

My name is Margaret Wade, and I am a master's student in the School of Continuing Studies at Georgetown University. I am conducting a research study examining how organizational culture and leadership shape decision-making and organizational functioning within rural volunteer fire departments in New York State, and you are invited to participate in this study. To be eligible to participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, currently serve as a volunteer firefighter or fire service member in a rural volunteer fire department in the Hudson Valley Region of New York State, and have at least one year of experience serving in a rural volunteer fire department.

If you agree to participate, you will be invited to take part in a one-on-one interview about your experiences in the volunteer fire service. The interview will focus on organizational culture, leadership, decision-making, and organizational functioning. The interview is anticipated to take approximately 30–60 minutes and, with your permission, will be audio/video recorded to ensure an accurate record of your responses. Interview recordings will be transcribed using secure software, and the information collected will be de-identified and coded by theme for analysis. Research data, including de-identified interview information and coding, will be securely stored with GU Box. Identifying information will be removed from the final research, and a participant identification code will be used in place of your name in study records and research materials.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. The researcher will make reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of your information throughout the study and in the final research. You may choose not to answer any question or stop the interview at any time without penalty. The study protocol will be available three days prior to your interview date upon request. Informed consent forms will also be sent three days prior to your interview date and must be completed and submitted before you are able to participate.

If you have any questions about the study or would like to participate, please contact me at:

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