



Department of Employee Relations

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Job Evaluation Report

Fire and Police Commission Meeting: November 20, 2025

Fire Department – EMS/Training Education Bureau – Health and Safety Division

Current	Recommended
Athletic Trainer PR 2IX (\$62,040 – \$86,854) FN Recruitment rate is at \$68,244. (One Position)	Performance and Training Physical Therapist Pay Range 2LX (\$75,162 – \$105,223) FN Recruitment rate is at \$90,230. (One Position)

Note: Residents receive a 3% Resident Incentive Allowance.

The Fire Department has requested the reclassification of one vacant non-sworn position of Athletic Trainer within the EMS/Training Education Bureau, Health and Safety Division. A job description was provided and discussions were held with Asst. Chief Joshua Parish, and Alicia Ekman, Fire Health and Safety Manager.

Background

Over the past several years the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) has employed an Athletic Trainer to provide injury evaluation and referral services. This supported MFDs initial injury support model. This model focused on identifying injuries and directing members to external care providers. This system has evolved to also support firefighters who are not acutely injured but are dealing with long-standing aches, pains, and physical wear—and are seeking proactive, long-term care. As a result, the program is transitioning from an athletic trainer model of emergency response to a performance and training physical therapy model of preventative care and condition management. To meet the needs of this model MFD has requested reclassification of its Athletic Trainer position.

Performance and Training Physical Therapist

Current	Recommended
Athletic Trainer PR 2IX (\$62,040 – \$86,854) FN Recruitment rate is at \$68,244. (One Position)	Performance and Training Physical Therapist Pay Range 2LX (\$75,162 – \$105,223) FN Recruitment rate is at \$90,230. (One Position)

Most of the job duties of the non-sworn Performance and Training Physical Therapist will be performed independently, with general administrative supervision from the Fire Health and Safety Manager. The Fire Medical Officer will oversee the medical scope of the practice of the Performance and Training Physical Therapist. Duties and responsibilities include:

- 40% Managing injury care for active and prospective members, including sworn personnel, civilian staff, and academy cadets and recruits. Educating and supporting members through the entire

injury care process, including provider collaboration, workers' compensation navigation, records management, and customer service. Conducting musculoskeletal evaluations, movement screenings, and return-to-work assessments.

- 20% Collaborating with the Fire Health and Safety Manager (HSMGR) and the contracted Health and Fitness Coordinator (HFC) to identify safety risks and implement mitigation strategies. Developing and delivering innovative, data-informed training sessions related to injury prevention and physical readiness. Serving as a resource and trainer on injury care topics during recruit onboarding, return to work refresher training, and field operations.
- 20% Generating and designing evidence-informed injury care and prevention programs based on department trends and outcome data. Collaborating with the HSMGR, contracted HFC, and Peer Fitness Trainers (PFTs) to conduct hands-on training and virtual workshops, write educational bulletins, and design multi-media resources. Supports the return-to-work refresher program through individualized and group training interventions. Partners with internal and external stakeholders, including public health, academia, and medical professionals, to enhance members' well-being and support research-informed programming. Actively collaborates with the performance and training team to enhance members' experience from all aspects.
- 10% Participates in department-wide wellness initiatives, screenings, and education efforts. Promotes wellness integration into daily operations through on-site visits, informal assessments, and open dialogue with members. Serves as an adjunct member of the Peer Fitness Trainer and Peer Support Teams, supporting physical and mental wellness initiatives.
- 10% Supports management of assigned firefighter Performance Training Centers (PTCs), including cleanliness, equipment orders, contractor coordination, and members' engagement with the space. Documents all encounters with members in the department's electronic health record system as part of a member case management approach. Prepares and shares reports with relevant stakeholders to support accountability and program improvement.

Minimum qualifications include a degree in physical therapy from the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), a valid Wisconsin Physical Therapy License, and a valid Wisconsin Driver's License at time of hire. Please note, to get a physical therapy license in Wisconsin, individuals must graduate from a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program accredited by CAPTE. An additional Certification in Strength and Conditioning or Tactical Strength and Conditioning is desirable. Experience in orthopedic or sports medicine physical therapy settings preferred. Equivalent combinations of education and experience may be considered.

This reclassified position is located within the Fire Department EMS/Training Education Bureau, Health and Safety Division. The incumbent of this position will support the day-to-day administration and delivery of injury care and prevention programming across the department.

Analysis

In conducting a cost of labor analysis for this title, rates of pay from the Economic Research Institute (ERI) were considered.

