



Washington Fire Chiefs

2024 Legislative Agenda

- **Stable Funding & Revenue**
 - Seek legislation to exempt or at least mitigate the impacts of tax increment financing areas on fire districts and regional fire service authorities (RFAs).
 - Support efforts to modify the property tax growth limit to reflect population growth and inflation, with a cap of 3%.
 - Continue exploring opportunities for local levy reform and funding stability.

- **State Fire Marshal's Office**
 - Seek to implement the recommendations from the Fire Service Delivery Workgroup, including establishing the Fire Service Advisory Committee to evaluate, educate and advocate for fire service funding and policy needs with the SFMO, WSP, OFM and the Governor's office, and continuing to work toward the creation of an independent State Fire Marshal's Office.
 - Support efforts to increase funding to support Firefighter 1 and 2 Training, Hazardous Materials Training, Regional Direct Delivery Training, the Firefighter Apprenticeship Program, Firefighter Professional Development Certifications, and Firefighter Training Reimbursement.
 - Support efforts to fully staff and fully fund the All-Hazard Mobilization program to address growing workload management challenges and ensure prompt and full reimbursements for mobilization deployments.

- **Firefighter Health & Safety**
 - Support proposals that provide firefighters and paramedics with protection from obstruction and attack when performing official duties.
 - Continue supporting efforts to address first responder mental health needs.
 - Continue supporting data-driven expansion of presumptive disease coverage for firefighters and paramedics.
 - Support efforts to improve the safety of firefighting gear, including enhancing regulatory standards and promoting the use of PFAS-free turnout gear.

- **EMS, Mental & Behavioral Health, and Substance Abuse Response & Co-Response**
 - Support efforts to address hospital capacity and ER wait time issues.
 - Support proposals aiding co-responder programs, including training and integration with the 988 system and first response (CROA).
 - Continue supporting the GEMT program, focusing on protecting stable reimbursement rates.



- Support proposals providing funding and assistance for integrated response to individuals dealing with substance use disorder, including support for leave-behind Narcan and other prevention efforts.
- Support efforts to reduce the reliance on emergency response to care facilities, including proper staffing and training for care facility employees.
- Monitor efforts regarding balance billing to ensure fair payment and reimbursement for ground ambulance transport.

- **Wildland Fire**
 - Continue supporting the All-Hazard Mobilization program to ensure adequate staffing and funding.
 - Support full reimbursement to local departments for wildland and other mobilization deployments.
 - Support efforts to fully fund DNR's forest health and wildfire resilience program established in HB 1168 (2021).
 - Support continuing efforts with DNR and the SFMO to improve and expedite the process for approval of aerial assets in early wildfire attack.
 - Continue to work with stakeholders to identify unprotected lands throughout the state, and to identify strategies for ensuring protection for rangelands and other vulnerable land.

- **Washington State Association of Fire Marshals**
 - Support inclusion of fire and life safety measures in new housing options that address the housing crisis and housing shortages.
 - Support efforts to enhance training on best practices for firefighter response to EV, Lithium-Ion battery, and other energy fires.
 - Support efforts furthering the effective use and implementation of the Wildland Urban Interface Code.

- **Volunteer Firefighters Issues**
 - Support efforts to incentivize the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.

- **Fire Service and Local Government Partners**
 - Support, as appropriate, proposals important to other fire service stakeholders and partners, including the Washington State Council of Firefighters, the Washington State Association of Fire Marshals, the Washington Fire Commissioners Association, the Washington Firefighters Association, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Washington State Fire Marshals Office.
 - Support, as appropriate, efforts of local government coalition partners on issues of mutual interest, including public records reform, property tax reform, infrastructure investment, public safety reform, and efforts to address homelessness.