



AUSTIN FIRE

Public Safety Commission Meeting
FY23 Q4

Chief of Staff Rob Vires





Labor Contract Arbitration Award

September 8: Arbitration Panel provided a decision (the award) regarding the labor negotiations between the City of Austin and the Austin Firefighters Association (AFA), effective immediately.

The award imposes a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that expires on September 30, 2025.

Highlights of the new Collective Bargaining Agreement:

- Base wage increases of 4% for FY23, 4% for FY24, and 4% for FY25.
- One-time lump sum payments based on annual base pay, overtime hours, and Bilingual or Staff pay.
- Adding Juneteenth as a paid holiday and providing exception vacation credit for the 2023 Juneteenth holiday.
- Adding stipend pay for Wildfire Battalion, Arson, and Dispatch.
- Adding a staff schedule pay stipend for AFD Assistant Chiefs.
- Eliminating random drug testing and post-accident drug testing. (Drug testing for suspicion of impairment continues.)
- Adding two additional Kelly Days to the shift schedule by no later than September 2025.
- The hiring of new civilian employees in assignments listed in Article 19 will resume.
- The fire cadet hiring process that is currently underway will continue and the final eligibility list will be in effect for one year from the date of the written exam.



Deferred Maintenance at Fire Station 1

Recent Update:

- Fire Station 1 has been under construction for several months with crews occupying and operating out of the station in concert with construction.
- Electrical complications arose during the Phase 1 work which resulted in repeated intermittent loss of power in the main building. Several attempts were made to correct these complications, while maintaining operations and construction.
- On the weekend of October 7, 8 & 9, the contractor planned a temporary upgraded of the failing electrical systems to maintain the original phased plan. The effort was not successful and created several additional life safety obstacles that violated COA Code. Seeking to ensure occupant safety and maintain code compliance, the COA Fire Marshal recommend that the building be vacated until corrections and electrical upgrades could be made.
- Crews vacated on noon of 10/13.

Coverage during renovation:

- Engine 1 has been relocated to Station 51 at 5410 Hwy 290 W.
- Engine 13 has been relocated to Station 6 at 1705 S. Congress Ave.
- Ladder 1 has been relocated to Station 32 at 2804 Montebello Rd.
- AFD/ATCEMS are coordinating with Travis County to authorize a lease agreement for space that will serve as a temporary Public Safety Station.



Expected completion: May 2024

Address: 401 E 5th St.

Improvements to this station:

- Complete renovation
- Upgrades to utilities, technology, and living spaces
- Will seek to achieve LEED Silver Designations
- Individual bedrooms and gender neutral bathrooms
- Advancements include Advanced Alerting for multi-company fatigue reduction, EV Charging Stations, and Noise Reduction Insulations



Deferred Maintenance at Fire Stations 8, 23, & 25

Expected completion: March 2024

Coverage during renovation: Crews remain nearby.

- Engine 8 is on-site; Ladder 8 is at Station 30.
- Engine 23 is in a trailer at 8700 Cameron Road.
- Engine 25 is at Station 44.

Improvements to these stations:

- Complete renovation with upgrades to utilities, technology, and living spaces
- Will seek to achieve LEED Silver Designations
- Individual bedrooms and gender neutral bathrooms
- Technological advancements include Advanced Alerting for multi-company fatigue reduction, EV Charging Stations, and Noise Reduction Insulations



Trailer housing the crew at Station 8



Station 25



Station 23



New Fire Station 53 at Goodnight Ranch

Located in Council District 2 and will be a shared facility with ATCEMS Medic 42.

Expected completion: January 2024

- New Station 53 will go into service mid-January 2024.
- New Engine 53 will go into service at that time.

Improvements and features in the new station:

- 15,000+ sq ft with 4 pull-through bays, 15 dorms, day room, kitchen, and gym.
- LEED Silver Designations
- Individual bedrooms and gender neutral bathrooms
- Technological advancements include Advanced Alerting for multi-company fatigue reduction, Solar Power, EV Charging Stations, Noise Reduction Insulations and Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes.

Recent updates:

- On schedule to open January 2024.
- Site work is complete.
- Currently working on interior finishes and details.
- Construction is well underway after breaking ground in February.
- Contactor JE Dunn is doing great work to move the project forward.
- All materials are arriving on schedule, at this time, as supply chain issues wane.



