



## PRESS RELEASE

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### RIDGELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT CREATES NEW PATHWAYS FOR VETERANS THROUGH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

**RIDGELAND, MS** - The Ridgeland Fire Department (RFD), led by a veteran who knows firsthand the meaning of service, is opening new doors for those who have served in the armed forces. Guided by a deep understanding of what it means to give back, RFD is helping veterans transition from military life to public service—continuing their mission to protect and serve in a new capacity.

With the support of the Board of Aldermen and in partnership with the School of EMS and COMPASS, the City of Ridgeland has introduced an Apprenticeship Program for Emergency Medical Technician–Basic (EMT-B) training. This effort allows veterans to use their GI Bill benefits to complete the School of EMS's Paramedic program, setting them on a path toward a fulfilling and lasting career in emergency medical services.

The program provides a structured, hands-on learning experience that blends classroom instruction, fieldwork, and real-world practice. It gives veterans a strong foundation in emergency response while easing the transition into civilian life through mentorship and teamwork—hallmarks of both military and fire service culture.

RFD is also developing plans to expand the program to include onboarding for veterans who wish to become Firefighters or EMT-Basics. This next step will open additional opportunities for service-minded individuals to join the department, further strengthening Ridgeland's ability to respond to emergencies with professionalism and compassion.

Through this initiative, the City of Ridgeland reaffirms its dedication to supporting veterans while investing in the community's safety and resilience. The program is a powerful example of how service can evolve, allowing those who once defended our nation to continue protecting it at home.

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