

Northern Virginia Fire & Rescue

Leadership Development Institute



2022 Session Information

The Northern Virginia Fire and Rescue Department's Leadership Development Institute (NVFR LDI) provides unique and important leadership training for company-level and command officers. Many fire service programs focus specifically on the strategies and tactics of firefighting, but a majority of any officer's time is spent interacting with the members and citizens while in the firehouse, rather than on the incident scene. Leadership, management and communication skills are both an art and a science that have to be taught in the fire service, just as they are taught in the military. This program combines the art and science of leadership, as well as management techniques and skills, taught by national level speakers from within and outside the fire service. We provide not only education and knowledge, but specific methods to implement what the student has learned. This unique training environment provides opportunities to practice in a non-threatening setting with feedback from recognized fire and rescue leaders. This combination of instruction and implementation is what makes this experience distinct.

We offer two programs, the Company Officer Leadership Program (COLP) and the Command Officer Leadership and Management Program (COLMP). Both are six day residency programs with students required to stay on campus the entire time. All students are selected on a competitive basis by their department and are recommended for the program by their fire chiefs. The programs are designed to be challenging to the students, with little to no down-time. Students are required to attend all portions of the program; no tardiness is allowed. Students are engaged throughout the day, typically starting in the early morning hours and ending late at night. The schedule mimics daily life in the firehouse by forcing the officer to manage multiple tasks throughout the day including PT, meal times, education, networking, some aspects of fatigue and still handle personnel issues calmly. This approach is designed to keep students slightly "off-balance" the entire week, which in turn allows them to challenge their normal routines and ways of thinking. A primary goal of the program is to encourage cross-organizational communication and networking.

The target audience for COLP is future or acting company officers as well as existing company officers, preferably with 1-2 years of experience. These students are able to use their experience working as subordinates or in a leadership role to determine which leadership methods work. This experience informs their initial understanding of effective leadership. The focus of this program is direct leadership: work procedures, standards, group cohesion, norms, individual motivation, individual/small group task oriented perspectives and dynamics. The target audience for COLMP is future or acting command officers as well as existing command officers with 1-2 years of experience. Command officers are typically charged with leading and managing multiple companies or business lines. The focus of this program is organizational leadership: leadership climate, organizational culture, policies, changes,

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systems and processes. Both NVFR LDI programs are intended to open and challenge the minds of the participants, to teach them concepts and skills, allow them to practice, and then to go forth and mentor others. Leaders with additional years of experience in their rank will also benefit from new skills and approaches to practicing the art of leadership, mentorship, and management, and are highly encouraged to apply as well.

October 17-22, 2022 will be the ninth session of the company officer program and the seventh session of the command officer program. We welcome applications from career and volunteer fire/rescue personnel from jurisdictions inside and outside of the Metropolitan Washington COG. Our program is fortunate to have numerous perspectives from students and staff across the Mid-Atlantic region. Please visit the Institute's website address at <https://www.nvers.org/fireems/LDI> for additional information and to download a student application.

We look forward to another year of enhancing the knowledge base and abilities of fire/rescue leaders in the region!

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