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COMMENT:









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**Attention: Jamal**

**Governor's Office**

**From: Cheryl**

**Chendry0216@aol.com**

**843-889-3994 home**

**843-475-5003 cell**

Filled out application 1/15/15

Had physical on 1/16/2015

Was interviewed the same day by Chief Riddle, Chief training officer Rakoske. Les Tumbleston and myself was present at that time of the interview as well. Was told then that the fire academy would be held at the St Pauls Fire Department station #1. The academy would last until April 16, 2015 with written test given on April 17, 2015 and skills test given on April 18, 2015. Written test would be given in Hollywood at station 1 and skills test would be administered in North Charleston. Was told at time of interview that once both test were passed a certificate of firefighter 1 would be given. Also was told at time of interview that soon as the test were taken the shift of 24/48 would start immediately while waiting on test scores to be returned from Columbia. Upon passing these test all requirements would be met to receive the certificate is what was said during interview. There are currently firefighters who work shifts that do not have this certificate but are paid and work 24/48. Also further education would be administered while waiting on test scores. If test were failed there would be another test administered within 30 days but no longer than a year to try to pass the failed portion of the test. At no time was it said that the requirement of going to academy as well as recruit school EVER spoke of.

Hire date was 1/21/15

Class time started 1/20/15

Class consisted of 9 people (4 cauc. and 5 african americans)

During the course of the training 1 cauc and 1 african American dropped out.

The one cauc student had a medical emergency where ems was called to him. He was participating in a non-state certified curriculum drill. (9 tire drill) Lieutenant PJ was following direct orders of Chief Rakoske. Lieutenant PJ objected to the idea of administering the drill because it was too advanced for the students and it was hot and humid outside that day. The student passed out and was taken to the hospital.

The 1 african American was jailed for possession of marj. Booked and detained. When he returned to work he told them what had happened so they took him for a drug test. He told them he was "dirty". He was fired. There have been other instances that employees of St Pauls Fire District were sent to have drug screens in their own vehicles with no superiors accompanying them to the drug screen. African Americans were NOT escorted but the cauc were always escorted. Those who are relatives of a certain family are NEVER escorted.

Two weeks before the test were to be given, the department demanded that all recruits in the class HAD to sign up to attend recruit school in North Charleston. Knowing there was a second chance of taking the test if failed three recruits did not sign up for recruit school. (3 cauc) Students felt that if they passed why did they need to go to another school for the same training and if they failed they still had another chance to take the test

again. By going to recruit school the second chance of taking the test would be forfeited and most of the students of this academy were not told this fact. The other 3 students knew about the second chance clause after visiting the Fire Academy website. The 3 students decided not to go to recruit school and wait on their scores with all anticipation of being put on shift as promised. Also they realized that recruit school was expensive for the department to send the students to so why go if they already passed. The 3 students have not been put on shift yet.

There was computer work as well as lecturing and practice of different skills. After one week of being able to work out in the gym at station 1 the students were no longer allowed to work out in the gym that is at the station for PT. Students were told that should be done on their own time at home.

On April 6, 2015 Chief Mitchell said the students HAD to go to recruit school. Chief Mitchell brought into the class a piece of notebook paper for students to sign to go to recruit school. It was not even a formal letter not even on letterhead. Students protested this idea and many did not sign the notebook paper. Chief Mitchell said he had to have the signed papers back by 3:30 that same day. After I made phone calls to Columbia, councilman Rawls, and district managers, Chief Mitchell came back into the classroom and announced that the recruit school was now only a backup plan used for those who failed the written test. John was then called to Chief Mitchell's office with Chief training officer Rakoske present and was told that if he

(John) wanted a job at the fire department he better "control his wife and reel her in". Chief Rakoske told John that the comment Chief Mitchell said was "uncalled for and inappropriate". John took offense to the comment but never showed disrespect to the Chief. John then asked Chief Mitchell if there was anything else he needed to say. Chief Mitchell said no so John left his office and went to sit in his truck to cool down.

I am not only a victim of a 25yr abusive marriage but I am a sworn officer of the court system (LAY-GAL). It is believed that the ONLY reason the recruit school idea even came up was because they neglected to add HAZ-MAT OPS to the curriculum which is a prerequisite through the South Carolina Fire Academy required in order to receive a firefighter 1 certificate. The students did receive CPR, EMR, and NIMS. There are Captains and Battalion Chiefs that do NOT have firefighter 1 cert. A District Chief from Charleston County EMS which was the EMR instructor on May 8, 2015 came by station 1 to teach a refresher course saw the 3 recruits loading a truck with a lawn mower, weedeater, and a blower. He asked "what are yall doing?" and the 3 recruits said they were going to cut grass at another station. He said "yall are not on shift yet?" recruits then said they have not put on shift yet and that they were working m-f 8-5 cutting grass, hauling trash, mopping, sweeping etc. He was flabbergasted. He said "you have got to be kidding me. Yall are EMR certified and passed your practice

test and are waiting on your certificates." At that time John and Daryl told him they both passed the test. He was shocked.

