



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT, FIRE COMMISSIONER FORD GRADUATE 88 FIREFIGHTER
EMTS**

Today's graduation builds on the citywide effort to maximize medical emergency resources in fight against COVID-19

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Chicago Fire Department (CFD) Commissioner Richard C. Ford II today held a graduation ceremony for 88 Firefighter EMTs as part of the City's latest efforts to maximize emergency medical resources in the fight against the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Today's class of graduates will begin their assignments this week, further building on the more than 4,900 firefighters and paramedics in Chicago that work every day to keep residents safe.

"The men and women of the Chicago Fire Department have been on the front lines of a crisis that is entirely without precedent in our city. And yet, it's moments like these that speak to how much we need each of them in our lives," said Mayor Lightfoot. "While we continue to encourage everyone to stay home during these difficult times, these candidates graduating today will be out there every day to protect us and ensure our fellow residents remain safe."

This graduation ceremony recognizes newly recruited firefighters who started classes in November of 2019. The graduating class includes 16 military veterans, 14 former Chicago Police Officers and 26 former graduates of Chicago Public Schools. The 88 new Firefighters are 43% minority, and seven are females.

"These men and women have answered the call to join the ranks of our beloved Department, to make sure we maintain the numbers needed to respond to any emergency in any neighborhood, be it manmade, natural or even this medical pandemic," said Commissioner Ford. "I would like to also thank their families for giving these candidates the support needed to make it into and through our training academy to now serve as the newest Chicago Firefighters."



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All candidates graduating today completed a rigorous six-month training course at the Robert Quinn Fire Academy that includes courses for certification as an emergency medical technician (EMT) and Illinois Firefighter or Fire Paramedic. Training includes not only basic firefighting skills but also operation in confined spaces and specific techniques for search, rescue and extrication as well as coordinating medical services with hospitals, mental health clinicians and dispatchers.

Earlier this spring, the Fire Department worked with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) to break down training courses into smaller groups to ensure candidates practiced social distancing while still receiving the necessary training. Over the past several months, the Fire Department has ensured all firefighters and paramedics responding to emergency calls have been provided with PPE specifically designated to keep them safe during this time.

For more information and updates on COVID-19, text COVID19 to 78015 or visit [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](https://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus).

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