

Video Produced In-House: Education/Training/Recruitment (2025-2026)

Category Description

(This category is exclusive to municipalities only.)

Submit a single video for an educational campaign, training exercise or local government recruitment opportunity produced entirely using department staff/resources.

Videos must not exceed five minutes.

Submissions will be judged on criteria such as creativity and innovation, clear messaging, production quality, inclusivity and overall presentation.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION SUGGESTIONS: Summary of the video's goals and objectives, as well as the production process, target audience and overall impact.

Name of Individual Submitting Entry

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Entry Title

Class 25-01 – Firefighter New Hire Documentary

Social Media

<https://coralsprings.gov/socialmedia>

Video Link (YouTube or Vimeo)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sljWJH9ZNjk>

Supporting Documentation

FirefighterRecruitment-SupportingDoc.pdf

What are the goals and objectives of the video (include target audience)?

The primary goal of Class 25-01 – Episode 1: “The Beginning” was to authentically showcase the Coral Springs-Parkland Fire Department’s in-house firefighter academy as a premier training environment while supporting long-term recruitment, transparency, and community trust. Rather than producing a traditional promotional video, the objective was to create a cinematic, documentary-style episode that immerses viewers in the earliest stages of a firefighter’s journey and communicates the intensity, professionalism, and purpose behind the training process. We wound up making this a 2-part series.

A key objective was recruitment. The video was designed to resonate with prospective firefighter-paramedics by providing a realistic, unfiltered look at what it takes to earn a place in the department. By highlighting the physical demands, emotional challenges, discipline, and teamwork required from day one, the video helps set accurate expectations, attracts high-quality candidates, and reinforces that the department values preparation, accountability, and excellence.

Another objective was internal and external education. Internally, the video serves as a point of pride for

department members, reinforcing the value of investing in an in-house academy and showcasing the commitment of training staff and recruits alike. Externally, it educates residents and stakeholders on how their fire department prepares its personnel before they ever respond to an emergency, strengthening confidence in the organization's training standards and operational readiness.

Describe the supporting documentation submitted with this entry.

The supporting document includes links to the YouTube video, Facebook and Instagram posts, as well as statistics for the posts and some comment excerpts.

What is new, innovative or creative about this video?

What makes Class 25-01 – Episode 1: “The Beginning” innovative is the intentional departure from the department's traditional approach to documenting new-hire recruit academies. In past years, in-house academies were captured through b-roll and condensed into a fast-paced, two-minute, music-driven highlight video. While effective for energy and awareness, that format left little room to explore the depth, purpose, and human side of the training process.

For this project, the department fundamentally reimagined how training and recruitment content could be told. Instead of producing a single promotional recap, the team adopted a long-form, documentary-style storytelling approach. The goal was to go beyond what recruits do and focus on why they do it, why the standards are high, why the training is demanding, and why the department invests so heavily in preparing its firefighters before they ever respond to a call.

To achieve this, a videographer was embedded with the academy for a majority of the class, beginning on day one. This approach allowed the production team to capture unscripted moments, emotional milestones, and authentic interactions between recruits and instructors that are often missed in traditional highlight videos. Select recruits were followed throughout the process, creating personal narratives that viewers can connect with and allowing the audience to experience the academy through the eyes of those living it.

The result is a more immersive and meaningful training and recruitment video that blends cinematic visuals with real storytelling. By prioritizing authenticity, continuity, and character-driven narratives, the department created a multi-episode series rather than a one-time promotional piece. This innovative format not only deepens community understanding and trust but also provides a powerful, reusable recruitment tool that reflects the department's commitment to excellence, transparency, and developing firefighters the right way from the very beginning.

Describe how the video was successful (include your evaluation process and metrics).

The success of Class 25-01 – Episode 1: “The Beginning” was evident both internally within the fire department and during its premiere in front of recruits, families, and staff. Initially, the concept represented a significant cultural shift. The department had become accustomed to high-energy, music-driven academy recap videos, and there was understandable skepticism about moving to a slower, interview-based documentary format. Concerns were raised about dedicating time for interviews during an already demanding academy schedule and uncertainty about what the final product would look like.

That skepticism quickly turned into confidence once a preview cut of the episode was shared. Command staff and training personnel were impressed by the depth, authenticity, and emotional impact of the storytelling. The documentary format captured elements of the academy that had never been communicated before, leading to strong internal buy-in. One member of the department even formally apologized for initially doubting the concept, acknowledging how powerful and effective the finished product was.

The video's most meaningful measure of success came on graduation day, where it was premiered to an audience of approximately 100 people, including the new recruits seeing it for the first time, their family

members and friends, and fire department personnel. The response was overwhelmingly positive. The video resonated deeply with recruits and their families, many of whom gained a greater appreciation for the commitment, sacrifice, and growth that occurred throughout the academy. Following the premiere, the Public Safety Marketing team received multiple accolades from staff and leadership for the quality and impact of the production.

Beyond the immediate response, the video has become a strategic recruitment asset. As the department prepares to open hiring again, this episode along with Part 2 of the series will be actively used to support recruitment efforts. The documentary approach allows potential applicants to see themselves in the recruits on screen, effectively conveying the message: this could be you. By showing the academy from day one through graduation, the video sets clear expectations, attracts motivated candidates, and reinforces the department's commitment to developing firefighters through a professional, supportive, and highly structured in-house training program.

Recognizing the diversity of our communication departments across the state, in the space below, discuss the factors that set your community and submission apart i.e, department size, overall budget spend, innovative and creative techniques utilized, impact on community and size of city/county as examples.

The Class 25-01 video series was produced 100% in-house by the city's Public Safety Marketing team. From concept and filming to interviews and editing, no outside vendors were used. This allowed the department to deliver high-quality, cinematic recruitment and training content while remaining fiscally responsible.

The community served by the department is diverse, and that diversity is intentionally reflected in the video. The series highlights male and female recruits from different racial and cultural backgrounds, reinforcing a core message: it does not matter what you look like to do this job. What matters is heart, grit, discipline, and a commitment to service. This inclusive representation helps ensure the content resonates with a broad range of potential applicants across the state.

Creatively, the submission stands apart by abandoning the traditional high-energy highlight reel in favor of a documentary-style series. Embedding a videographer within the academy enabled authentic, unscripted storytelling that captures real emotion, growth, and the demands of the profession. This approach provides transparency and depth rarely seen in public safety recruitment content.

The impact extends beyond recruitment. Residents gain confidence in how firefighters are trained, families better understand the sacrifices required, and prospective recruits see a clear, realistic pathway into the fire service. For a city of Coral Springs' size, this project demonstrates how in-house innovation, inclusive storytelling, and strategic communication can produce meaningful community impact and elevate public safety messaging statewide.