

Fire and Rescue Services Overview

Howard County, Maryland

Located southwest of Baltimore, Maryland and northeast of Washington, D.C., Howard County, Maryland is a rapidly developing jurisdiction. With urban, suburban, and rural areas, the 253 square-mile jurisdiction includes densely populated areas such as Columbia, Ellicott City, and Laurel in the southeast part of the county, as well as more rural areas such as Clarksville to the West and North. The current population of Howard County is 321,113 residents.



Howard County is a Charter government with its own legislative and executive branch. With no incorporated towns or cities within Howard County, the County government provides all local government services to its residents. This includes public safety protections by police and fire departments.

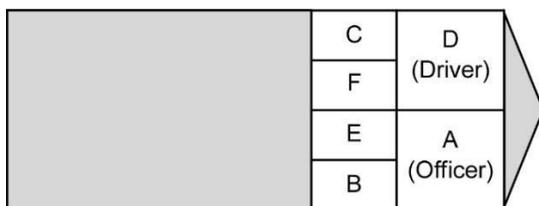
Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services

The Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (HCDFRS) is a combination system (volunteer and career departments) with nearly 900 personnel. Operating from twelve (12) stations across the County, HCDFRS is statutorily responsible for fire suppression and prevention, fire training, arson investigation, rescue services, and emergency medical services.

Every station has at least one engine and one paramedic unit assigned. Many stations also house apparatus such as ladder trucks, heavy duty rescue squads, brush trucks, foam and dry chemical units, and water tankers. Career personnel work on a rotating shift schedule working twenty-four (24) hours on duty followed by forty-eight (48) hours off duty.

Personnel responding to an emergency are assigned a riding position on their apparatus. This riding position correlates with their radio and SCBA equipment. Apparatus riding positions with corresponding radio designations used by HCDFRS are as illustrated in Figure 2.

Engines / Trucks / Towers / Squads



Ambulances / Tankers / Brush Units

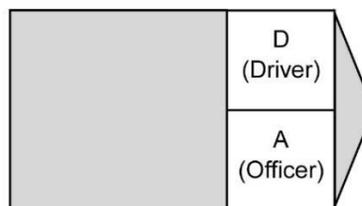


Figure 2 HCDFRS Radio and Seating Matrix