RENDERING: VIEW FROM INTERSECTION
JE DUNN

CITY OF AUSTIN
GOODNIGHT RANCH FIRE/EMS STATION
PGAL





Auto Aid – Travis County & Williamson County

Auto Aid: Interlocal agreement to dispatch the closest unit to a 911 call regardless of department or jurisdiction.

Auto Aid Successes:

- Auto Aid occurs multiple times per day and greatly contributes to decreased response times for our citizens of Austin and Travis County.
- February 2023 – Engine 38 and Quint 34 were on-scene first to a house fire in Cedar Park. The house had significant fire up to the attic and Quint 34 was able to rescue an unconscious patient in the hallway. AFD and Cedar Park worked together to control the fire.
- October 2022 – Engine 45 was first on-scene to a house fire in Avery Ranch Country Club. AFD, Cedar Park, and Round Rock worked together to control the fire.



Photo of Auto Aid in action with Round Rock, Cedar Park, and Austin Fire Departments on-scene together.

“We can not even begin to thank everyone that helped make the house fire a little bit easier. The Austin Fire Department, Round Rock Fire Department, and the Cedar Park Fire Department were absolutely amazing. They worked so hard to make sure even our Bearded Dragons survived. I can’t even begin to explain our gratitude for these firefighters. They were so kind, thoughtful and brave. They even gave my Little Man a tour of the truck which he absolutely loved. I have had a million different emotions today but I can tell you that our hearts are full.”

- Online post from a citizen who experienced a house fire in the City of Austin, near Avery Ranch/Brushy Creek, October 2022

Auto Aid Training Successes

Initial Training

- All departments in the Automatic Aid agreement participated in training over the new agreement and operational guidelines. This was followed by hands-on training with departments that would respond together.

Auto Aid Incident Commander Training Sessions

- Several sessions including classroom and hands-on training
- Puts Incident Commanders in situations requiring managing incidents involving Mayday or Multiple Alarm scenarios.
- Regional partners outside of Auto Aid are requesting this due to how well it has been received.

Command of Multiple Alarm Training

- 12 classes with almost 200 students from 17 departments

Command of Mayday Training

- 9 classes with approximately 175 students.
- Most recent class: November 1st and adding 3 more due to demand.

Command of Mayday Scenarios - Scheduled for Spring 2024

- Conducted in coordination with IAFF Fire Ground Survival training to teach firefighters techniques for saving themselves if trapped in a fire.

