

**PHILADELPHIA FIRE DEPARTMENT
FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET TESTIMONY
APRIL 14, 2026**

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon, Council President Johnson and Members of City Council. I am Fire Commissioner Jeffrey Thompson. Joining me today are First Deputy Commissioner Carl Randolph, Deputy Commissioner Gustav Baumann, Deputy Commissioner Joshua McGoirk, and Deputy Commissioner Martin McCall. I am pleased to provide testimony on the Philadelphia Fire Department's Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget.

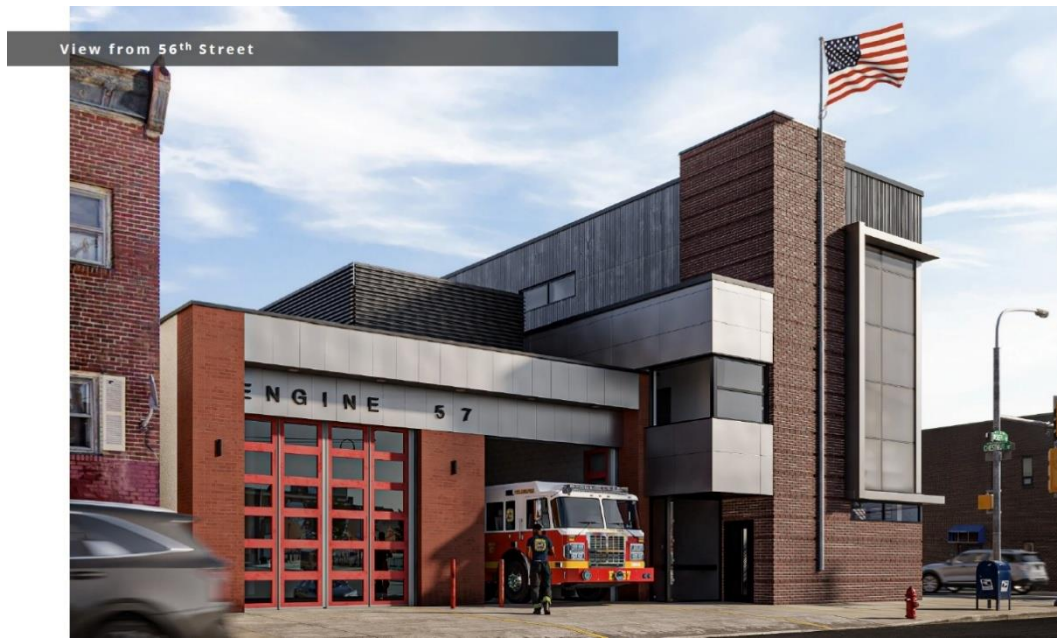
DEPARTMENT MISSION & PLANS

Mission: The Philadelphia Fire Department (PFD) serves the public by providing comprehensive all-hazard prevention, risk reduction, and emergency response. PFD also strives to ensure the health and safety of its members while supporting the Mayor's goal of building mutual trust and safety in city neighborhoods.

Plans for Fiscal Year 2027:

- PFD will begin triaging lower-acuity EMS calls in an effort to increase medic unit availability for more serious incidents and decrease the frequency of zero medic units.
- PFD will continue to support Enhanced Code Blue events and the Kensington Nuisance Fire Task Force during the winter months to support the Mayor's vision for a safer Philadelphia.
- PFD will purchase new self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs) for all firefighters, aligned to the newest standards from the National Fire Protection Association.
- PFD will break ground on a complete reconstruction of the Engine 57 firehouse in West Philadelphia, in partnership with the Department of Public Property (DPP) and Capital Programs Office.
- PFD will break ground on a new burn tower at the Fire Academy, in partnership with DPP and the Capital Programs Office.
- PFD will fully implement its new digital records management system to enable better tracking and support of personnel.
- PFD will begin a new upskilling program for PFD emergency medical technicians (EMT) to become Advanced EMTs, and Advanced EMTs to become paramedics. This will enable members to provide more skilled emergency medical care and create opportunities for promotion.

PHILADELPHIA FIRE DEPARTMENT



The City is moving forward with this redesign of Engine 57's station in West Philadelphia.



The Fire Department responded to more than 350,000 emergency incidents in FY25, a 5.5% increase over FY24.

