

3. COVID-19 Agency Impact Updates and Discussion of Delay of Cadet Classes for Public Safety Agencies 4:35-4:55 pm

Sponsored by Commissioners Hollis, Harris, and Hausenfluck

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, AFD took actions to ensure proper staffing of frontline units and a safe training environment for our cadets. At the time the pandemic struck, AFD had two separate classes (Classes 128 and 129) in session (approximately 75 cadets total). To minimize exposure between students instructors and bolster social distancing at the Academy, AFD was able to accelerate those cadets in Class 128 who were already pre-certified and graduate them early. The benefits realized from this action included increasing our Operations' staffing (saving ~\$90,000) and reducing the number of individuals at the Academy by 50 percent. Class 129 will graduate July 31, 2020.

The next cadet class will begin in late October 2020. Applicant processing of the next 200 candidates (the final list of which will make up Class 130) has been delayed due to the shifting of staffing resources at our Wellness Center. Several of those members are deployed in support of COVID-19 testing for public safety personnel across Travis County and critical City of Austin infrastructure personnel. In mid-May, we re-evaluated testing needs and adjusted scheduling to continue testing in the morning. This freed up the remainder of each day to resume applicant processing and regularly scheduled physicals. AFD is currently on track to fill two cadet classes in FY2021.

4. Sexual Harassment Policy Updates 4:55-5:15 pm

Sponsored by Commissioners Hollis and Webber

- AFD's revised Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation policy was distributed on May 6, 2020, with a corresponding Information Bulletin. Points to note:
 - Although the final version of the policy was ready for distribution in March, it was held due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Battalion Chiefs are required to dedicate time to discuss the policy with their crews, ensuring it is fully understood and questions regarding the procedures are addressed. All reviews of the revised policy must be completed by July 2, 2020.
- AFD began revising its existing E202 Harassment policy in 2019.
- Revisions to the independent harassment policies across all three public safety departments for both uniform and sworn personnel focused on aligning those policies with the legal language used by the City of Austin. This was initiated by inquiries from the Public Safety Commission.
- The City's Legal and Human Resources Departments were also consulted on other areas of the policy specific to AFD. Those include the reporting process, which contains an anonymous option, {the Electronic and Anonymous Reporting System (EARS)}, and details on how third-party investigations of sexual harassment allegations will be conducted in compliance with AFD's Collective Bargaining Agreement.