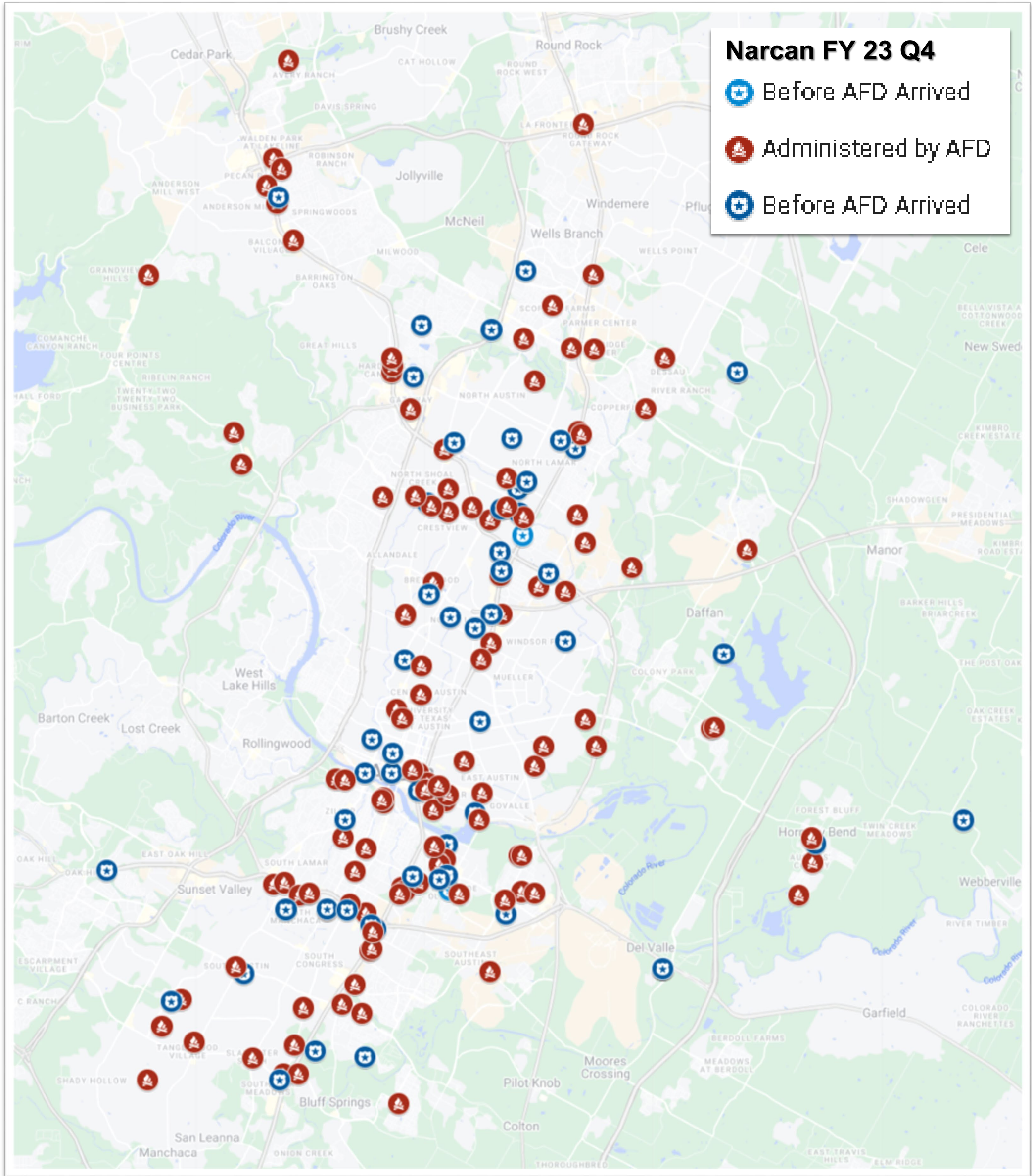
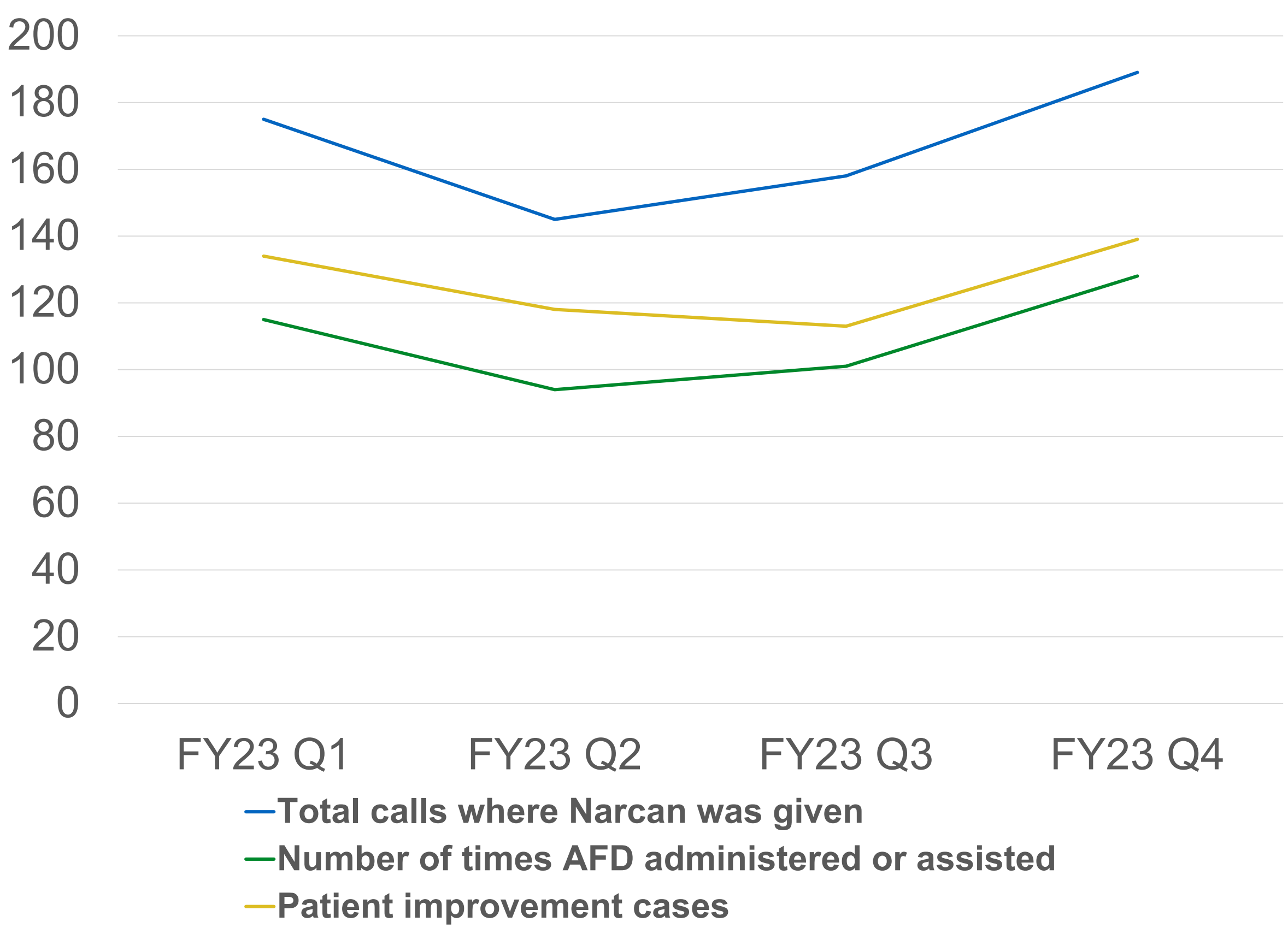
Command training in development for next year will be for mid- and high-rise fires.





