



## Summer 2025

*Investing for Firefighters and Their Families®*

A PUBLICATION FOR THE

## MEMBERS & BENEFICIARIES

OF THE HOUSTON FIREFIGHTERS'  
RELIEF AND RETIREMENT FUND

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Fund Members,

I am pleased to share that we successfully passed legislation aimed at strengthening the fund and supporting our members. House Bill 2688 was approved by the Texas state legislature with unanimous support—an encouraging sign of broad recognition for the importance of our mission.

To be transparent, the version of the bill that advanced out of the Senate was not exactly what we initially crafted and fought for. However, it represents meaningful progress and a step in the right direction. Importantly, we have built new relationships in the Senate and laid the groundwork for stronger advocacy on behalf of both our active members and retirees.

The Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund currently maintains approximately \$5.6 billion of assets under management and remains the healthiest pension fund in the state of Texas with at least \$1 billion in assets. This healthy financial position, along with the strong political alliances forged in the recent legislative sessions, gives lawmakers the confidence to consider restoring benefits which have been previously reduced.

The Board remains fully committed to protecting your retirement security and upholding the fund's top-tier status. Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to seeing you in December.

Brett Besselman  
Chairman of the Board  
Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund



Brett Besselman  
Chairman of the Board



# TRUSTEE ELECTION

## HFRRF Board of Trustees Election Process for 2026 Starting Term

The **HFRRF Board of Trustees** consists of:

- Five **active firefighters**
- One **retired firefighter**
- Two **citizen members**
- The **city treasurer**
- The **mayor or their appointed representative**

Elections take place annually for firefighter positions with expiring terms. Members should be enrolled in Member Direct to receive election communications. Questions? Call **281-372-5100** for assistance.

### Positions Up for Election (Term Begins January 2026)

Position	Term Begins	Eligibility Requirements	Incumbent
II	January 2026	Captain or Senior Captain	David Riegor
V	January 2026	Classified Firefighter assigned full-time to the Fire Alarm Division	Gerard Daniels

### Nomination Period: August 1st – August 15th (Deadline: 4 PM)

- Members may nominate themselves or others.
- Nomination forms are available online at [www.hfrf.org](http://www.hfrf.org) and at the pension office.
- Submit completed forms:
  - o At the HFRRF office (business hours: **7:30 AM – 4 PM, Monday–Friday**),
  - o In the Member Drop Box (after hours, covered porch), or
  - o By email: [HFRRFelections@hfrf.org](mailto:HFRRFelections@hfrf.org).

### Nominee Requirements

- Nominees are notified of their nomination.
- To be included on the ballot, nominees must submit an Accept/Decline Nomination Form (unless self-nominated).
- Nominees may submit a one-page election profile for distribution with ballots.
- All required forms must be received by **August 22nd (4 PM deadline)**.

### Voting Period: October 1st – October 22nd

- Secret ballot voting is conducted by an independent auditor/election service.
- Ballot distribution:
  - o Sent via email and USPS first-class mail, and
  - o Includes ballots, candidate profiles, and voting instructions.
- Votes may be cast electronically or by mailed paper ballot.
- Ballots with write-in candidates or received after **October 22nd** will be invalid.

### Run-Off Election (If No Majority Winner)

- If no candidate receives a majority of votes, a run-off is held.
- The top two candidates must submit a new Accept/Decline Nomination Form by **October 30th**.
- Ballots sent & voting period:
  - o Run-off ballots mailed/emailed: **November 3rd – November 24th**.
  - o Ballots must be **received** by the election service by **November 24th**.

### Results Announcement

- Official election results certified by the independent auditor/election service.
- Election results announced: **October 23rd**.
- Run-off results announced: **November 25th**.
- Results will be posted online at [www.hfrf.org](http://www.hfrf.org).

