



TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT STAFF REPORT

Board Meeting Date: May 5, 2026

DATE: April 15, 2026
TO: Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Board of Fire Commissioners
FROM: Sarah Klein, Peer Support Coordinator
Phone: (775) 326-6020 Email: scklein@tmfpd.us
THROUGH: Richard J. Edwards, Fire Chief
Phone: (775) 326-6000 Email: redwards@tmfpd.us
SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve participation in the Hearts 4 Heroes USA Paw Platoon Placement Program to add an in-training facility canine to the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's Peer Support Program to support firefighter mental health and wellness; and if approved, authorize the Fire Chief or designee to execute all related policies, agreements, and required paperwork (All Commission Districts). FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

Recommendation to approve participation in the Hearts 4 Heroes USA (H4H USA) Paw Platoon Placement Program, which will add an in-training facility canine to the District's Peer Support Program to support firefighter mental health and wellness; and if approved, authorize the Fire Chief or designee to execute all related policies, agreements, and required paperwork.

PREVIOUS ACTION

None

BACKGROUND

Hearts 4 Heroes USA is a first responder-led organization focused on improving mental health outcomes for fire, EMS, and law enforcement personnel. The Paw Platoon Placement Program is currently active in multiple departments nationwide and continues to expand.

The program was developed in response to increasing levels of stress, trauma exposure, and behavioral health challenges within the first responder community. Therapy dogs in-training are introduced into the fire service environment early and trained to acclimate to station operations, emergency response environments, and peer support activities.

Participation in the program would allow the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) to integrate a therapy dog into its existing Peer Support Program. The dog would be assigned to designated handlers and made available to all personnel to support stress reduction, emotional wellness, and engagement with peer support resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

Initial program costs are partially covered by H4H USA and include veterinary care, training for both the dog and assigned handler, and basic equipment. Ongoing costs to the District are expected to be minimal and may include food, grooming, and routine care. Additional costs may be offset through partnerships, donations, or community support. There is no significant impact to the District's General Fund anticipated.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board approve participation in the H4H USA Paw Platoon Placement Program to support firefighter mental health and wellness; and if approved, authorize the Fire Chief or designee to execute all related policies, agreements, and required paperwork.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion could be:

"I move to approve participation in the Hearts 4 Heroes USA Paw Platoon Placement Program to support firefighter mental health and wellness, and authorize the Fire Chief or designee to execute all related policies, agreements, and required paperwork."