Overdose Response

In December 2021, all AFD personnel received hands on training for Naloxone administration and each unit received a stock of the medication.

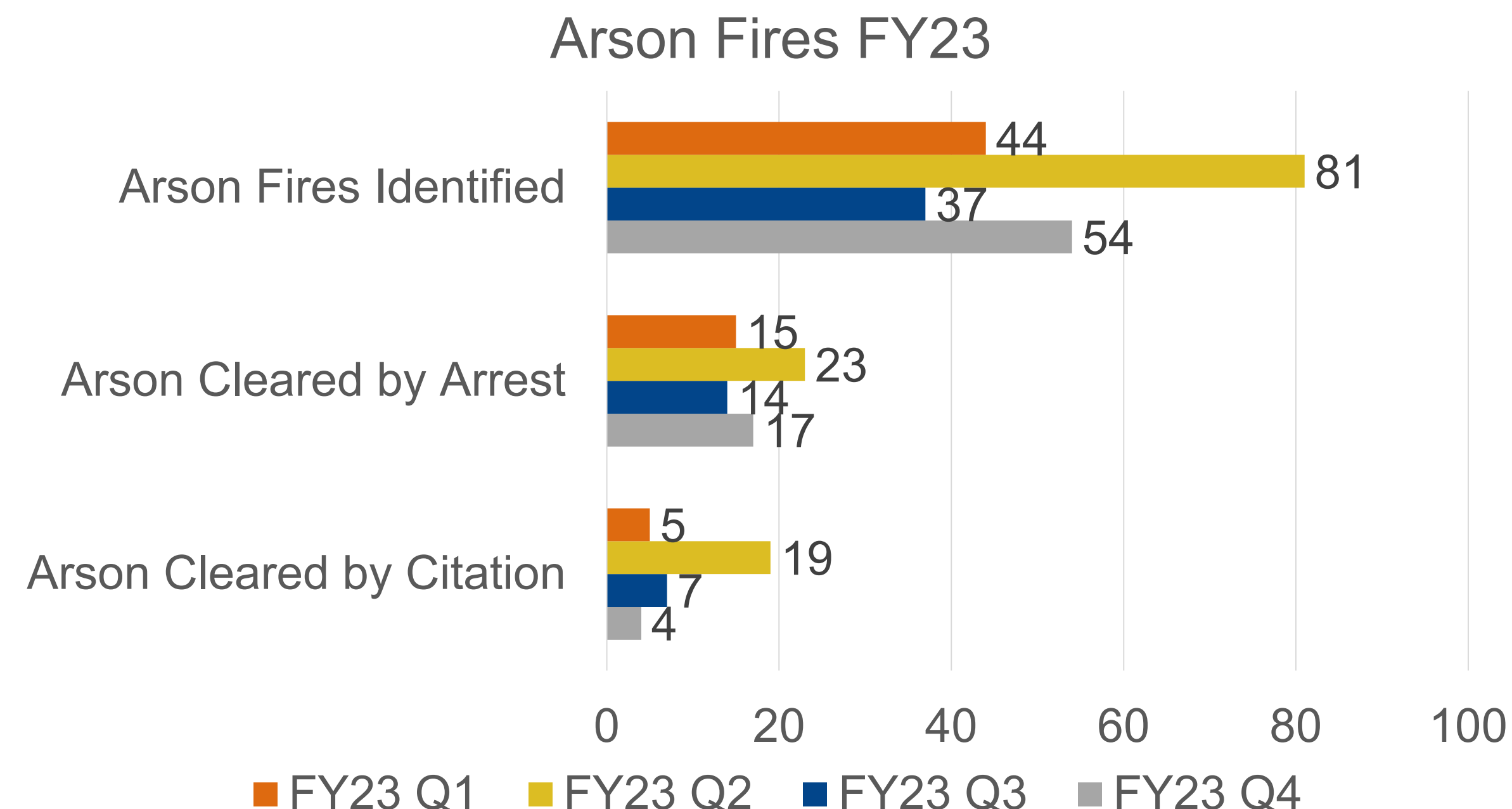




Investigations

- Percent of Arson Fires Cleared:
 - FY 23 Q1: 54%
 - FY 23 Q2: 52%
 - FY 23 Q3: 48%
 - FY 23 Q4: 39%*

* Q4 cases still being investigated
National Clearance Rate: 22%



Cleared Incident Example:

- On August 24th, 2023, the Austin Fire Department responded to a reported Structure fire at 303 John Nance Garner Cir. Fire crews arrived to find a fire at the Sonora Apartments. A second alarm was dispatched. The fire was quickly extinguished using on scene resources.
- Austin Fire Arson investigators, using their training and arson detection canine, determined this was an Incendiary fire resulting in \$2 million in damages.
- During the investigation it was determined the fire was intentionally set, a warrant was issued for arrest of a resident.
- Arson investigators coordinated with the DPS Fugitive Taskforce to apprehend the suspect. Informants provided his current whereabouts and a joint taskforce located and captured the suspect without further incident.



AFD Wildfire Division

Progress on Wildfire Mitigation:

- Total Homes with Reduced Wildfire Risk: 1,694
 - Total Values Protected (Adjacent Homes): \$1,629,106,976
- Current Austin Firewise Communities: 23
- Currently Engaged Communities: 64

Progress on Wildfire Mitigation in the past 6 months:

- Mechanical Fuel Treatment: 2 projects, 2 acres
 - Mechanical Treatment is transitioning to sole responsibility of landowning City departments. AFD will provide technical support.
- Prescribed fires: 3 projects, 150 acres
 - Increased wildfire risk due to drought resulted in planned burns being outside of allowed prescription.
- Home assessments provided: 11
- Presentations: 10
- Training hours received: 66
- Training hours conducted: 4,644

Total local CWPPs completed and implemented: 23





Office of the Fire Marshal: Special Events

Special Events in FY23 Q4 – July to September 2023

- Willie's 4th of July @ Q2 stadium with fireworks display
- HEB Austin Symphony 4th of July Concert & Fireworks display
- Blues on the Green
- Pride Fest
- 5-West Campus events with Fraternities and Sororities
- Bat Fest
- 4-Austin FC games @ Q2
- 6- smaller festivals and circus around town
- 79- Tradeshows including Austin Convention Center, Palmer Events Center and other Event properties (including Hotels).
- 1- UT football game- assisting UT Fire Marshal
- 23- outdoor concerts @ Moody Amp & GIA Amp
- Multiple Night Inspections
- 13 pyro/aerial firework displays - Several permits denied due to late summer drought and burn bans





