



FALL RIVER
MASSACHUSETTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire Release

(FALL RIVER, MA- July 15, 2025) - The City of Fall River continues to mourn the tragic loss of nine residents in the fire that occurred on July 13th, 2025 at Gabriel House Assisted Living Facility. Our thoughts are with the families and loved ones affected by this devastating event. We extend our deepest gratitude to the firefighters, police officers, and emergency medical personnel who responded with courage and professionalism in the face of immense danger.

The City is aware of recent public comments from the leadership of the International Association of Fire Fighters regarding staffing levels and operational concerns. We respect the role of national and local union leadership in advocating for its members and for public safety, and we take their concerns seriously. We also recognize that any large-scale emergency brings with it a range of complex emotions and legitimate questions. The City is committed to listening and engaging in constructive dialogue with all public safety stakeholders.

In accordance with standard protocol, a full investigation is underway to determine the cause of the fire, assess system performance, and identify any contributing factors. This includes thorough review of staffing, response times, fire suppression tactics, and building safety systems. We will allow this process to be guided by facts, not assumptions, and we ask the public to do the same.

The City of Fall River, like many cities and towns across the Commonwealth, strives to provide the best possible services to the community within the constraints of our financial reality.

Resources are limited, and we are constantly looking for ways to be more efficient with the services we provide. Every Fire Chief, Police Chief, and EMS Chief has advocated for more



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personnel, apparatus, and equipment, and every Administration, including this one, has worked responsibly to ensure the needs of their departments and the community are met. This past February, the City authorized JB Consulting Group, LLC to create area coverage maps to account for demographic changes in the City, and to determine how altering the deployment of fire apparatus, and/or staff could impact response times and the ability of the Fall River Fire Department to meet NFPA 1710 response standards. Within the next few months we will have the results of their study and we will be able to make informed policy decisions.

In this difficult moment, we call on all parties – city officials, first responders, and community leaders – to remain united in our shared goal: ensuring the safety and well-being of our residents. We look forward to working closely with the Fire Department and union leadership as we move forward, and we remain committed to maintaining transparency and accountability throughout the investigative process.