



International Association of Firefighters

Local Affiliate 3617

Midway Professional Fire Fighters Association



Brothers and Sisters,

The officers and executive members of Local 3617 would like to welcome you to the Midway Professional Firefighters Association of the International Association of Firefighters. This organization is an advocacy group made up of career members of Midway Fire Rescue. Our mission is to support the membership in their duty of protecting life and property in the Waccamaw Neck.

As with any organization, new members typically have questions about how the union operates. Below are some common questions asked by new members and their answers:

What are the benefits of being in Midway Professional Firefighters Association, Local 3617?

The \$390.00 contribution (\$15 per paycheck) members make over the course of a year pays for many things including:

Midway Professional Firefighters Association and some of the International Association of Firefighters Benefits

- A death benefit (NEW \$7,500.00 Benefit, Up from \$3,000.00)
- Financial Assistance from Local 3617.
 - (For Example: MFF Mercer (Flooding), Chief Smittle (Cancer), Chief Carney (Cancer), MFF Cracknell (Cancer))
- Legal representation, including the Legal Guardian Program
- Scholarships
- Lower rates for mortgages and insurance
- Banking services, including a mortgage loan program
- Discounts on vacations, including Disney Resorts
- Corporate and member IAFF credit cards
- Catastrophic Major Medical Insurance Plan
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance
- AFL-CIO Union Plus Programs for Union Privilege
- Dental and Vision Program
- Car rental discounts
- Union made checks
- Emergency Disputes Fund, or EDF
- Crisis & Disaster Intervention
- Legislation (Cancer, 1st Responder Vaccination Bill)

Local 3617 members are also members of the Professional Firefighters of South Carolina Association. As members of the South Carolina Professional Firefighters Association, there are several added benefits including:

- Notary Services
- Life Insurance
- Review and consultation of retirement paperwork, human affairs, workman's compensation, and EEOC cases.
- Lawyer referral
- Legislative action at the state level for fire service related causes

Furthermore, one of the most important benefits of joining the local is being part of an organization that has over 300,000 members across North America. If something were to happen to you or a family member virtually anywhere in the United States or Canada, the IAFF locals in the area will be there to offer any assistance you need. This has happened locally. IAFF members who had emergencies were taken care of-no questions asked! The IAFF locals were there to assist when needed. All it took was a phone call. The IAFF was there for its members in Florida and Texas in the summer of 2017 during the devastating hurricanes. Credit cards of \$500 were given to all IAFF members who had damage to their properties. The IAFF coordinated relief efforts for its members and all firefighters in these areas.

Our former President, Mark Mercer, was the recipient of financial assistance when he lost everything during the flooding in October 2015. Although, Mark had just left the department and the local, we gave him \$1,500 to go towards his family's recovery. This type of assistance is available if something were to happen to you. Local members can be seen in the community coordinating fundraisers, assisting with work at your homes, and supporting you and your family regardless of your needs.

In the summer of 2017, we unfortunately lost one of our own, Battalion Chief Joshua Carney, due to a cancer diagnosis related to this career. Local 3617 stepped up immediately as soon as he was diagnosed and supported him and his family throughout his illness and unfortunate passing. Local 3617 members were with him and his family thru the entire ordeal, helping with everything from:

- Trips to the doctor's office
- Lawn maintenance
- Installing a hot tub
- Constructing a platform for his chair
- Cooking meals for the family
- Assisting with his GoFundMe account
- Coordinating other donations and fundraisers
- Any family assistance that was needed at any time

The IAFF lent a helping hand to our local as well by assisting us and the family. The IAFF sent the family a LODD memorial medal in his honor. Battalion Chief Carney will be memorialized at the IAFF Memorial Wall in Colorado in September 2018.

The IAFF also does a lot of work behind the scenes to make our jobs easier and safer. The PTSD Center that opened up in Upper Marlboro, Maryland is the only center of its kind in the world and is available to members if the need were to arise. This center specialized in PTSD for firefighters.

Members of this local have been working very hard with state legislatures and other locals to advocate for cancer, PTSD, and pension reform. We do not see many fire officers, fire chiefs, or government officials doing this work. Who is working with these legislatures to try and get bills passed to make our jobs safer? It is the members of the IAFF locals who are doing the leg work.