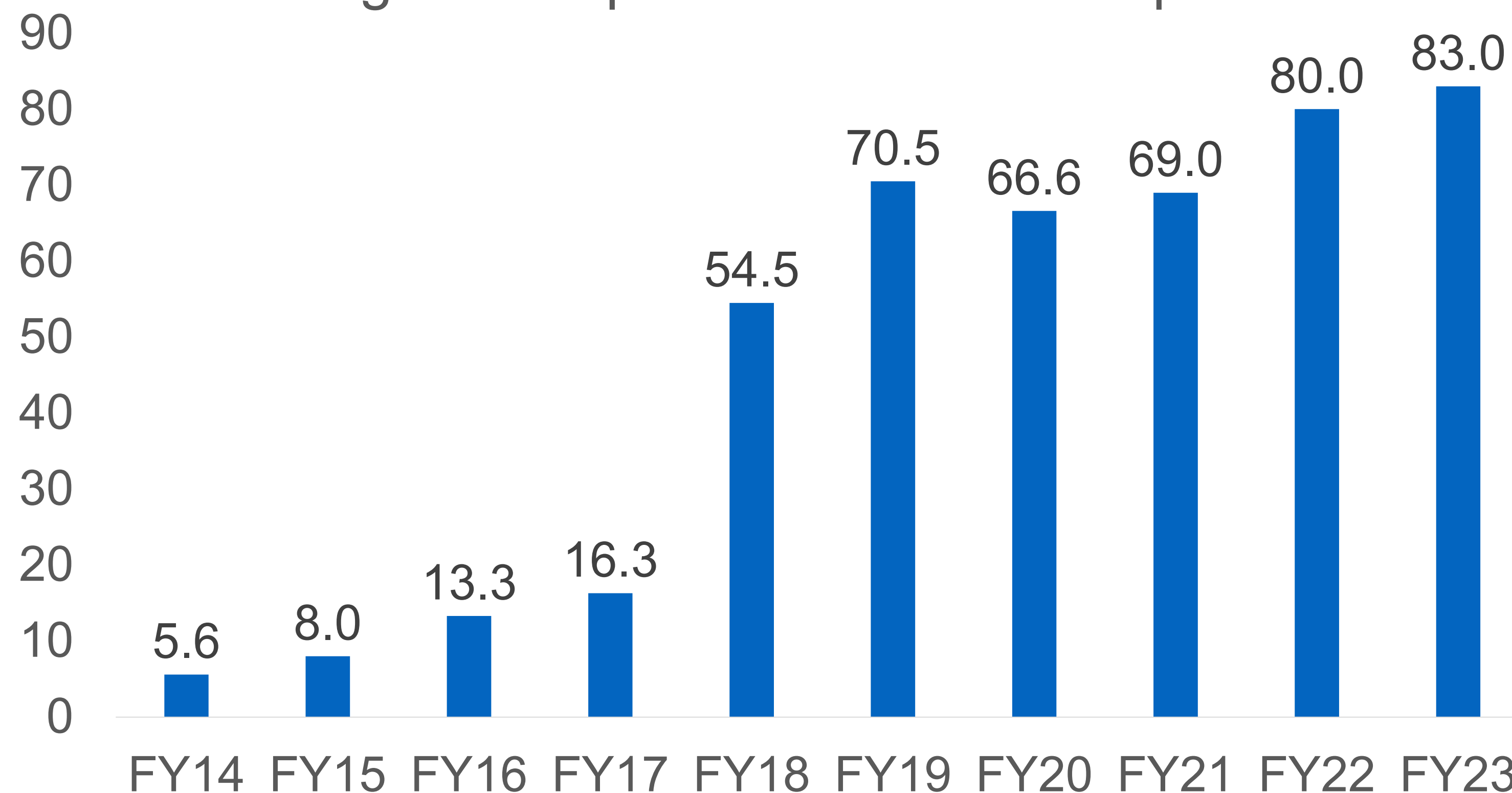
The Compliance Engine

The Compliance Engine (TCE) database tracks compliance and non-compliance for all fire protection systems in commercial properties across the City of Austin.

