



MEDIA CONTACTS

- Dionna Smith, Chief Communications Officer, dasmith@dekalbcountyga.gov, 470-889-7360 (c)
- Sloan Turner, Communications Manager, ssturner@dekalbcountyga.gov, 470-393-8348 (c)
- Quinn Hudson, Senior Communications Consultant, wghudson@dekalbcountyga.gov, 470-522-8923 (c)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2026

DeKalb County Appoints Melvin K. Carter as Fire Rescue Chief 26-year veteran and DeKalb native brings extensive experience to role



DECATUR, Ga. — DeKalb County Chief Executive Officer Lorraine Cochran-Johnson announced the appointment of **Melvin K. Carter as Chief of DeKalb County Fire Rescue**, elevating a 26-year department veteran and lifelong DeKalb County resident to lead one of the County's most critical public safety agencies.

Carter brings more than two decades of fire service experience and a comprehensive background in fire suppression, emergency medical services, training, fiscal administration, recruitment and retention, and strategic planning to the role. Throughout his career with DeKalb County Fire Rescue, he has held several executive leadership positions, including Deputy Chief of Operations, Deputy Chief of Training and Professional Services, and Deputy Chief of Fiscal and Support Services.

"Chief Carter represents the very best of DeKalb County, homegrown talent, proven leadership and an unwavering commitment to service," said **CEO Cochran-Johnson**. "For 26 years, he has dedicated his career to protecting the community that raised him while preparing the next generation of firefighters and leaders to carry that mission forward. Chief Carter understands DeKalb, he understands this department, and most importantly, he understands that leadership is ultimately about people and service. I am confident he will continue to strengthen DeKalb County Fire Rescue and position the department for long-term success."

A native of DeKalb County and graduate of Cedar Grove High School, Carter has spent his career serving the community he calls home. In his leadership roles, he has overseen initiatives focused on operational readiness, workforce development, succession planning and continuous improvement while gaining extensive experience in fleet and facilities management, EMS system oversight, personnel readiness and organizational strategy.

"It is an incredible honor to serve as Fire Chief in the community where I was born, raised and have dedicated my career," said Carter. "DeKalb County Fire Rescue is made stronger every day by the extraordinary men and women who answer the call to serve. As Chief, my focus will be on ensuring they have the leadership, training, resources and support necessary to protect our residents at the highest level. I look forward to building upon our strong foundation, developing the next generation of leaders and ensuring our department remains prepared to meet the evolving needs of DeKalb County."

Carter holds a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership, a Bachelor of Applied Science in Organizational Leadership with a concentration in Occupational Safety and Health, and an Associate of Applied Science in Fire Science Technology. He is credentialed as a Chief Fire Officer and is a graduate of the Fire Service Executive Development Institute, Leadership DeKalb and the Bright Future Leadership Development Program. He also serves on the Georgia Trauma Task Force Board of Directors and is a member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs.