

Chiefs Mentoring Chiefs

A Free Program of Assistance for Massachusetts Fire Chiefs

"We can all benefit from another's experience at some point in our careers."

The Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts (FCAM) established the Chiefs Mentoring Chiefs program to optimize and put to work the vast years of Fire Chief experience of current and retired Fire Chiefs in the Commonwealth. The mission of FCAM is to "further the professional advancement of the fire service; to serve as the recognized Fire Chiefs' organization for the exchange of ideas, knowledge and experience." Chiefs Mentoring Chiefs is one way in which FCAM fulfills this mission.

Beneficial Program Activities

Designed to help you take advantage of both short-and longer-term mentoring relationships, program activities include:

- New Chiefs' networking and relationship-building
- Assistance for Chiefs in crisis (not to be confused with Critical Incident Stress Management)
- Web pages containing documented knowledge and experience of Chiefs

At the center of the program is the belief that all Fire Chiefs, from the moment they begin their tenure, start to accumulate a vast amount of knowledge and experience from which other Chiefs can benefit. Fire Chiefs who volunteer to be mentors are experienced; they are approved as a mentor and then provided with training for this role. There are currently over 30 active and retired Chiefs who are prepared to serve as mentors.



If You Find Yourself in Need of More Immediate Assistance

There are currently two Program Coordinators. In addition to monitoring the program, the coordinators manage calls for immediate assistance that have been routed to them through the **FCAM website front page**, or the FCAM Secretary. Program Coordinators then match your community's circumstances and demographics with those of a trained mentor available for advice.

Chiefs Mentoring Chiefs—Many Opportunities for You as a Fire Chief

- Helping you, as a new Fire Chief, integrate into the Massachusetts Fire Chief community
- Establishing relationships that will be helpful to your professional growth and effectiveness
- Getting proactive advice about how to increase your effectiveness as Chief
- Providing immediate and relevant support when you find yourself in the middle of a leadership challenge
- If you are thinking about retirement, providing you with advice on benefits, job opportunities, and strategies for transitioning your role as Chief

The Chiefs Mentoring Chiefs program has also spurred documenting information that can help both new and experienced Chiefs perform better in their role. This information is located on FCAM's website (www.fcam.org) in a section available only to Chiefs. A major goal of the FCAM website is to harness the cumulative knowledge and experience of Massachusetts Fire Chiefs. In addition to being the primary on-line communication source for MA Fire Chiefs, the website is an information and reporting source for mentors and mentees—and a key place to request mentoring help.

Reflect for a moment on what a mentoring relationship can represent for you as a Fire Chief. Consider the benefits of asking for and accepting advice and experience as a means of avoiding crises and furthering the success of your career.

What You Can Do to Ensure Your Own Success

Massachusetts Fire Chiefs have state, regional and district associations. Joining one or all of those organizations will help you access a wealth of experience right from the start of your tenure.

Contact your District Director for more information. If you need the contact information for your District Director, contact the FCAM Secretary/Treasurer at FCAMSEC@comcast.net.