This allows the Austin Fire Department to track annual fire systems reports, deficiencies and repair reports and receive immediate notification of system impairments.

FY23 Q1: 80%
FY23 Q2: 81%
FY23 Q3: 81%
FY23 Q4: 83%

Percentage of City of Austin fire system tracking for compliance and non-compliance



Prior to The Compliance Engine

After implementation of The Compliance Engine



Community Outreach

The Austin Fire Department has a vision that residents be fire safe in their homes by providing free smoke alarms and fire safety educational training through Outreach Programs:

- **Free Smoke Alarms** - offers/installs free smoke alarms to homeowners that live within the Austin Fire Department's Jurisdiction. Number of Smoke Alarms installed:

- FY 23 Q1: 110	- FY 23 Q3: 212
- FY 23 Q2: 284	- FY 23 Q4: 212
- **Fire Safety Training** – provide vital “hands-on” fire extinguisher training and home fire safety awareness demonstrations

- FY 23 Q1: 200	- FY 23 Q3: 217
- FY 23 Q2: 185	- FY 23 Q4: 164
- **Red Angels Program** – in collaboration with Austin Community College's nursing program, we provide “in-home” basis health wellness checks (blood pressure, glucose, temperature, heart rate) and conduct home hazard safety assessments

- FY 23 Q1: 38	- FY 23 Q3: 29
- FY 23 Q2: 41	- FY 23 Q4: 53



**To request smoke alarms call the
Free Smoke Alarm Hotline:
(512) 974-0299**

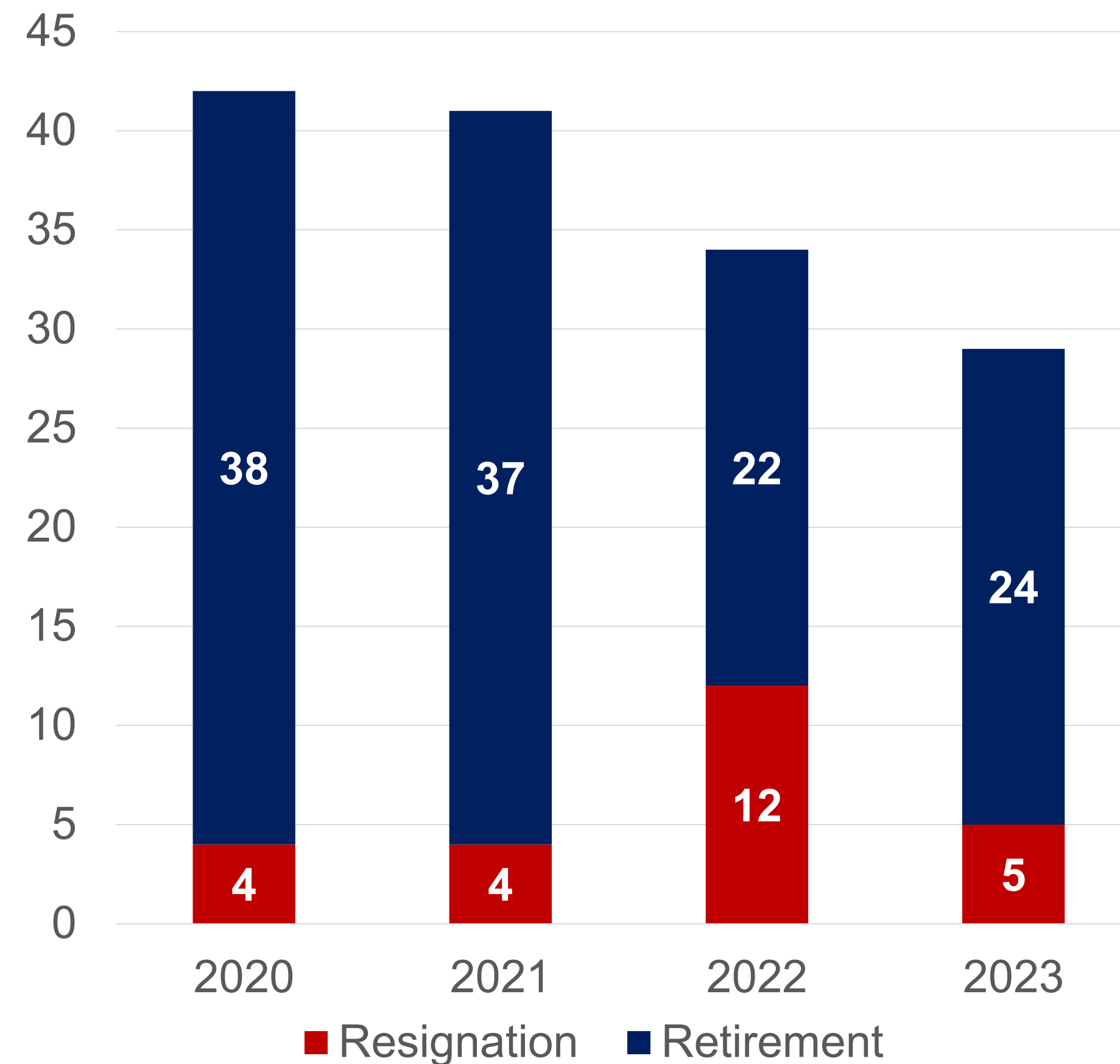


AFD Sworn Separations

- Since 2022, AFD has had **68** sworn retirements and **14** sworn resignations
- Average Years of Service:
 - Retirements: **25.5** Years
 - Resignations: **5.0** Years
- AFD experiences roughly **2.5** separations per month
- Current sworn vacancies: **39**



AFD Sworn Separations
through October 26, 2023





AFD Civilian Vacancies

Current Civilian vacancies: 19

Divisions with Civilian Vacancies Include:

- Operations (Environmental Compliance Specialist Sr)
- Administration Services/Finance (Inventory Control Specialist II)
- Engineering (Engineers, Plans Examiners, and Admin Specialists)
- Wellness (Program Manager, Business Process Specialist & Physician)
- Wildfire (Mitigation Specialist Sr, Mitigation Specialist, IT Geospatial Analyst)

Additional Efforts to Fill these Vacancies:

- Attending Events: COA Job Fair
- Promote AFD and enhancing job postings: Paid for Engineering Job Board