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PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW & OTHER BUDGET DRIVERS

General Fund Financial Summary by Class						
	FY25 Original Appropriations	FY25 Actual Obligations	FY26 Original Appropriations	FY26 Estimated Obligations	FY27 Proposed Appropriations	Difference: FY27 Proposed-FY26 Estimated
Class 100 - Employee Compensation	\$388,463,277	\$402,309,895	\$392,110,292	\$392,640,495	\$395,934,095	\$3,293,600
Class 200 - Purchase of Services	\$14,043,352	\$11,867,631	\$20,250,034	\$20,250,034	\$20,360,034	\$110,000
Class 300/400 - Materials, Supplies & Equipment	\$21,289,691	\$14,318,311	\$23,283,589	\$15,783,589	\$31,673,714	\$15,890,125
Class 500 - Contributions	\$0	\$1,783,089	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Class 800 - Payment to Other Funds	\$8,296,986	\$8,248,000	\$8,577,920	\$8,577,920	\$12,908,000	\$4,330,080
	\$432,093,306	\$438,526,926	\$444,221,835	\$437,252,038	\$460,875,843	\$23,623,805

Contracts Summary (Professional Services only)						
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY26 YTD (Q1 & Q2)	FY27 Projected
Total amount of contracts	\$4,000,000	\$9,599,502	\$5,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$5,000,000
Total amount to S/LBE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total amount to M/W/DSBE	\$600,000	\$983,202	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$150,000	
S/LBE Participation Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
M/W/DSBE Participation Rate	15%	10%	15%	11%	5%	

**S/LBE not yet available as the City works to build the S/LBE registry and begin setting small and local business participation goals.*

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Total S/LBE Contract Participation Goal (Public Works; Services, Supplies & Equipment; and Professional Services combined)			
	FY25	FY26	FY27 Projected
S/LBE Participation Rate Goal	N/A	N/A	N/A

**S/LBE not yet available as the City works to build the S/LBE registry and begin setting small and local business participation goals.*

Proposed Funding Request:

The proposed Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund budget totals \$460,875,843, an increase of \$23,623,805 over Fiscal Year 2026 estimated obligation levels. This increase is primarily due to the increased cost of replacing self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs), which enable members to breathe in dangerous environments; wage increases for members of DC33 and DC47, along with non-represented and exempt employees; and a projected increase in interfund charges.

The proposed budget includes:

- \$395,934,095 in Class 100, a \$3,293,600 increase over FY26 estimated obligations. This additional funding will support anticipated overtime due in part to 2026 special events, plus wage increases for DC33, DC47, non-represented and exempt employees.
- \$20,360,034 in Class 200, a \$110,000 increase over FY26 estimated obligations. This additional funding will cover additional bunker gear cleaning.
- \$31,673,714 in Class 300/400, a \$15,890,125 increase over FY26 estimated obligations. This funding will enable PFD to replace outdated self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs) for all members.
- \$12,908,000 in Class 800, a \$4,330,080 increase over FY26 estimated obligations. This funding facilitates access to Water Department equipment and supports operational activities.

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STAFFING LEVELS

The department is requesting 3,392 budgeted General Funds positions for FY27, level with FY26.

Employment Levels (as of November 2025)			
	FY26 Budgeted	Filled as of November 2025	FY27 Proposed
Number of Full-Time Positions	3,392	2,914	3,392
Number of Exempt Positions	17	17	17
Number of Executive Positions (deputy level and above)		11	
Average Salary of All Full-Time Positions		\$90,272	
Median Salary of All Full-Time Positions		\$90,253	

NEW HIRES

New Hires (from 7/1/2025 to November 2025)	
	Total Number of New Hires
Black or African American	55
Hispanic or Latino	16
White	41
Other	8
Total	120

**For the period 12/1/25 - 3/29/26, PFD added (new hires/rehires/transfers): five Black or African American, two White, and one Hispanic/Latino employees.*

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VACANCY RATE AND ALLOWANCE

Vacancy Rate Summary (General Fund)						
	FY25 Actual Vacancy Rate	FY26 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance	FY26 Vacancy Rate	FY26 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance Rate	FY27 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance	FY27 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance Rate
Departmental Total	18.1%	(\$52,831,101)	14.1%	17.6%	(\$45,932,738)	15.8%

Note: The Department's vacancy allowance and vacancy allowance rate are skewed by its overtime allocation.

