

# Benefits

## Free Training

You can receive free firefighting, rescue, and EMS training through the [Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute](#). These courses count as college credits through the [University of Maryland](#).

### **Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center**

This program includes classroom instruction as well as formal training at selected local fire companies, students are required to complete a minimum of 138 hours of work-based learning and take the Firefighter 1, Incident Management System, Emergency Response to Terrorism, Hazardous Materials Operations, Firefighter 2, and Rescue site. Students may earn college credit. This intense training program is offered as a one year experience. the classroom training will be provided by instructors from the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MRFI) of the University of Maryland.



## Maryland State Income Tax Incentive Program

The State of Maryland offers a Tax Relief Program for eligible volunteers via a Tax Subtraction Modification. This program was developed as an incentive for volunteer organizations to recruit and retain volunteer emergency service providers. [[Read more about House Bill 19.](#)] To qualify for the Program, volunteers must meet performance requirements, which could vary among organizations. You must accrue at least 50 points annually. A point is awarded for participating in any meeting, drill, fundraiser function, or for each hour of attendance in a training class. Members may deduct \$3,500 from their Maryland State income taxes if they meet this requirement and have continuously served as a volunteer for the past three years. Volunteer associations continue to work with Maryland State Legislature in order to reduce the length of service requirement.

## Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP)

LOSAP was started to encourage participation in the St. Mary's County Volunteer system. Administered by the St. Mary's County Commissioners, funding for the program is derived from county fire tax. These funds are entrusted to an investment firm to ensure its growth and sufficient funding for future recipients. Benefits available through LOSAP include:

- **Length of Service Benefit** - Must be 55 years old and must have accumulated at least 50 points per year for no less than 20 years.
- **Disability Benefit** - You become disabled during the course of service as a volunteer while engaged in providing such services and the disability prevents you from pursuing your normal occupation. The disability must be of a permanent nature as certified by the Maryland Workmen's Compensation Commission.
- **Survivor Benefit** - A surviving spouse is entitled to benefits equal to 50 percent of the deceased volunteer's benefits.
- **Cost of Living** – Equals to State.
- **Death Benefit** - A death benefit for Line of Duty Death be paid to the volunteer's designated beneficiary.

As a qualified volunteer you may receive a benefit of \$150.00 per month for life (based on age of 55 and 20 years of service. For each additional year of qualified service over 20 years addtoan \$8.00 per year) Thus, a recipient with 25 years of creditable service would receive \$190.00 per month for life. LOSAP benefits are not taxable by the State of Maryland.

## Scholarship Program

The St. Mary's County Commissioners sponsor a Scholarship Program that awards active members of a St. Mary's County Volunteer Fire Department, Rescue Squad or Advanced Life Support Unit. The total funding available will be spread amongst the applicants that have met eligibility requirements.

## Fire Science Degree

The [College of Southern Maryland \(CSM\)](#) in partnership with the [Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute \(MRFI\)](#) offers an [Associate of Applied Science Degree in Fire Science Technology](#). Firefighters can now receive college credit for their training. In fact, candidates can earn an Associate of Applied Science degree from CSM! Credits can be transferred to the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) toward a bachelor's degree with a major or minor in fire science. Imagine getting an A.A.S. or B.S. in a career field that is not only crucial to society and the public's safety and well-being, but in a field that you are committed to and enjoy. There's no better time than now to take the results of your hard work and rigorous training and apply it toward a credential that can offer career growth, pride, and personal satisfaction.