

Clackamas County Fire District

Measure 3-594

Referred to the People by the District Board.

BALLOT TITLE

LOCAL OPTION LEVY FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Question: Shall Clackamas Fire District implement a five-year emergency services levy at \$0.52 per \$1,000 assessed value, beginning FY 2023-24?

Summary: Clackamas Fire District is seeking an enhanced five-year local-option levy to support fire and medical response throughout the District. Funds will be used for:

- Additional firefighter and first responder positions in all parts of the district to improve response times, safety and effectiveness.
- Full-time, 24/7 career staffing at two rural fire stations (Logan and Clarkes) that are critical to wildfire and emergency response.
- Implementation of quick response vehicles staffed by trained firefighter paramedics for medical and other emergencies in high-volume service areas.
- Equipment and operational costs connected to wildfire preparedness and emergency response.

The levy would cost \$0.52 per thousand of assessed property value, which is \$138 per year for a typical homeowner at the median assessed value of \$266,018.

An estimate of the total amount of money to be raised for each year of the proposed levy renewal is: FY 2023-2024: \$13,806,000 FY 2024-2025: \$14,300,000 FY 2025-2026: \$14,658,000 FY 2026-2027: \$15,024,000 FY 2027-2028: \$15,340,000

the district is seeking funding for additional firefighters to meet the needs of each community we serve.

What would the levy pay for?

The levy would fund 62 additional firefighters, enabling increased staffing across most fire stations and 24/7 career staffing at two rural fire stations (Logan and Clarkes) that are critical to wildfire and emergency response. It would also fund quick response vehicles to improve response efficiency in high-volume service areas, as well as equipment and operational costs connected to emergency and wildfire mitigation, prevention, and response.

How much would it cost?

If passed, the emergency services levy would provide annual funding of \$14.5 million at a cost of \$0.52 per \$1000 of assessed property value, which is \$138 for the typical homeowner at the median assessed value of \$266,018.

What happens if the levy does not pass?

If the levy does not pass, staffing reductions implemented in 2022 will remain in place and the Logan and Clarkes fire stations will not be staffed by career firefighters. Further staffing and operational cuts may be required.

Submitted by:
Nick Browne
Fire Chief

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

District Overview

Clackamas Fire is one of the largest and busiest fire agencies in the region, serving 220,000 residents across 235 square miles. In 2022, the district responded to more than 30,000 calls for emergency or fire services

Levy Overview

In recent years, growing demands for services and increasing threats from wildfires have strained district budgets, requiring reductions in the number of firefighters on most engine crews. In early 2022, the Clackamas Fire leadership began to develop options for future funding. This process included public meetings and multiple community forums, generating input from community members and staff. In 2023, the Board of Directors voted to refer an emergency services levy to voters. If passed, this levy would fund enhanced firefighter staffing and equipment for emergency and wildfire response.

Why do we need a levy?

Demands for fire, emergency and medical response are increasing across the district. Since 2021, there has been a 15% increase in call volume. At the same time, budget constraints have resulted in a 9% decrease in emergency staffing. Wildfire risk is also increasing, further stretching department resources. The district's permanent tax rate is not able to keep pace with the rising costs of providing services. With more than 30,000 calls expected each year,