

Seattle Fire Department

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Department Overview

The Seattle Fire Department (SFD) provides fire protection and prevention, technical rescue and emergency medical services for the City of Seattle. It deploys engine companies, ladder companies, aid and medic units and fireboats to mitigate the loss of life and property resulting from fires, medical emergencies and other disasters. SFD maintains 33 fire stations that are strategically located within six battalions to provide optimal response times to emergencies. Each battalion serves specific geographic areas in the city: the downtown/Central Area, north and northeast Seattle, northwest Seattle, south and southeast Seattle and West Seattle.

SFD has a strong record on prevention of fires and property loss from fires. Seattle has fewer fires than the national average and of other cities with similar population size. Dollar loss and civilian deaths are also below the national and regional averages. Seattle averages 0.9 fires annually per 1,000 residents, which is lower than the regional average of 3.5 and national average of 4.1. Over the past five years, the average number of total structure fires per year in Seattle has been 624. Total fire dollar loss averaged \$22.6 million per year.

SFD provides emergency medical responses, which account for approximately 82% of all fire emergency calls in Seattle. In order to respond to the emergency medical demand, all Seattle firefighters are trained as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to provide basic emergency medical care, or basic life support. SFD staffs seven medic units each with two firefighter-trained paramedics to provide more advanced medical care or advanced life support. Additionally, the department has five full-time and two peak-time aid units staffed by firefighters to provide basic life support citywide.

In 2016, SFD implemented the Low Acuity Alarm Program to reduce non-emergency calls to the 911 system and to provide improved service and care to individuals with non-emergent needs. Currently, core activities are high utilization intervention (individuals and locations), low acuity data and trend analysis, establishment of referral partnerships and alternate treatment/transportation development.

The department also has marine, hazardous materials, high-angle, tunnel and confined-space rescue teams. In addition, SFD officers and firefighters are members of local and national disaster response teams such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Urban Search and Rescue Task Force and wild land firefighting. SFD's fire prevention efforts include fire code enforcement, building inspections, plan reviews of fire and life safety systems, public education and fire safety programs, regulation of hazardous materials storage and processes and regulation of places of public assembly and public events to ensure life safety.

Budget Snapshot

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Department Support				
General Fund Support	221,311,051	219,514,500	220,970,564	223,942,630
Total Operations	221,311,051	219,514,500	220,970,564	223,942,630
Total Appropriations	221,311,051	219,514,500	220,970,564	223,942,630
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	1,158.55	1,167.05	1,167.05	1,168.55

* FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here

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Budget Overview

The Seattle Fire Department's (SFD) 2020 Adopted Budget reflects the City's commitment to maintaining public safety and supporting the work of those who directly meet the community's emergency-response needs.

Enhancing Response to 9-1-1 Calls

SFD plays a key role responding to a high volume of 9-1-1 calls that are medical, behavioral, and/or social in nature and do not require emergency interventions or hospitalization, or "low-acuity" calls. In 2018, downtown core units responded to over 11,000 low-acuity calls. This represented nearly 50% of those units' EMS run volume. Yet SFD has few options for these patients beyond hospital Emergency Department (ED) transport or leaving them at the scene. Nearly half of these downtown non-emergent patients were seen but not transported and almost 4,000 of them were seen and transported to an ED. Low-acuity conditions affect some of the most vulnerable in the community and 31% of downtown core patients were flagged as experiencing homelessness.

In late 2019, SFD launched Health One, a Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) pilot, to intervene in crises after a 9-1-1 call as an alternative to this current state. This program sends a team of two fire fighters and one social worker to the scene of low-acuity and crisis EMS calls to divert patients to appropriate and therapeutic destinations. This service will achieve a "warm handoff" of the patient to a new or existing caseworker and supportive services, including shelter, housing, and substance abuse treatment. The 2020 Adopted Budget adds resources to enhance the Health One program.

Providing Life Safety Protections

SFD's Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) provides fire prevention services, including enforcement of the Fire Code, to help provide a high standard of life safety to residents, workers, and visitors to the city. Currently one in three fire protection systems in Seattle are out of compliance, and roughly one in three fire calls turns out to be a false alarm. Until recently, SFD could only provide a notice of violation that did not always result in sustained compliance. Following up on notices of violation (now called orders to comply) requires scheduling return visits that provide time for building owners to come into compliance, unless the violation requires immediate compliance. If a building owner continues not to comply with an order, after potential extensions of compliance deadlines, prosecution is the next step in enforcement, with the threat of penalties of up to \$1,000 per day of violation. This is a slow process that may be too lenient for smaller violations that are easy to come into compliance for and then reoffend. At the same time, the penalty at the end of the process can be harsh.