The big question seems to be "why are the new recruits not on shift?"

Trey Green who is firefighter told several people including John that calls that come from a certain area in Charleston County he referred to as "Galloway Gap" you are to respond slowly. Green went on to say that the people who live there are racist rednecks. The area that he was referring to is where we live and John told him that. Green was shocked and said "you one of those racists too?" John said no he is not racists. We have friends of all kinds and colors. This firefighter is putting our homes and lives at stake with no care. We are tax payers in this county and 25.51% of all our taxes go to St Pauls Fire Department. If this is the protection that we have in this area then where is all the tax money going? What is it being used for? This makes us feel very unsafe that we have no one to call in the event of an emergency. So then Firefighter John Johnson went on to say that the Galloway's were all inbred people. John told him that he was married to a Galloway. Johnson then said well then you are married to an inbred. Then he laughed. John said "I do not appreciate you talking about my family and my wife's heritage like that." John now avoids Johnson at all cost. When these statements were reported to the chain of command nothing happened to the firefighters who said this.

Daryl and Brandon both heard these statements as well as others.

Request for further education as well as being put on shift are still being made to commanding officers but are still being ignored. Seems like the officers are hoping that these 3 men just up and quit their jobs. John has always wanted to be a firefighter and has taken a HUGE pay cut to do so. He went from \$60,000.00 a year to \$27,000.00 a year just to serve the community and feel like he is giving back but serving the community that, by the way, he is not even from. John was a certified crane operator and that certification expired because of the desire to become a firefighter and the untruths he was told from the staff at the fire department. This is the community I grew up in, graduating from Country Day School and working in while in school in Hollywood. I have lived here all my life except for when I went to college in Florida. All my family is here and the community is becoming aware of the problems at the fire department. John was told on May 18, 2015 that he will go "no where" in the department because he doesn't know the right people.

There is no true chain of command at this department with Chief Mathews being out of the office for 9 weeks now (as of May 18, 2015) and Chief Mitchell is hardly here either. The BC's will give the 3 projects to do and Chief Mitchell will text or call Lieutenant Herbert Young and have them do other things which is cutting more grass or hauling more trash. We now know that

Mr. Young is not even a firefighter 1 which must be met before the Lieutenants test can be taken. Mr. Young is believed to not even have a drivers license but drives the station vehicles.

As of May 13, 2015 John went onto his fire academy account and set up the test for HAZ-MAT OPS. He received an email from the department as well as the academy confirming his upcoming training that would be held in July 2015. Then a few hours later he received a very nasty email from his training officer Rakoske denying the class. (see attached copies of emails) 5/19/2015 Lieutenant Herbert Young gives direct orders for Daryl to go to station 6 alone and cut grass and weed eat. Then Daryl was to go alone to station 2 to cut grass and weed eat. This station has over 4 acres of grass. This was done as a punishment to Daryl for being out of work on 5/18/2015. These lawns are being cut every two to three days. Daryl was told by lieutenant Young that the last time the grass was cut at station 2 it was horrible and spots were missed. This is untrue because the captain from that station made a point to come to station 1 on his day off to say how good the lawn looked and it has not looked that good in over 10 years. John was told on 5/18/2015 by a firefighter that his family was bringing him breakfast and the John must make sure to bring him his breakfast. John was busy when the family member came with the food so he told the family member where to take the food. The firefighter was angry that John was not the one who brought him his food and that John told his family member where to deliver it.

This is the second largest fire district in South Carolina covering over 460 square miles of service area. Over 50% of the approx. 75 firefighters are now working triple shifts. They should be working 24 hours on and 48 hours off but instead they are working at least 60 hours straight because this district is so undermanned but here are three willing firefighters who want to go on shift but officers will not put them on shift. This is a clear case of discrimination, defamation, harassment, and hazing. Labor laws and safety laws are being violated as well. There is so much more information to this and help is needed. The residents of this district do not even have an idea of how unsafe we are.

**Print****Page 1 of 1**

**Subject:** [No Subject]  
**From:** John Hendry (jhendry123@yahoo.com)  
**To:** mvr901@att.net;  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 13, 2015 6:05 PM

Sir I do not know what is going on and it's really none of my business. I created a Fire Portal with the Academy and found that I passed Fire I written and practical but will not receive a certificate until complete Haz Mat Ops.....Needless to say I was very upset to hear this!! I enrolled in a Haz Mat Ops class to be held in Dorchester County in July Class# 2728-1650. After completion of this class I will then get my certificate. I would appreciate if you could approve it for me.

