties, private agencies, and paid internships to recruit staff successfully. In Forest Park, we want to ensure that as part of our ongoing effort to recruit, we only want the best of the best working for Clayton County's largest, full-service municipality.

The issue is two-fold: attracting qualified candidates and offering a competitive hourly wage. The latter is currently being addressed by the City Manager's Office and a local municipality survey study is on the verge of being released, specifically regarding hourly wages. The former, introduction to and hiring of qualified candidates, may be improved by offering a referral pay incentive to existing employees. We believe successful recruitment is all about local connections. We want to encourage current staff to refer their friends, previous colleagues, and even neighbors. Through conversation, relationships, mentoring, and networking, current employees can contribute to the wealth of talent the City employs.

Eligibility & Participation:

1. Eligible positions are those open positions within the Fire Department, identified by the Human Resources Department, which are posted on the City's website.
2. All regular full – or part-time employees of the Fire Department are eligible to participate except for:
 - Members of the Fire Command Staff
 - Hiring Manager, members of the selection team, or individuals who would have direct reporting relationship with the candidate.

3. All eligible candidates must meet the following criteria in order for the employee to be eligible for a referral bonus:

- Cannot be a former employee, contract temporary help, agency employee or student employee.
- Cannot be an immediate family member
- Must be an external candidate

Procedures

Referrals are made by applicants listing the employee's name as a referral source in the following ways:

- On the employment application, or
- On the applicant's resume/cover letter
- The City will provide a form for completion and submission to the Human Resources Department by either the applicant or the referring employee with the applicant's application indicating that the referring employee has made the referral.

Policy

When a regular full – or part-time employee recommends a qualified and certified individual for a valid opening, and the referral is hired as a regular full-time employee, a referral bonus will be paid.

- First Payment - **\$1500** referral bonus awarded after the new employee completes ninety (90) days from the hire date.
- Second Payment - **\$1500** referral bonus awarded after the new employee completes one (1) year from the hire date.

Referral bonuses are normally paid on the first full pay period after the qualification period has ended. Applicable taxes will be deducted.

Both the employee who made the recommendation and the employee who was hired must be employees of the City at the time the bonus payment is due. An employee who is on leave or temporary disability at the time the bonus payment is due will have any bonus payment deferred until the employee returns from the leave of absence.

If multiple employees are listed as referral sources, the incentive funds will be evenly divided. In the event that a name is listed but not clearly defined, or if the referral sources could apply to multiple employees, the t City Administrator will decide eligibility.

The hiring process will be fair and consistent with the City's policy and procedures, with no bias for or against candidates, whose selection might make another employee eligible for a referral bonus. No referral bonus will be awarded for a candidate if any agency or third-party fee is required for the hire. Human Resources Department will monitor the use of the Employee Referral Program and have final authority over all aspects of the Program.

Cost: \$ Variable

Budgeted for: X Yes No

Financial Impact:

N/A
