

For immediate release

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Plymouth Twp Offers Property Tax Rebate for Volunteer Firefighters

In an effort to give back to Plymouth Township's volunteer firefighters – and incentivize others to consider volunteering – the Plymouth Township Council recently adopted an ordinance providing property tax rebates to individuals serving the two local fire departments.

The ordinance, which was adopted in April, uses a points-based system to repay Harmonville Fire Co. No. 1 and Plymouth Fire Co. No. 1 volunteer firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, and administrative members between 10 percent and 100 percent of the previous year's municipal real estate taxes. Plymouth Township property taxes paid in 2023 and subsequent years are eligible for rebate the following year, Township Manager Karen Weiss said.

"The fire companies record the calls, trainings, and other criteria for the calendar year, then submit a list of those eligible for rebate," Weiss said. Each department's agency supervisor is responsible for providing Plymouth Township with a list of volunteers who have met the criteria by Feb. 15 of each year, according to the ordinance. From there, payments will be issued within 45 days.

Plymouth Fire Co. No. 1 Fire Chief John Heleniak III and Harmonville Fire Co. No. 1 Fire Chief John Hoffman expressed gratitude to the Plymouth Township Council, as well as township staff, for implementing the volunteer tax rebate program.

"This rebate program will undoubtedly be a huge morale boost for our members, as well as add a tremendous tool for our respective companies to utilize for our recruitment and retention initiatives," Heleniak said.

The eligibility period runs from January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year. Administrative members must earn 25 points to qualify for a 10 percent tax rebate. Emergency responders who earn a minimum of 50 points qualify for a 25 percent tax rebate; those who score 100 points would receive a 50 percent rebate; members who attain 150 points qualify for a 75 percent rebate; and those with 200 points annually would receive a full 100 percent municipal property tax refund, according to the ordinance.

Volunteers accrue points for various services, including two points for each emergency response call; two points per department training; one or two points per various trainings, certifications, and continuing education. Firefighters can also earn points for attending the fire department's business meeting, as well as company, countywide and regional committee meetings. A community component of the tax rebate program awards firefighters two points for participating in fire prevention or other public education activities.

Plymouth's forward-thinking tax rebate program also recognizes leadership roles and longevity among volunteers, awarding between two and 10 points for various positions and length of time serving.

Members can also receive points for fundraising activities, completion of a fire department physical, Firefighter I and Firefighter II certifications, station staffing and non-compensated fire police details.