***Mark your calendar and be sure to vote!***

## Save the Date

### HFRRF Coffee



**September 18, 2025**

**11:00am - 12:00pm**

**HFRRF Greer & Lowdermilk Conference Center  
4225 Interwood N Pkwy, Houston 77032**

### HFD Annual Memorial Ceremony



**October 18, 2025**

**10:30am - 1:00pm**

**HFRRF Memorial Garden  
4225 Interwood N Pkwy, Houston 77032**

### Annual Retiree Holiday Luncheon

*1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in December*



**December 4, 2025**

**11:00am - 1:00pm**

**HFRRF Greer & Lowdermilk Conference Center  
4225 Interwood N Pkwy, Houston 77032**

*Watch your email for invitation and please RSVP*

### Annual Retiree BBQ

*1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in May*



**May 7, 2026**

**11:00am - 1:30pm**

**HFRRF Greer & Lowdermilk Conference Center  
4225 Interwood N Pkwy, Houston 77032**

*Watch your email for invitation and please RSVP*

## 2025 KEY DATES

JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
30	31					

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### BOARD MEETINGS:

3rd Tuesday of every month

### OFFICE CLOSINGS:

July 4 Independence Day

September 1 Labor Day

October 13 Columbus Day

November 11 Veterans Day

November 27 & 28 Thanksgiving

December 24 & 25 Christmas

January 1 New Year's Day

### NOON CLOSURES:

August 29

October 10

November 26

December 23

December 31

### Hurricane Season - June 1st - Nov 30th

Are you ready?

Prepare a disaster kit with water, nonperishable food, clothes, flashlight, batteries, first aid supplies, and hygiene products for your entire family including pets.

Register for AlertHouston and stay alert!

[www.houstonemergency.org](http://www.houstonemergency.org)



# RETIREE BBQ

May 1, 2025





## HFRRF OFFICE NEWS

### HAPPY WORKIVERSARY

25 YEARS  
OF SERVICE  
300 MONTHS  
1,304 WEEKS  
9,132 DAYS  
219,168 HOURS  
13,150,080 MINUTES  
COUNTLESS PROJECTS

#### Silver Achievement

##### Claudia McInnis

Director of Finance and Administration

July 7

Celebrating 25 years

#### Shining Star

##### Andrea Sharayha

Director of Human Resources

October 4

Celebrating 15 years



#### Bright Horizons

##### Ajit Singh

Chief Investment Officer

October 30

Celebrating 10 years



##### Valerie Corona

Receptionist

Valerie brings with her several years of experience as a receptionist, along with a solid background in document control, data entry, and customer service.

Her expertise will undoubtedly be a great asset to the Fund, and we are excited to have her on board.

## HFRRF Memorial Garden



### Memorial Benches - SOLD OUT

### Memorial Pavers - \$100

If you would like to purchase a paver in the Memorial Garden, the order form is available on [www.hfrrf.org](http://www.hfrrf.org) under Memorial Garden on the home page.



### Are you proud of your family and your service in HFD?

Celebrate life's milestones at G&L, a venue that honors both! Call today to make new memories at our venue overlooking the memorial dedicated to you and those who served beside you.

## MEMBER SERVICES

### What to Do When a Death Has Occurred: Guidance from the Firefighters' Pension Office

Kristi Marx, LCSW

When a firefighter passes away, it's a difficult and emotional time. As the office responsible for managing death benefits, we want to help ease some of the administrative burden. The first and most important step is to report the death to our office as soon as possible. You do not need to wait for a death certificate to start the process. Early notification helps us to ensure that survivor benefits and pension applications begin without unnecessary delays. Resources will also be provided to help navigate this life transition.

You will also need to let us know whether you would like the death shared with the broader membership. Many families find comfort in the support of the firefighter community, but the choice to make this information public is entirely up to you. If the deceased was an active or retired member, you may also choose to request an Honor Guard Service—a meaningful tribute that the Houston Fire Department is proud to offer to honor their service. If you have not already contacted HFD, a member of our staff can refer you or send a written HG request.

To prevent payment interruptions, please do not close any bank accounts associated with the deceased member until we confirm that pension payments and benefit transitions have been completed. Delays often occur when accounts are closed too soon, so keeping them open is a simple but critical step.

Additionally, take time to locate important documents such as marriage certificates, birth certificates for any minor or disabled dependents, and if applicable, any medical documents. These will be needed to finalize benefits. We're here to guide you every step of the way—please reach out to us as soon as possible so we can support you during this transition.

## REMINDERS

### Online DROP/PROP Withdrawals

Did you know that you can make DROP/PROP withdrawals online? Log into [MemberDirect](#) and go to My Account. Choose Forms. For a lump sum withdrawal up to \$50k, use the Disbursement Form. If you want to set up recurring monthly or quarterly withdrawals, submit the Periodic Disbursement Form.