- Created in Internal Hiring Process: Qualified Prevention Admins applied for Plans Examiner postings
- Enhance Candidate experience: Interacting and keeping candidates updated throughout the process, promoting City Benefits, etc.
- Reclassified long vacant titles to positions of immediate need





Cadet Hiring Process

- AFD received applications from March 15-29, 2023.
- We reverted back to Civil Service on July 1st.
- The list from the Civil Service Written Exam given on August 1st will be good for one year.
- We anticipate doing another hiring process in 2024.

Latest Applicant Update, as of October 25, 2023:

- Applicants (CBA): 1,370
- Applicants (143): 1,363
- August 1st Civil Service Written Exam participants: 644
- Top Ranks: 228
- September 16th-17th Pre-Hire Weekend participants: 177
- **Applicants still in the hiring process: 138**
 - 46% target groups
 - 8% female applicants
 - 17% veterans





Recruiting

Q4 Updates:

- AFD has worked closely with our media consulting vendor (DLM) to send out notifications to all current and eligible individuals that submitted a Candidate Interest Card.
- We will be increasing awareness of our next application period through a Google and Meta ad campaign with DLM in November.
- Also through Webpage banners made in partnership with “V Digital Services”.
- Recruiters continued to attend job/career fairs at colleges and other organizations throughout Central and South Texas.

Pass the Torch

Participants (ages 18-35) engage in real fire service activities under the guidance of experienced firefighters to get a glimpse into the cadet academy and a first-hand feel for a career in the fire service.

- **Q4 Update:** Piloting a condensed Fall 2023 class that begins October 21st, Graduation on December 2nd. 26 participants who plan to apply with AFD in 2024.
- **HP2023:** 13 Previous Pass the Torch participants still in current hiring process.

Fire Explorers Post 370

The Explorers (ages 14-20) meet once a month and learn about careers in the fire service directly from members in the Austin Fire Department.



- **Q4 Update:** Currently planning for 2024. We have a new Lead Instructor and we are working on additional staffing.



AFD strives to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

If you or anyone you know is interested in joining the Austin Fire Department, please visit:

[JoinAFD.com](https://www.joinafd.com)