In late 2019, legislation was approved to provide FMO with a more moderate tool to compel code compliance. SFD now has the authority to issue citations for Fire Code violations such as locked exit doors, failure to properly maintain fire protection systems like sprinklers, and repeated false alarms. The provisions for Fire Code citations are similar to existing provisions in the Seattle Municipal Code for the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections and the Seattle Department of Transportation, including appeal to the Office of the Hearing Examiner. This moderate tool in FMO's toolbox will improve life safety in the city by providing an immediate penalty and incentive for building owners and businesses to comply with the Fire Code.

Increasing Administrative Workload

As the city has grown and demand for SFD services has increased, so have demands on the Operations team's administrative staff. The department is striving to increase efficiencies with electronic systems; however, even with the addition of these systems, the volume of work far exceeds the resources available and the current staff in the past two years have worked a significant amount of overtime to keep up. A new position using existing resources will help provide the level of administrative support that is needed to effectively run Seattle Fire Department Operations and Resource Management Divisions.

City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget

The Council added \$600,000 of General Fund appropriation to SFD to augment one recruit class in 2020.

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Incremental Budget Changes

Seattle Fire Department

	2020 Budget	FTE
Total 2020 Endorsed Budget	220,970,564	1167.05
Baseline		
2020 Coalition and Non-Rep Annual Wage Increase Base Budget	719,197	-
2020 State Paid Family Medical Leave Increase Base Budget	200,828	-
Add Accounting Position	54,996	0.50
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	959,825	-
Proposed Operating		
Add Ops Admin Support	-	1.00
Enhance Health One	400,000	-
Increase Seattle IT Allocation to Fund Accela Support	37,220	-
Council		
Add \$600,000 GF (one time) in 2020 to SFD to augment one recruit class	600,000	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$2,972,066	1.50
Total 2020 Adopted Budget	\$223,942,630	1168.55

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

2020 Coalition and Non-Rep Annual Wage Increase Base Budget

Expenditures \$719,197

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to reflect the Annual Wage Increase for the department's non-uniformed staff, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of Unions, for personnel costs included in this department's baseline budget. This includes increases to salary, FICA, Medicare, retirement, overtime and temporary labor.

2020 State Paid Family Medical Leave Increase Base Budget

Expenditures \$200,828

Starting in January 2020, Washington State will offer paid family and medical leave benefits to all workers in the State of Washington, including City of Seattle employees. In 2020, the agreements with the Coalition of Unions moves a portion of the cost responsibility to the employee in 2020, with the City paying the remainder. This item increases appropriations to account for the City's obligation for all employees.

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Add Accounting Position

Expenditures	\$54,996
Position Allocation	0.50

This item adds an Accounting Technician II position to providing accounting support for the Fire Prevention Division, which will be implementing a new Fire Code citations program. The additional resource will be funded by new revenues collected from the Fire Code citations program. Until the fall of 2019, SFD did not have the authority to issue citations for Fire Code violations such as locked exit doors, failure to properly maintain fire protection systems like sprinklers, and repeated false alarms. With citations, the Fire Marshall's Office can now more quickly incentivize businesses and building owners to comply with the Fire Code than the prior method of issuing notices of violation, scheduling return visits and re-inspections, and pursuing litigation in particularly uncooperative cases. The 2020 Adopted Budget also increases resources at the Office of the Hearing Examiner to handle the citations appeals resulting from the new program. See the Office of the Hearing Examiner's budget book pages for more detail.

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures	\$959,825
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Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including the Department of Finance & Administrative Services rates, Information Technology rates and Human Resources rates, health care, retirement and industrial insurance charges for the department. This adjustment also includes a transfer of resources from the department to the Human Resources Investigations Unit (HRIU) as part of the City's efforts to improve investigative processes and practices across the City departments. While the internal service rates are final for 2020, some of the other adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Proposed Operating

Enhance Health One

Expenditures	\$400,000
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This item adds funding to enhance the Health One mobile integrated health service. Health One sends a team of two fire fighters and one social worker to the scene of EMS calls that do not require emergency department transportation, to divert patients to appropriate and therapeutic destinations. This program will allow firefighters and police officers to focus on emergency situations. The 2019 pilot program for Health One launched with operating hours coinciding with peak call times and core business hours of partner referral services, four days a week. This funding will enable SFD to expand Health One service and track and evaluate the program more effectively.

