

SIDE LETTER AGREEMENT – PARAMEDIC INCENTIVE PROGRAM

This Side Letter Agreement is dated May 18, 2026 (“Effective Date”) and is by and between the City of Calimesa (the “City”) and the Calimesa Professional Firefighters Association (the “Association”). The City and Association are each a “Party” and collectively are the “Parties.”

RECITALS

- A. The Parties entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) dated July 21, 2025, with a term of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.
- B. The Parties have been bargaining in good faith toward a successor MOU.
- C. The Parties have identified that the issue of recruitment and retention of Firefighter/Paramedics requires immediate attention and cannot wait until a full successor MOU has been negotiated and ratified.
- D. The Parties have met and conferred on the Firefighter/Paramedic issue, the result of which is this Side Letter Agreement.
- E. The Parties intend to integrate the terms of this Side Letter Agreement into the successor MOU.

The Parties therefore agree as follows:

1. Paramedic Recruitment and Retention Program.

- A. General. The City shall make available a Paramedic Recruitment and Retention Program (the “Paramedic Incentive Program”) to assist in the recruitment, appointment, and retention of qualified individuals into the Firefighter/Paramedic classification, in accordance with the guidelines established herein.
- B. Term of Program. The Paramedic Incentive Program shall be effective from the Effective Date of this Side Letter Agreement through June 30, 2027, unless modified, extended, or terminated earlier as provided herein.

C. Program Eligibility. The Paramedic Incentive Program shall apply to the following categories of employees:

- i. Newly hired employees appointed to the Firefighter/Paramedic classification who possess all required certifications at the time of hire.
- ii. Current employees in the Firefighter/Paramedic classification.
- iii. Current employees in the Firefighter/EMT classification who are selected by the City to participate in a City-sponsored paramedic training program and who subsequently promote or are appointed to the Firefighter/Paramedic classification.

D. Hiring Bonus.

- i. Employees newly hired after the Effective Date of this Side Letter Agreement into the Firefighter/Paramedic classification shall be eligible for a total hiring incentive of up to twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), paid as follows:
 1. Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon hire (included in first paycheck).
 2. Seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) upon completion of six (6) months of service.
 3. Eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) upon successful completion of probation.
- ii. Employees who receive the hiring bonus are not eligible to receive the retention bonus.

E. Retention Bonus.

- i. Employees in the Firefighter/Paramedic classification as of the Effective Date of this Side Letter Agreement shall be eligible for a total retention incentive of up to twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), paid as follows:
 1. Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in the first full pay period following the Effective Date.
 2. Seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) upon completion of six (6) months from the Effective Date.
 3. Eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) upon completion of twelve (12) months from the Effective Date.
- ii. Employees who receive the retention bonus are not eligible to receive the hiring bonus.

F. Incentive Bonus for Firefighter/EMTs. Firefighter/EMTs selected by the City to participate in a City-sponsored paramedic training program shall be eligible for a total incentive of up to fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000), paid as follows:

- i. Four thousand dollars (\$4,000) upon completion of ninety (90) days in the Firefighter/Paramedic classification.
- ii. Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon completion of six (6) months in the Firefighter/Paramedic classification.
- iii. Six thousand dollars (\$6,000) upon completion of twelve (12) months in the Firefighter/Paramedic classification.

G. City Discretion in Program Participation. Participation in the City-sponsored paramedic training program for Firefighter/EMTs shall be at the sole discretion of the City.

- i. The City retains the exclusive right to determine:
 1. The number of employees selected for participation.
 2. The timing of selections.
 3. The criteria used for selection, which may include merit, qualifications, operational needs, and other job-related factors.
- ii. Selection for participation shall not be subject to seniority-based entitlement.

H. Limitations and Exclusions.

- i. Incentive payments under this program shall not be considered base salary and shall not be included in the calculation of retirement benefits or other compensation unless otherwise required by law.
- ii. Employees must be in paid status and in good standing as determined by the City at the time each incentive installment is paid. Employees who separate from City service prior to meeting the applicable milestone shall not be eligible for any unpaid portion of the incentive.

I. Program Modification / Reopener.

- i. The City reserves the right to reopen negotiations on this Side Letter Agreement for the purpose of modifying, extending, or terminating the Paramedic Incentive Program.
- ii. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any incentive installment that has been earned by an employee pursuant to the terms of this Side Letter Agreement shall be honored and paid by the City.

2. **Term of Side Letter Agreement.** This Side Letter Agreement shall remain in effect through June 30, 2027, after which, it shall expire and be of no further force or effect unless the parties mutually agree in writing to extend it or if and until its provisions are incorporated into a successor Memorandum of Understanding.

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IN WITNESS THEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this Side Letter Agreement on the dates listed below.

CITY OF CALIMESA

**CALIMESA PROFESSIONAL
FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION**



Will Kolbow, City Manager




Matt Vega, President

Dated: 5-19-26

Dated: 5-20-26

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

By: 

Darlene Gerdes, City Clerk