Physical Therapist[†] (with Certification Adjustment)

Level [†]	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	Mean	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Level 1	\$62,077	\$66,616	\$72,673	\$78,620	\$84,701
Level 2	\$70,985	\$76,345	\$83,483	\$90,536	\$97,668
Level 3	\$80,937	\$87,221	\$95,509	\$103,699	\$111,867

Source ERI, as of 10/01/2025

The following table provides wage information from ERI for Physical Therapist with Certification in Southeastern Wisconsin Communities:

Physical Therapist (with Certification Adjustment): Five years of Experience

Area Name	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	Survey Mean	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Kenosha	\$78,818	\$84,904	\$92,800	\$100,456	\$108,079
Madison	\$76,450	\$82,212	\$89,747	\$97,104	\$104,465
Milwaukee	\$76,327	\$82,348	\$90,230	\$97,935	\$105,651
Racine	\$76,221	\$82,380	\$90,435	\$98,294	\$106,141
Waukesha	\$76,106	\$82,138	\$90,049	\$97,791	\$105,546
Wauwatosa	\$75,977	\$81,986	\$89,861	\$97,565	\$105,283
West Allis	\$76,226	\$82,237	\$90,112	\$97,814	\$105,531

Source ERI, as of 10/01/2025

[†]ERI defines a Physical Therapist as a position that administers medically prescribed physical therapy treatment on patients suffering from injuries, or muscle, nerve, joint, and bone diseases, to restore function, relieve pain, and prevent disability. Reviews physician's referral (prescription) and patient's condition and medical records to determine physical therapy treatment required. Plans and develops written treatment programs based on evaluation of patient data. Evaluates and tests patient's strength, motor development, sensory perception, functional capacity, and respiratory and circulatory efficiency, and records findings to develop or revise treatment programs. Administers manual exercises to improve and maintain function. Instructs, motivates, and assists patient to perform various physical activities, such as nonmanual exercises, ambulatory functional activities, daily-living activities, and in use of assistant and supportive devices, such as crutches, canes, and prostheses. Requires State license. Administers treatments involving application of physical agents, using equipment such as hydrotherapy tanks and whirlpool baths, moist packs, ultraviolet and infrared lamps, and ultrasound machines. Evaluates effects of treatments at various stages and adjusts treatments to achieve maximum benefit.

Administers massage, applying knowledge of massage techniques and body physiology. Administers traction to relieve pain, using traction equipment. Records treatment, response, and progress in patient's chart or enters information into computer. Instructs patient and family in treatment procedures to be continued at home. Evaluates, fits, and adjusts prosthetic and orthotic devices, and recommends modification to Orthotist. Confers with physician and other practitioners to obtain additional patient information, suggest revisions in treatment program, and integrate physical therapy treatment with other aspects of patient's health care. Orients, instructs, and directs work activities of assistants, aides, and students. May plan and conduct lectures and training programs on physical therapy and related topics for medical staff, students, and community groups. May plan and develop physical therapy research programs and participate in conducting research. May write technical articles and reports for publications. May teach physical therapy techniques and procedures in educational institutions. May limit treatment to specific patient group or disability or specialize in conducting physical therapy research. In facilities where assistants are also employed, may primarily administer complex treatment, such as certain types of manual exercises and functional training, and monitor administration of other treatments. May plan, direct, and coordinate physical therapy program. Requires State license.

‡Experience Levels

Levels	Descriptions
Level 1	Beginning Level. Employees in this first (1st) level satisfy the basic job requirements. As the employee gains knowledge and experience, the work reviews, checks, and supervision may be reduced. Complexity or variety of work is typical, and there are no additional technical, mathematical, or scientific requirements beyond the basic requirements at this first (1st) level. Some organizations refer to level 1 as the entry level of the job. Typically requires experience and advanced specialized training.
Level 2	Intermediate Level. Employees in this second (2nd) level require greater knowledge, training, and/or experience than level 1. The amount of work review, checks, and supervision are less for an employee at level 2 than at level 1. Complexity or variety of work is moderately higher than level 1 and may involve greater technical, mathematical, or scientific skills than level 1. Some organizations refer to level 2 as the intermediate level. Typically requires experience and advanced specialized training.
Level 3	Senior Level. Employees in this third (3rd) level require greater knowledge, training, and/or experience than level 2. The amount of work review, checks, and supervision are less for an employee at level 3 than at level 2. Complexity or variety of work is higher than level 2 and may involve greater technical, mathematical, or scientific skills than level 2. The scope of assignments may vary when compared to level 2. Some organizations refer to level 3 as the senior level. Typically requires experience and advanced specialized training.

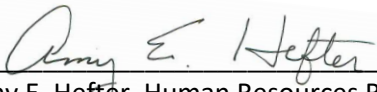
Recommendation


These duties, responsibilities, and requirements are currently comparable to the work performed by the already classified Risk Management and Safety Officer position. Based on this comparison, the

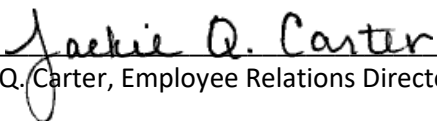
recommendation is to classify this non-sworn position as a Performance and Training Physical Therapist in Pay Range 2LX (\$75,162 – \$105,223). Recruitment rate is at \$90,230.

Action Required – Effective Pay Period 26, 2025 (December 7, 2025)

* Please see submitted addendum to CCFN for Salary and Position Ordinance changes.

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