



# Columbia Fire Department

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Subject: **Analysis of Employees Separating from CFD**

In response to the Columbia Firefighters' Association's news release, the following is an analysis of employee separations from the Fire Department which covers a 10-year period to show trends in the data with an emphasis on the past three years, since that time period was highlighted in the news release. The table below shows that 255 employees separated from the Fire Department from January 1, 2000 to the present. Of these, 116 (46%) retired, 75 (29%) resigned, 62 (24%) were terminated and 2 (1%) died (one was a heart-related line of duty death, the other an off-duty illness).

Over the three-year period of 2007-2009, 104 employees left the Department. This included personnel in firefighting, fire prevention and support positions. Of the 104 separations, 55 (53%) retired, which was the main factor in the high number of departures as well as the increase from previous years. There were also 27 (26%) resignations, 21 (20%) terminations and 1 (1%) death. This is a turnover rate of 7.5 percent per year. Retirements peaked at 21 in 2007, followed by 18 in 2008 and 16 in 2009. Resignations were highest in 2009 with 12 employees leaving for other jobs, followed by 9 in 2007 and 6 in 2008. Thus, resignations doubled from 2008 to 2009, but the numbers were low, changing from 6 to 12. It is noteworthy that there were 11 resignations in 2005. The year 2008 had 10 terminations, the highest in the 10-year period, half of whom were recruits in training who failed tests or had disciplinary problems.

With regard to the cost of recruit classes, over the past three years the length of the classes has been incrementally increased from 10 weeks to 16 weeks due to curriculum changes by the S. C. Fire Academy and the need to more thoroughly teach the subject matter and evaluate the students. A class of 24 students for 16 weeks costs about \$405,000, which includes instructors' time. This is a significant expense, but it is essential to ensure properly trained personnel for their safety and that of the public.

## Employee Separations

Year	Retired	Resigned	Terminated	Deceased	Total
2000	9	8	6	0	23
2001	9	5	5	0	19
2002	4	5	1	0	10
2003	8	6	8	0	22
2004	10	6	7	0	23
2005	9	11	5	1	26
2006	9	6	6	0	21
2007	21	9	6	1	37
2008	18	6	10	0	34
2009	16	12	5	0	33
2010	3	1	3	0	7
<b>Total</b>	116	75	62	2	255