

Hoff is a third-generation Chicago firefighter whose father was killed in a building collapse while fighting a South Side fire when the younger Hoff was just five years old. Thomas Hoff was 44.

Robert Hoff was twice awarded the Carter Harrison Award, the Chicago Fire Department's highest honor for bravery. In 1984, he suffered severe burns in an attic fire and spent 21 days in the burn unit.

"It was a flashback. The day I got burned, my son was five years old," Hoff once said.

His appointment was hailed by Chicago aldermen as one of former Mayor Richard M. Daley's "finest." It was a surprise to no one that he was one of only a handful of department heads to be retained by Emanuel.

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