Increase Seattle IT Allocation to Fund Accela Support

Expenditures	\$37,220
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This item adds expenditure authority to SFD to cover its portion of new staffing added in Seattle Information Technology (Seattle IT) for the Permitting System Integration (PSI)/Accela program. See Seattle IT's budget book section for more details on this program.

Add Ops Admin Support

Expenditures	-
Position Allocation	1.00

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This item adds an Administrative Staff Assistant to perform complex administrative support functions directly supporting the Assistant Chief of Operations and Assistant Chief of Resource Management and respective divisions and provide supervision of three administrative staff. SFD has documented a significant increase in the administrative workload of their Operations team since 2015, including overtime transaction processing, travel and training requests, tour and visit requests, memo generation, mail processing, and special events coordination. This increased workload resulted in nearly 1,000 hours of overtime (among 5 staff members) worked in 2018. The costs of this new position will be offset with reductions in utilization of temporary employment services and/or overtime.

Council

Add \$600,000 GF (one time) in 2020 to SFD to augment one recruit class

Expenditures	\$600,000
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The City Council added \$600,000 GF to the Seattle Fire Department (SFD) in 2020 to augment one recruit class.

The 2020 Endorsed and Proposed Budgets included base-level funding for two recruit classes, each containing 30 recruits. This Budget Action provided funding that is sufficient to fund nine additional candidates for one recruit class. SFD staff have indicated that a larger recruit class would allow the department to fill vacancies more quickly.

Expenditure Overview

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Appropriations				
SFD - BO-FD-F1000 - Leadership and Administration				
00100 - General Fund	35,965,429	39,976,067	39,063,734	40,579,642
Total for BSL: BO-FD-F1000	35,965,429	39,976,067	39,063,734	40,579,642
SFD - BO-FD-F3000 - Operations				
00100 - General Fund	176,212,790	169,556,729	171,815,676	172,999,192
Total for BSL: BO-FD-F3000	176,212,790	169,556,729	171,815,676	172,999,192
SFD - BO-FD-F5000 - Fire Prevention				
00100 - General Fund	9,132,832	9,981,704	10,091,154	10,363,796
Total for BSL: BO-FD-F5000	9,132,832	9,981,704	10,091,154	10,363,796
Department Total	221,311,051	219,514,500	220,970,564	223,942,630
Department Full-Time Equivalent Total*	1,158.55	1,167.05	1,167.05	1,168.55

** FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here*

Budget Summary by Fund Seattle Fire Department

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
00100 - General Fund	221,311,051	219,514,500	220,970,564	223,942,630
Budget Totals for SFD	221,311,051	219,514,500	220,970,564	223,942,630

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Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

SFD - BO-FD-F1000 - Leadership and Administration

The purpose of the Leadership and Administration Budget Summary Level is to provide strategy and policy, public outreach and education, information and personnel management, recruitment and training of uniformed staff; allocate and manage available resources; and provide logistical support needed to achieve the Department's mission.

Program Expenditures	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Citywide Indirect Costs	20,912,915	27,437,733	26,459,847	27,484,410
Departmental Indirect Costs	15,077,983	12,538,334	12,603,887	13,095,232
Pooled Benefits	(25,469)	-	-	-
Total	35,965,429	39,976,067	39,063,734	40,579,642
Full-time Equivalents Total*	54.00	60.00	60.00	60.50

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The following information summarizes the programs in Leadership and Administration Budget Summary Level:

Citywide Indirect Costs

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Citywide Indirect Costs	20,912,915	27,437,733	26,459,847	27,484,410

Departmental Indirect Costs

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Departmental Indirect Costs	15,077,983	12,538,334	12,603,887	13,095,232
Full Time Equivalents Total	54.00	60.00	60.00	60.50

Pooled Benefits

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Pooled Benefits	(25,469)	-	-	-

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SFD - BO-FD-F3000 - Operations

The purpose of the Operations Budget Summary Level is to provide emergency and disaster response capabilities for fire suppression, emergency medical needs, hazardous materials, weapons of mass destruction, and search and rescue. In addition, reduce injuries by identifying and changing practices that place firefighters at greater risk and provide communication services.