OTHER BUDGETARY IMPACTS

Federal and State (Where Applicable)

PFD’s federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant ends in January 2027. This Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) award, totaling \$22.4 million over three years, has been paying a portion of costs for 72 firefighters since January 2024. Also, the PFD’s federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award for officer development and resilience training ends in March 2027. This FEMA award, totaling \$2.6 million over two-and-a-half years, provides some overtime reimbursement.

PFD submitted a Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) application to FEMA in August 2025 that would pay for a full-time officer at the Delaware Valley Intelligence Center (DVIC) for three years as part of a temporary assignment, in part to support special events in 2026. That application is still pending; it does not appear that any awards have been announced.

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CONTRACTING EXPERIENCE

M/W/DSBE Participation on Large Professional Services Contracts											
Top Five Largest Contracts, FY26											
Vendor Name	Service Provided	Dollar Amount of Contract	RFP Issue Date	Contract Start Date	Ranges in RFP	% of M/W/DSBE and SBE Participation Achieved	\$ Value of M/W/DSBE and SBE Participation	Total % Participation - All DSBEs	Total \$ Value Participation - All DSBEs	Local Business	Waiver for Living Wage Compliance?
Digitech Computer LLC	EMS PT Software and RCM	\$7,300,000	12/22/2021	2/1/2023	MBE: 15-20%	10%	\$730,000	10%	\$730,000	No	No
					WBE: 5-10%	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
University of Pennsylvania	Medical Director	\$208,000	5/8/2020	7/1/2020	MBE: BGFE	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	Yes	No
					WBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
Deccan International	GIS Analytics Software	\$171,000	9/28/2018	3/1/2019	MBE: 25-30%	100%	\$171,000	100%	\$171,000	No	No
					WBE: 25-30%	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
Priority Dispatch Corp	EMD/EF D Protocol Software	\$129,000	10/26/2017	5/12/2018	MBE: BGFE	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	No	No
					WBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
SB & Company	Auditing Services	\$15,000	11/29/2017	5/12/2018	MBE: BGFE	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	No	No
					WBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				

**Non-Profit Vendor Demographics not applicable.*

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PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:

Program Name: Fire Commissioner’s Office

Program Number: 21

FY27 Proposed General Fund: \$1,800,822

Program Description: The Fire Commissioner’s Office is responsible for overall strategic planning, policy, operations, and communications for the Fire Department.

FY27 Strategic Goals:

- PFD will provide International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Resiliency training to cadets and Leadership and Mental Performance training to officers in line with the federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant award.
- PFD will continue to seek grant opportunities to support operations and strategic initiatives.
- PFD will develop a tiered departmental management training curriculum and leadership development courses.

FY27 Performance Measures:

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Number of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) structure fires ¹	2,720	Reduction from FY25	Reduction from FY26
Number of fire incidents responded to	62,057	Meet demand	Meet demand
Number of EMS incidents	289,088	Meet demand	Meet demand
Number of civilian fire-related deaths	37	Reduction from FY25	Reduction from FY26

¹The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) defines a structure fire as “any fire in or on a building or other structure.”

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PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:

Program Name: Operations

Program Number: 22

FY27 Proposed General Fund: \$380,496,336

Program Description: The Operations program is responsible for the daily staffing of PFD's fire suppression and emergency medical services (EMS) companies. It oversees the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Unit at the Philadelphia International Airport (PHL), hazardous materials response, special operations, marine operations, and Pennsylvania-Task Force 1 (PA-TF1), the FEMA Urban Search and Rescue team sponsored by PFD.

FY27 Strategic Goals:

- PFD will begin triaging lower-acuity EMS calls by ensuring Advanced Life Support (ALS) units remain available for calls that require advanced care, while Basic Life Support (BLS) calls are held for the appropriate BLS resource, thus increasing medic unit availability for more serious incidents and decreasing the frequency of zero medic units.
- PFD will continue to support Enhanced Code Blue events and the Kensington Nuisance Fire Task Force during the winter months to support the Mayor's vision for a safer Philadelphia.

