

Georgia Fire Service Unification

Charter Member Agreement

Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs and Georgia State Firefighters Association

Whereas: The Georgia Fire Service is composed of all segments of a recognized and respected profession of public safety officers dedicated to the safety and well-being of all Georgia citizens and the advancement and well-being of all the members of the Fire Service, and

Whereas: Unification of all Fire Service associations and supportive organizations is considered essential to the improvement of all Fire, Rescue and EMS operations throughout the State of Georgia as well as the most important step in securing lasting commitments from our recognized stakeholders including the general public, and

Whereas: Speaking with a unified voice and supporting agreed upon goals that reflect the needs and aspirations of the members of all our organizations collectively, and in consideration of future actions in support of the best interests of all the communities we serve, and

Whereas: The Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs (GAFC), through a successful reorganization and approval of a Constitution and By-laws designed to coordinate advocacy activities deemed essential to Fire Service goal attainment, and

Whereas: The objective of an inclusive and transparent Georgia Fire Service shall result in additional legislative successes, attainment of quality inter-organizational communications and highly effective relationships with local, state and federal agencies, and

Whereas: It is understood that the Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs and the Georgia State Firefighters Association, through harmony, cooperation, and mutual efforts are key in representing all members of the profession in Georgia, Career and Volunteer, Firefighter to Fire Chief, therefore:

THE FOLLOWING PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED:

We the members of the Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs acting thru our Board of Directors hereby pledge our support for the program of the Georgia State Firefighters Association and;

- 1.) We agree to have a representative at each regular and special Board meeting of the GSFA as requested by the GSFA;
- 2.) We will support the program of GSFA on programs of mutual and statewide interest;

- 3.) We will publish the names and photographs of GSFA Officers and Committee Chairperson in an Annual Membership Directory and post same on our statewide home page;
- 4.) We will run at least two feature stories each year on the progress and accomplishments of GSFA;
- 5.) We will invite two elected GSFA leaders to each meeting of the GAFC Board of Directors and program oriented executive committee meetings to solicit input and critiques of our program;
- 6.) We will invite at least two elected or appointed GSFA leaders to any meetings where input is solicited to change or add to the annual goal attainment objectives of the Fire Service Strategic Plan;
- 7.) We will collaborate with GSFA members to all State Capitol or similar public events to honor members of the Fire Service and/or to champion legislative causes deemed necessary to the advancement of our profession;
- 8.) We are aware that a number of our members are also members of the GSFA and that the GSFA endorses and supports Charter Members of the Fire Service in regional and local organizations of Fire Chiefs and other Fire officers. We have agreed to and will actively support the membership efforts of GSFA and their goal of enrolling all firefighters in their association.
- 9) We will support the efforts of the Fire Service in regular interaction and exchanges with the Georgia Fire Academy in that organization's efforts to bring a wide range of Fire Service educational programs for all members and ranks of the fire service, career and volunteer.
- 10.) We will provide mass fax and mass e-mail services to all GSFA officers required to communicate with the Fire Service and or GSFA membership;
- 11.) We will support all recognition ceremonies for Federal and/or State legislators supportive of Fire Service reforms that are sponsored by GSFA;
- 12) We will notify GSFA of any plans by our association to introduce state legislation or changes in state statutes that will materially affect Fire Department operations (including EMS) or the welfare of our members.
- 13.) In the absence of GSFA representatives for any legislative work requiring joint effort and with special emphasis on the Georgia General Assembly, we will inform GSFA leaders of deliberations or outcomes regarding the annual legislative agenda of the Fire Service.

President: _____ Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs

Date: _____

Further:

We, the members of the Georgia State Firefighters Association, do hereby agree to the following activities designed to assure the best possible working relationship between our association and the GAFC in their role as a central coordinator of the Georgia Fire Service at both the state and federal levels:

- 1.) We will provide on-line access to our Constitution and By-laws and any subsequent changes to those documents with the GAFC Secretary who has been selected to maintain an up-to-date file of all Unification Charter Member governing documents.
- 2.) Annually, we communicate with the GAFC Secretary the names, titles and communication particulars of our elected and appointed leaders, including standing committee and ad hoc task force chairpersons.
- 3.) We will invite the GAFC board and other Fire Service leaders and staff to meetings where resolutions, policies and concerns of a statewide or federal government nature regarding the Fire Service will be discussed that will be promoted by a unified effort.
- 4.) On an annual basis, but no later than September 1st of each year, we will file the names and communication particulars of our members who have agreed to support the Fire Service Joint legislative program.
- 5.) We will support the efforts of the Fire Service in regular interaction and exchanges with the Georgia Fire Academy in that organization's efforts to bring a wide range of Fire Officer Development programs to our members.
- 6.) We will make every effort to attend statewide meetings designed to enhance our knowledge of Fire Service operations, Fire, Rescue and EMS department management and legislative initiatives necessary to improve our services.
- 7.) We will contribute our time and talents to committee and task force work, whenever feasible to assure Fire Service advisory work receives our input.
- 8.) We will support one or more Fire Service endorsed organizations that have met the operational standards of the Service to provide both intra and inter-state mutual aid to communities in need.
- 9.) We will participate in the conduct and evaluation of activities necessary in obtaining the annual program objectives of the Fire Service in our collective effort to accomplish the goals of the Fire Service Strategic Plan. We will contribute ideas and suggestions to continually improve that plan.
- 10.) We will publicize and otherwise communicate to our members not only our progress as an organization, but the work and progress of GAFC and the Unification partners as

they support the Fire Service Strategic Plan in two feature stories per year in wither of our publications where space is available.

11.) We will notify GAFC of any plans by our association to introduce state legislation or changes in state statutes that will materially affect Fire Department operations (including EMS) or the welfare of our members.

12.) We will notify GAFC of any plans by our organization to publically judge or criticize State or Federal government operations or their employees or representatives, this, in the interest of assuring a unified front by the entire Fire Service in bringing attention to serious deficiencies in the conduct of planning, funding, or execution of public safety programs.

We have examined and been briefed on the content of the new GAFC Constitution and By-laws.

We are aware that a number of our members are also members of the GAFC and that the GAFC endorses and supports Charter Members of the Fire Service in regional and local organizations of Fire Chiefs and other Fire officers. We have agreed to support the membership efforts of GAFC and their goal of enrolling all Chiefs and Fire Officers.

We understand that GAFC, on behalf of the Georgia Fire Service, wishes to publicize, through official publications, the accomplishments of our association. To this end we will cooperate with the information service arm of the GAFC on stories of interest to all our colleagues.

We have been asked to send one or more representatives to task force meetings held to deal with a wide range of fire Service issues and challenges. As feasible, we will use our best efforts to staff those meetings.

In The Best Interest of the Georgia Fire Service, we enter into this agreement.

President: _____ Georgia State Firefighters Association

Date: _____
