
DIGEST

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HB 894 Original

2026 Regular Session

Dewitt

Abstract: Authorizes the governing authority of the city of Alexandria to create the position of public safety officer within the fire department.

Present constitution creates a fire and police civil service system applicable to municipalities of over 13,000 in population and parishes and fire protection districts. Provides that the system is subject to Art. XIV, §15.1 of the 1921 Constitution made statutory by the 1974 Constitution. Present law creates and provides for two fire and police civil service systems: (1) one applicable to any municipality which operates paid police and fire departments and which has a population of not fewer than 13,000 persons; and (2) one applicable to any parish, fire protection district, or municipality with a population of fewer than 13,000, but not fewer than 7,000 persons.

Proposed law retains present constitution and present law.

Present law, relative to both systems, provides that a municipal fire and police civil service board is created in the municipal, parish, and fire protection government. Requires the board to establish and maintain employment lists containing the names of persons eligible for appointment to various classes of positions in the classified service. Requires that names of persons attaining a passing score on a promotion test be placed on the promotion employment list for the tested class, from highest to lowest, according to departmental seniority.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law authorizes the governing authority of the city of Alexandria to create, by ordinance, the position of public safety officer within the fire department. Provides that a public safety officer is a fire department employee who shall perform both firefighting and police duties.

Proposed law requires an employee to meet certain eligibility requirements to become a public safety officer, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Current employment and good standing within the fire department.
- (2) Hold a rank below captain.
- (3) Authorization by the appointing authority to perform police work.
- (4) Successful completion of a normal background investigation and any psychometric,

psychological, or other medical or physical examinations for police officers in the city of Alexandria.

- (5) Successful completion of all firefighter training and certification requirements.

Proposed law provides that only the fire chief may recommend an employee to the appointing authority to be a candidate for public safety officer. Additionally provides that the police chief may reject any candidate who is recommended for appointment as a public safety officer.

Proposed law requires all public safety officers to maintain current certifications and participate in ongoing professional development as required by both the fire department and police department. Provides that public safety officers may perform all duties of a police officer, including but not limited to law enforcement, emergency medical response, rescue operations, and community safety initiatives.

Proposed law provides that public safety officers shall be subject to the civil service rules and regulations applicable to the fire department. Provides that any allegations of misconduct or violations of departmental policies shall be investigated under the applicable civil service rules of the fire department, with input from officials of both the fire department and police department as necessary. Additionally provides that the police chief may determine that a public safety officer shall no longer perform police duties, subject to a written joint policy between the fire department and police department.

Proposed law requires the fire chief and police chief to jointly develop and approve training standards, operational guidelines, and performance metrics for public safety officers. Requires the fire chief and police chief to jointly submit for approval to the fire and police civil service board a proposed dual role training curriculum and operational guidelines no later than 90 days after the effective date of proposed law. Provides that all necessary amendments to departmental policies and fire and police civil service rules shall be promulgated no later than 180 days after the effective date of proposed law.

Proposed law provides that fire department employees shall retain their rank and seniority, in the fire department, regardless of an appointment as a public safety officer. Provides that service as a public safety officer shall not constitute a break in service or adversely affect promotional eligibility or seniority accrual within the fire department.

(Adds R.S. 33:2481.8)