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FY27 Performance Measures:

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Fire engine response time (minutes:seconds) ¹	N/A	≤ 6:39	≤ 6:39
Percent of fire calls responded to within 5:20 minutes ²	N/A	≥ 90.0%	≥ 90.0%
EMS response time (minutes:seconds) ¹	N/A	≤ 9:00	≤ 9:00
Percent of EMS emergency calls responded to within 9:00 minutes ¹	N/A	≥ 90.0%	≥ 90.0%
Average total run time of EMS incidents (minutes)	74	Decrease from FY25	Decrease from FY26

¹ PFD updated its data-pulling methods in FY26. As such, FY25 data is not applicable.

² PFD updated its data-pulling methods in FY26. As such, FY25 data is not applicable. The FY27 target for this measure may be reassessed after full fiscal year data is available.

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PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:

Program Name: Logistics

Program Number: 23

FY27 Proposed General Fund: \$52,653,038

Program Description: The Logistics program is responsible for ensuring PFD has the training, equipment, supplies, and facilities that members need to carry out their mission. It also oversees the Philadelphia Fire Academy, which trains recruits as well as current members, the Fire Communications Center (dispatch/911), and the Health and Safety Office.

FY27 Strategic Goals:

- PFD will purchase new self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs) for all firefighters, aligned to the newest standards from the National Fire Protection Association.
- In partnership with DPP, PFD will break ground on a complete reconstruction of the Engine 57 firehouse in West Philadelphia.

FY27 Performance Measures:

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Number of calls handled by the Fire Communications Center (FCC)	567,193	Meet demand	Meet demand
Number of PFD graduates ¹	91	144	144
Fire Academy graduation rate	79%	≥ 85%	≥ 85%

¹ The FY26 and FY27 targets are based on the number of graduates necessary to cover attrition and reduce the number of vacancies.

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PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:

Program Name: Planning, Research & Risk Reduction

Program Number: 24

FY27 Proposed General Fund: \$12,780,907

Program Description: The Planning, Research, and Risk Reduction program is responsible for preparing emergency response plans for special events and critical infrastructure facilities. It oversees the Fire Marshal’s Office and the Fire Code Unit, and provides data analysis and fire prevention services through smoke alarm installations and community outreach.

FY27 Strategic Goals:

- PFD will fully implement its new digital records management system to enable better tracking and support of personnel through more transparent scheduling that is integrated with OnePhilly.
- The Planning, Research, and Risk Reduction program will continue fulfilling Philly 311 requests for free smoke alarm installations.
- PFD will increase the number and range of foreign-language speakers in community outreach units.

FY27 Performance Measures:

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Number of smoke alarms installed	9,358	10,000	10,000
Number of fire and life safety trainings given to the public	1,001	1,000	1,000

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PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:

Program Name: Finance and Administration

Program Number: 25

FY27 Proposed General Fund: \$6,036,841

Program Description: The Finance and Administration Division is responsible for budgeting, human resources, professional standards, payroll, attendance, and other duties. This Division also oversees the Recruitment Unit, Employee Assistance Program, and the Employee Relations Office.

FY27 Strategic Goals:

- PFD will work with the City’s Central Grants Office within Finance to ensure alignment with grants management best practices, in part through the use of the City’s new grants tracking software.

FY27 Performance Measures:

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Number of uniformed separations	111	≤ 100	≤ 100
Number of community events at which PFD is represented	843	≥ 850	≥ 850

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PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:

Program Name: Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Administration

Program Number: 26

FY27 Proposed General Fund: \$7,107,899

Program Description: The EMS Administration Division is responsible for overall EMS delivery and specialty units, including Mobile Integrated Health (MIH), EMS Billing and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), EMS Privacy Office, and the Regional EMS Office.

FY27 Strategic Goals:

- PFD will begin a new upskilling program for PFD EMTs to become Advanced EMTs, and Advanced EMTs to become paramedics. This will enable members to provide more skilled emergency medical care and create opportunities for promotion. .
- PFD will develop and pilot an EMS officer-led performance evaluation framework to strengthen field provider excellence.

FY27 Performance Measures:

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Percent of EMS incidents handled by PFD Mobile Integrated Health	1.7%	2.0%	2.0%