Over 60% of the money being paid for dues goes to the International. This covers the costs of legal advice and representation, among other things. The state local dues are \$5.00 per member, per month. The remainder is used by this local to operate.

In 2019, the South Carolina Cancer Coalition was started that included the Professional Firefighters of South Carolina that all Local 3617 are part of and in two years, all South Carolina Firefighters had the S1071 the Firefighter Cancer Healthcare Benefit (Act 168) signed by the governor. A big win for South Carolina but also the International Association of Firefighters in South Carolina.

What can the local do to make our jobs better?

The purpose of the local is to support the firefighters of Midway Fire Rescue with our mission to serve the citizens of the Waccamaw Neck. As an advocacy group, we need to support ourselves, so we can support the community.

There are two laws on the books in South Carolina, the right-to-work law and the 'fire at will' law, that make this state very unfriendly to unions. In spite of these laws, there are many locals who have great working relationships with their fire chiefs, board of commissioners, and government officials. Also, union membership is not against the law in South Carolina either. Many states that have right to work laws, including Virginia and Florida, have many very active IAFF locals who do a great job working with their associated politicians and governments.

When are the meetings?

We try to have meetings once every 1-3 months. Our quota is 1/3 of the membership that is not working. With every member having side jobs, sometimes it is hard to have enough people for meetings. We try to keep everyone in the loop thru emails if there is no meeting.

What kind of activities does MPFFA participate in?

The MPFFA co-sponsors the chili cook off every March with the Island Bar and Grill. This event sends money to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and supports a local child who is sick. We also participate in the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk/Run sponsored by Tidelands-Waccamaw Health.

We are always looking for other ways to get out and support the community. Therefore, we hope to have additional events that we can participate in in the future.

What if I have a problem at work and I need to speak to a union representative?

Each shift has an executive board member who is the contact person for that shift. If there are any issues, you reach out to your shift's E-board member, and they will move it up the chain of command.

We hope this letter has been informational for you. If you have any other questions, feel free to reach out to us at any time.

Stay Safe & Thank You!

The Officers of Local 3617



International Association of Firefighters
Local Affiliate 3617
Midway Professional Fire Fighters Association



Application for Membership

I, _____ (printed name), the undersigned.

- A. Apply for membership in the above Midway Professional Firefighters Association, Local 3617.
- B. Agree to abide by the associations bylaws and constitution
- C. Hereby tender the sum of \$40.00 as payment of initiation fee. If already a member of the IAFF with another affiliate local a letter in good standing will be required and fee will be waived.
- D. Authorize, Midway Professional Firefighters Association, Local 3617 to be my exclusive bargaining agent for collective bargaining for wages, hours and other conditions of employment.
- E. Authorize monthly bank drafts for union dues OR agree to tender dues yearly in a manner as to remain a member in good standing.

Check One

New IAFF Member

☐

Local Affiliate IAFF Member (Letter Required)

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Signature by Member: _____ Date: _____

Birthday (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ Shift: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ Shirt Size: _____

Personnel Email Address: _____

A non-work-related email address is required for registration.

Dues are \$15.00 per pay period, paid via direct deposit (Preferred) or annually (\$390.00) can be paid by check or money order (NO CASH). Please make all checks payable to **Midway Professional Firefighters Association**.



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Monthly due payments to Midway Professional Firefighters Association is fast and easy!

Each paycheck you can have your dues deducted. This will be deposited into the Midway Professional Firefighters Association BB&T account.

The process is easy with only 5 steps:

1. Email Vechini Walker at vwalker@gtcounty.org with the information below.
2. CC in the email iafflocal3617@gmail.com for MPFFA records
3. Subject Line: Direct Deposit Deduction
4. Include (Word for Word):
Ms. Walker,
Please, deposit \$15.00 per pay period to the account with the remainder into my current direct deposit account.
5. Include: Routing#: 053201607 and Account#: 0005221760761
6. Thank Ms. Walker!
7. Attach in the email a picture of the Midway Professional Firefighters "voided" check.