Almost Fire Fighter I

John Hendry

Print

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**Subject:** RE:  
**From:** M Rakoske (mr901@att.net)  
**To:** jhendry123@yahoo.com;  
**Cc:** alton\_willis06@yahoo.com; asmalls18@gmail.com; brandonbrown4100@gmail.com; charlesgruber16@yahoo.com; dehfarma2@yahoo.com; dehfarms2@yahoo.com; jeremiahmatthews857@gmail.com; singleton843@gmail.com;  
**Date:** Thursday, May 14, 2015 1:24 PM

Ok John (and others) we have a process to register for classes based on your current shift (5 days a week). \*\*North Charleston Class Recruits – This will apply after you graduate from recruit school.

First we will need to discuss the class with me; I will determine if the class is required and this one has mat ops meets the requirement; then I have to get approval for the costs involved for the class and then approval to send you to a class/course from the Asst Chief or Chief. When approval is received, I/we can register you for the course.

The process is different when you are on an assigned shift (24/48) – the first contact is with your B/C and if staffing levels will not be depleted (people off on Leave out sick, or vacant positions) the B/C will generally sign off on the registration form and then you can forward that to me. Again I have to get approval for training, travel and overtime cost approved before you can be registered for any class.

So just be aware of procedures in place to request training classes/courses.

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Checked by AVG - [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)

Version: 2015.0.5941 / Virus Database: 4342/9774 - Release Date: 05/14/15



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.  
[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**Subject:** Re: RE:  
**From:** John Hendry (jhendry123@yahoo.com)  
**To:** rmr901@att.net;  
**Date:** Thursday, May 14, 2015 2:00 PM

Well plHaz-Maratsir tell me when we can discuss this class So I can get me the proper registration form so that I can apply and get the rest of this stuff that is required for me to move on with my career because Unlike some people I do not look at this as a job I look at this as a career and right now it is being held up by someone's mistake and I don't deserve to pay for that mistake. So please Sir at your earliest convenience I would like to discuss Taking Haz-Mat operations. Thank you

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

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**From:** "M Rakoske" <rmr901@att.net>  
**Date:** Thu, May 14, 2015 at 13:24  
**Subject:** RE:

Ok John (and others) we have a process to register for classes based on your current shift (5 days a week). \*\*North Charleston Class Recruits – This will apply after you graduate from recruit school.

First we will need to discuss the class with me; I will determine if the class is required and this one haz mat ops meets the requirement; then I have to get approval for the costs involved for the class and then approval to send you to a class/course from the Asst Chief or Chief. When approval is received, I/we can register you for the course.

**The process is different when you are on an assigned shift** (24/48) – the first contact is with your B/C and if staffing levels will not be depleted (people off on Leave out sick, or vacant positions) the B/C will generally sign off on the registration form and then you can forward that to me. Again I have to get approval for training, travel and overtime cost approved before you can be registered for any class.

So just be aware of procedures in place to request training classes/courses.

Print

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**Subject:** RE: RE:  
**From:** M Rakoske (mmr901@att.net)  
**To:** jhendry123@yahoo.com;  
**Date:** Thursday, May 14, 2015 3:13 PM

Recruit FF John,

I was not being rude or disrespectful when I sent "all" the procedures concerning HOW you "all" register for a class. I understand your frustration but if you checked your email you will or should have received an email "donotreply" stating that you have BEEN APPROVED to attend the Haz Mat Ops class. NOW a VERY IMPORTANT NOTE – You signed up and registered IT IS your RESPONSIBILITY to ensure you remember to attend the class at the proper times. Failure to do so will result in paying for the cost of the class and being counseled.

I just today received the results for the course (5/14/15) the envelope was put in the mail on the 6<sup>th</sup> and if it arrived last week to the station the results stayed in the office until I returned today ( I was out sick) that is just the way the system operates. All training related information comes to me or the training office first before any information is handed out. (letters or certificates). If this is not done your training file will have obvious missing and incomplete copies of training certificates and certifications.

Again I was just informing "all" on the procedures to register for a class. Now that I have the "OFFICIAL" FF I results we can continue at a much *s l o w e r* pace and get you all what you need as courses become available. Prerequisite courses are required before "we" can register for another course. Courses that are close together will not work because a grade must be entered and I must have a certificate before we can proceed.

So it is going to take time to get the courses needed and these factors causing that are out of our control.

**From:** John Hendry [mailto:jhendry123@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2015 2:01 PM  
**To:** M Rakoske  
**Subject:** Re: RE: