

# North Carolina Volunteer Firefighter Geospatial Recruitment and Retention Toolkit Pocket Guide



Below are the steps to leveraging the NC Volunteer Firefighter Geospatial Recruitment and Retention Toolkit, from data collection to developing successful marketing strategies.

Build out the data in the toolkit for your area to support data-driven recruitment and retention strategies.

The GIS Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment & Retention Toolkit is part of the IAF's Workforce Solutions Recruitment and Retention contract with the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs (NCAFC). The overall goal of the broader contract is to increase the number of volunteer firefighters through effective state-wide recruitment and retention efforts. The GIS Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment & Retention Toolkit will allow volunteer fire departments across the state of North Carolina to:

- View volunteer firefighter characteristics profiles for each NCAFC Region
- Locate target demographics and points of interest within their community
- Access recruitment and retention strategies to build plans based on the unique demographics of their community and volunteer firefighters

Follow the steps below to leverage this toolkit for recruitment activities. Alternatively, start with the quick guide to view the full roadmap for recruitment and retention activities.

- a. Ensure each of your volunteer firefighters complete this survey:



**Existing Volunteer Firefighter Survey** – Every Volunteer FF in North Carolina completes this once to feed the dashboard. [Survey Link Here](#)

- b. Share this additional survey with new/young recruits.



**New Volunteer Firefighter Applicant Survey** – New and recent recruits complete to share what made them join. [Survey Link Here](#)

- c. Complete this survey at each recruiting event to track your activities and share tips & tricks and lessons learned with the volunteer firefighter community.



**Recruitment Event Tracking and Feedback** – Complete once at every recruiting event. [Survey Link Here](#)

Access the Toolkit:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/018d08d5ed5b4ae7894b9edfac7e2646/>



*Next*, follow the four steps below to explore the data in the toolkit to support your local recruitment and retention activities.

Review the **1. Survey Results** displayed in Step 1 of the toolkit.

- a. Refine the results displayed in the charts by selecting your Region, County, and Response Area.
- b. Explore answers to questions regarding Life Stage (joined the fire service); Characteristics, Hobbies, and Entertainment; Initial Motivations (for joining); Current Motivations (to stay); and Who is Missing (from the current workforce).

Identify potential **2. Recruitment Locations** for your Response Area that align with characteristics identified in the results from Step 1 for your area.

- a. Zoom into your area of interest, e.g., fire district.
- b. Turn on map layers to view locations (gyms, community organizations, etc.) identified in Step 1.
- c. Select individual locations to view information or export a list of locations in your area of interest.

**3. Community Demographics** Explore to identify who may be missing from your workforce or is underrepresented.

- a. Zoom into your area of interest, e.g., fire district.
- b. Turn on the different census data layers to gain further insights into your community, e.g., language spoken at home.
- c. Click within the individual census tracts on the map to view more details for that specific characteristic in your community.
- d. Alternatively, view the [demographic profile for your county](#) available on the side panel.

Review **4. Successful Strategies** before planning your next Recruitment Event.

- a. Filter by location and day/time of the week to get ideas on what has worked well for your specific recruiting plan.
- b. Note suggestions/lessons learned to improve the potential for success at your event.

*Finally*, leverage the marketing materials and strategies provided to broaden outreach and encourage new volunteers to join your department or association.