- Regarding the Social Security Administration Windfall Elimination, we do not have personal information regarding your social security benefits. Please reach out to the Social Security Administration (SSA).

- The City of Houston administers the city medical, dental, and vision. We take premiums from the checks, but you need to contact the City of Houston Human Resources for any medical, dental, or vision questions.

### Know Your Deductions

COH - HR Benefits Services 832-393-6000

[benefits@houstontx.gov](mailto:benefits@houstontx.gov)

Cigna 800-997-1406, 832-393-6191

[cityofhouston.serviceinquiries@cigna.com](mailto:cityofhouston.serviceinquiries@cigna.com)

Cigna Dental 800-997-1406

[www.cigna.com](http://www.cigna.com)

Dearborn National (Life Ins.) 877-442-4207

[Claims\\_Customer\\_Service@dearbornnational.com](mailto:Claims_Customer_Service@dearbornnational.com)

Dennis Holder Scholarship Fund 281-385-8525

[hfdscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:hfdscholarship@gmail.com)

Standard Life 713-223-9166

HFD Honor Guard 713-376-6640

HFD Pipes and Drums 713-417-8348

HPFFA Medical Supplemental 713-223-9166 ext 1

HPFFA Dental/Vision (Humana) 1-800-833-2223

Houston Fire Museum 713-524-2526

Relative Assistance/Hosp Fund 713-223-9166 ext 5





## SUMMER BUCKET LIST

Texan summers sure bring the heat, but that doesn't mean you can't make the most of the sunshine (and maybe a little shade too). Whether you're cooling off with the family at the lake, smoking up brisket in the backyard, or exploring the Hill Country with the windows down, summer is the perfect time to enjoy the freedom you've worked so hard for.

This season, consider building up your "retiree bucket list", big or small. Visit one of Texas' many state parks or catch an Astros game. Maybe plant some okra, Texas sage, oregano, or cucumbers to make dill pickles later this year. Have you visited Marfa or Big Bend? This is a great time to take that road trip you've been thinking about! Do you have grandkids? Start a new tradition, teaching them how to fish, start a backyard campout, or pass down one of your favorite firehouse recipes. Whether you're staying close to home or venturing out, summer is a time to reconnect with joy, purpose, and a little adventure.

Your uniform may be hung up, but your legacy is still going strong. You've earned every moment of this summer, so enjoy it, stay cool, and don't forget the sunscreen.



## IN MEMORY

RETIREES	DEPARTED	HFD SERVICE
Noel Simmons	3/24/25	1959-1979
Robert A. Conners	4/6/25	1969-2007
Andrew Brown	4/23/25	1978-2012
Robert E. Swisher	4/27/25	1963-2005
Harry Matthews III	4/29/25	1979-2008
Milton C. Alford	5/6/25	1955-1982
Gerald Tamplin	5/22/25	1965-1987
David P. Barr	5/24/25	1957-1985
John Chambers	5/26/25	1990-2022
Henry Ainsworth	5/29/25	1966-1981
Roy J. Paul	5/31/25	1972-2008
Olin Musgrave	6/3/25	1975-2005
Ulysses Armstrong	6/5/25	1972-2003



BENEFICIARIES	DEPARTED
Vannie Baker	3/25/25
Cheryl Foroi	3/25/25
Judith Cox	4/6/25
Beatrice Skolaut	4/10/25
Vinita Dennis	5/1/25
Judy D. Sassie	5/1/25
Barbara J. Faith	5/8/25
June Hall	5/22/25



**RED LINE**

**Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund**  
4225 Interwood North Parkway  
Houston, Texas 77032-3866

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
N. Houston, TX  
Permit No. 4224

## HOUSTON FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF AND RETIREMENT FUND

**HFRRF's mission** is to provide a secure retirement benefit plan for our members through professional administration, prudent management of system assets, sound investment practices, and prompt and courteous delivery of accurate benefits and useful information.

### HFRRF Board of Trustees

Brett Besselman	Chairman
David Lantrip	Vice Chairman
Lisa Slagle	Secretary
David Riegor	Active Member
Ed Llewellyn	Active Member
Pete Ng	Active Member
Gerard Daniels	Active Member
Al Mays	Citizen Member
Arif Rasheed	City Treasurer Designee
Vacant	Mayor's Representative