

Introduced by: Mayor Matherly and
Council Members Marney and Therrien
Finance Committee Review: April 19, 2022
Introduced: April 25, 2022

ORDINANCE NO. 6204, AS AMENDED

**AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AN EDUCATION REIMBURSEMENT
PROGRAM WITHIN FAIRBANKS FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR
RECRUITMENT AND HIRING**

WHEREAS, the Fairbanks Fire Department (FFD) continues to struggle to recruit paramedics; and

WHEREAS, retention of paramedic staff has been extremely difficult for more than three years; and

WHEREAS, the current cost for the City of Fairbanks at a minimum is \$16,000 for tuition and up to \$120,000 in salaries, overtime, and benefits to send one employee to complete a paramedic program; and

WHEREAS, a sign-on education reimbursement bonus of ~~\$2000~~\$1,000 for a student paramedic, already in the end stages of their education, would help attract applicants and would constitute a significant cost savings to the City; and

WHEREAS, an additional \$2,000 after three years and ~~\$4000~~\$5,000 after five years will be paid to the employee to promote retention; and

WHEREAS, a retention education reimbursement bonus of \$2,000 after three years and ~~\$4000~~\$5,000 after 5 years will be paid to paramedics hired outside of the student paramedic program as an educational reimbursement to promote retention beginning May 1, 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, as follows:

SECTION 1. A Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus program for Fairbanks Fire Department paramedics is hereby established, providing for a ~~\$2000~~\$1,000 sign-on education reimbursement bonus and a retention education reimbursement bonus of \$2,000 after three years and ~~\$4000~~\$5,000 after five years, for eligible applicants, subject to the terms and conditions of the Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus Contract attached as Exhibit A.

SECTION 2. The education reimbursements bonuses established in this ordinance will be forward funded through Community Assistance Program funds salary-savings, as available.

SECTION 3. This program will sunset on December 31, 2023, unless extended by Resolution of the City Council.

SECTION 4. That the effective date of this Ordinance shall be the 28th day of May 2022.



Jim Matherly, City Mayor

AYES: Gibson, Cleworth, Marney, Clark, Therrien, Rogers
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ADOPTED: May 23, 2022

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



D. Danyelle Snider, MMC, City Clerk



Paul J. Ewers, City Attorney

CITY OF FAIRBANKS
FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST:

Ordinance or Resolution No: 6204

Abbreviated Title: ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING EDUCATION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Department(s): FIRE

Does the adoption of this ordinance or resolution authorize:

1) additional costs beyond the current adopted budget? Yes _____ No X

2) additional support or maintenance costs? Yes _____ No X

If yes, what is the estimate? see below

3) additional positions beyond the current adopted budget? Yes _____ No X

If yes, how many positions? _____

If yes, type of positions? _____ (F - Full Time, P - Part Time, T - Temporary)

II. FINANCIAL DETAIL:

EXPENDITURES:	2022	2023	Total
SALARY AND BENEFITS			
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0

FUNDING SOURCE:	2022	2023	Total
GENERAL FUND			
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0

Fairbanks Fire Department education reimbursement program will provide \$8,000 over five years from salary savings. The department will provide \$2,000 as a sign-on education reimbursement, \$2,000 after 3 years, and \$4,000 after 5 years. If the department does not have salary savings, the cost for five individuals would be \$10,000 in Year 1, \$10,000 in Year 3, and \$20,000 in Year 5. Overall, the savings in training, regular salaries and benefits, and overtime for backfill would be significant in comparison to the cost.

Reviewed by Finance Department: Initial mb Date 5/16/2022



Fairbanks Fire Department
Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus Contract

This agreement is made between the CITY OF FAIRBANKS (“City”) and _____ (“Employee”).

WHEREAS, the Employee has been offered employment for the City as a Paramedic in the Fire Department (“Department”) for the first time;

WHEREAS, the Department wishes to bestow upon the Employee a Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus as an incentive for the Employee to accept employment at the City and to remain satisfactorily employed in the Department as a Paramedic for at least five full years;

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 6204 that enacted the Sign on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus specified that payment of the education reimbursement bonus will be forward funded through Community Assistance Program funds was subject to Savings salary savings based on the originally adopted 2022 budget for that year.

WHEREFORE, the City and the Employee agree to the following terms:

1. The City, acting through the Department, agrees to bestow upon the Employee ~~\$2,000~~\$1,000 as a Sign-on Education Reimbursement Bonus, to be paid on the Employee’s first paycheck, and to pay the Employee an additional \$2,000 after three years and ~~\$4,000~~\$5,000 after five years as a Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus, to be paid on the Employee’s first paycheck after completing the time-period requirement, in return for the Employee accepting the City’s offer of employment and remaining employed as a paramedic for the full-time periods.
2. The City will apply all required federal and state tax deductions and will report all payments made under this Agreement as required by federal and state law. Taxes will be withheld as bonus earnings from the Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus and reported to the Internal Revenue Services as income on the Employee’s Form W-2. The Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus is not considered “salary” and will not be included for purposes of retirement benefit calculations or salary increases.
3. The Department will adhere to all relevant City and Department policies during the hiring process and in making education reimbursement bonus payments to employees.
4. In return for accepting the Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus as provided in paragraph 1, the Employee agrees to work for the Department as a paramedic on a regular and full-time basis for at least five years beginning _____ and ending on _____ (the “ending date”). Should the Employee resign, quit, or be terminated for cause before the ending date, the Employee shall repay a prorated amount of the Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus as provided in paragraph 5.
5. The Employee’s failure to remain employed by the Department as a paramedic for the applicable time period will trigger the Employee’s duty to repay, pro-rata, the amount paid by the Department

pursuant to paragraph 1 (this amount may be more than the Employee received due to taxes or other withholdings). To facilitate this repayment, the Employee, by signing below, expressly gives the City a lien on all their salary, wages, and other sums payable to them by the City, subject to state and federal law. In addition, the Employee authorizes the City to withhold all amounts so due from any sum payable to the Employee by the Department and the City. The Employee also agrees that any tax consequences that result from the repayment of the Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus will be the sole and exclusive responsibility of the Employee.

6. If the Employee fails to remain employed by the Department as a paramedic for the applicable time period for reasons beyond the Employee's control (e.g., injury, illness, or death), other than termination for just cause, the Department may, in its sole discretion, waive all or part of the liability owed by the Employee. Any such waivers must be approved in writing by both the Fire Chief and the Mayor.
7. If any part of the Agreement is found to be invalid or unenforceable, the other parts remain valid and enforceable, and the Employee agrees, represents, and warrants that they will be held to any applicable repayment of the Sign-on-Bonus/Retention Education Reimbursement Bonus.
8. All Sign-on/Retention Education Reimbursement bonus payments are conditioned on the availability of funds from the Community Assistance Program salary-savings based on the original adopted budget for that year.

BY SIGNING BELOW, the Employee certifies that he/she has not accepted a financial incentive for accepting employment at the City, other than as described in this Agreement.

IN WITNESS THEREOF:

Employee Signature

Date

Fire Chief Signature

Date

Mayor Signature

Date

PRINTED NAME of Employee

CITY OF FAIRBANKS
FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST:

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Reviewed by Finance Department:

Initial mb

Date 5/16/2022

CITY OF FAIRBANKS
FISCAL NOTE

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Reviewed by Finance Department:

Initial mb

Date 4/29/2022