Program Expenditures	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Battalion 2	22,614,098	28,128,703	28,608,916	28,622,069
Battalion 3 Medic One	14,238,850	13,665,927	13,772,972	13,800,973
Battalion 4	24,598,065	27,270,907	27,775,962	27,789,372
Battalion 5	24,353,095	25,752,466	26,203,426	26,215,032
Battalion 6	22,426,915	24,159,793	24,562,788	24,572,992
Battalion 7	22,791,689	21,576,587	21,925,193	21,932,565
Communications	5,591,810	5,151,374	5,182,727	5,201,055
Office of the Operations Chief	11,225,243	7,214,065	7,310,627	7,452,309
Operations Activities	27,197,760	15,271,537	15,099,527	16,020,864
Safety and Risk Management	1,175,264	1,365,370	1,373,538	1,391,961
Total	176,212,790	169,556,729	171,815,676	172,999,192
Full-time Equivalents Total*	1,043.05	1,043.05	1,043.05	1,044.05

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The following information summarizes the programs in Operations Budget Summary Level:

Battalion 2

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Battalion 2	22,614,098	28,128,703	28,608,916	28,622,069
Full Time Equivalents Total	205.45	205.45	205.45	205.45

Battalion 3 Medic One

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Battalion 3 Medic One	14,238,850	13,665,927	13,772,972	13,800,973
Full Time Equivalents Total	82.00	82.00	82.00	82.00

Battalion 4

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Battalion 4	24,598,065	27,270,907	27,775,962	27,789,372
Full Time Equivalents Total	199.45	199.45	199.45	199.45

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Battalion 5

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Expenditures/FTE				
Battalion 5	24,353,095	25,752,466	26,203,426	26,215,032
Full Time Equivalents Total	185.45	185.45	185.45	185.45

Battalion 6

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Expenditures/FTE				
Battalion 6	22,426,915	24,159,793	24,562,788	24,572,992
Full Time Equivalents Total	169.45	169.45	169.45	169.45

Battalion 7

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Expenditures/FTE				
Battalion 7	22,791,689	21,576,587	21,925,193	21,932,565
Full Time Equivalents Total	148.45	148.45	148.45	148.45

Communications

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Expenditures/FTE				
Communications	5,591,810	5,151,374	5,182,727	5,201,055
Full Time Equivalents Total	35.80	35.80	35.80	35.80

Office of the Operations Chief

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Expenditures/FTE				
Office of the Operations Chief	11,225,243	7,214,065	7,310,627	7,452,309
Full Time Equivalents Total	11.00	11.00	11.00	12.00

Operations Activities

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Expenditures/FTE				
Operations Activities	27,197,760	15,271,537	15,099,527	16,020,864

Safety and Risk Management

	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Expenditures/FTE				
Safety and Risk Management	1,175,264	1,365,370	1,373,538	1,391,961
Full Time Equivalents Total	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

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SFD - BO-FD-F5000 - Fire Prevention

The purpose of the Fire Prevention Budget Summary Level is to provide Fire Code enforcement to help prevent injury and loss from fire and other hazards.

Program Expenditures	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Code Compliance	514,564	542,368	547,224	553,744
Fire Investigations	1,349,588	1,436,857	1,454,636	1,462,796
Office of the Fire Marshall	1,479,568	1,561,693	1,578,482	1,656,802
Regulating Construction	2,815,268	3,452,735	3,488,354	3,602,674
Special Events	805,447	619,796	623,320	623,994
Special Hazards	2,168,397	2,368,255	2,399,138	2,463,786
Total	9,132,832	9,981,704	10,091,154	10,363,796
Full-time Equivalents Total*	61.50	64.00	64.00	64.00

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The following information summarizes the programs in Fire Prevention Budget Summary Level:

Code Compliance

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Code Compliance	514,564	542,368	547,224	553,744
Full Time Equivalents Total	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

Fire Investigations

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Fire Investigations	1,349,588	1,436,857	1,454,636	1,462,796
Full Time Equivalents Total	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00

Office of the Fire Marshall

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Office of the Fire Marshall	1,479,568	1,561,693	1,578,482	1,656,802
Full Time Equivalents Total	8.50	8.50	8.50	8.50

Seattle Fire Department

Regulating Construction

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Regulating Construction	2,815,268	3,452,735	3,488,354	3,602,674
Full Time Equivalents Total	19.50	22.00	22.00	22.00

Special Events

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Special Events	805,447	619,796	623,320	623,994
Full Time Equivalents Total	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

Special Hazards

Expenditures/FTE	2018 Actuals	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed	2020 Adopted
Special Hazards	2,168,397	2,368,255	2,399,138	2,463,786
Full Time Equivalents Total	17.50	17.50	17.50	17.50