

---

**VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER  
APPLICANT SCREENING PROCESS**

*All applicants will be required to participate in a screening process as follows:*

1. Review of application form. Applicants who meet the applicant criteria will be invited to proceed to the written test; at a date and time to be indicated.
2. Written aptitude test. This test consists of 25 multiple choice and 10 short answer questions. This test is intended to determine the Candidate's written comprehension, mathematical and mechanical ability, and ability to think clearly.
3. Group one-way interview. Candidates will participate as a group in a one-way interview process. An interviewer will ask questions to the candidates who will write their responses on a provided answer sheet. Candidate's answers will be evaluated.
4. Physical and mental abilities screening test.
  - (a) Only applicants who have achieved a passing mark on the written aptitude test and who have been accepted to proceed beyond the one-way interview will be invited to participate in the physical and mental abilities test.
  - (b) Applicants will be required to sign a waiver of liability acknowledging that they are physically fit to conduct the test and that they accept any risk of injury incurred during the test.
  - (c) The applicant will be scored pass/fail on each test component. To pass, the candidate must complete each test component completely, and as directed, and within the allotted time. No candidate ranking is given for faster times, it is simple pass or fail. The time allotted is ample for each test to be completed safely.
  - (d) Candidates must pass all 6 test components. A failure on any one component will terminate the test immediately. In addition, the test evaluators may terminate the test at any time if (in the opinion of the evaluators) the candidate's safety or health is perceived to be at risk from further testing. Such candidate shall be deemed to have failed.

- 
- (e) However, if a candidate should fail on any one test component, and at the discretion of the evaluators, the candidate may be permitted another opportunity to complete that particular test component. Candidates will only be permitted one repeat opportunity during the entire process.
- (f) The applicant must bring and wear for these tests a pair of heavy leather work gloves, safety shoes or boots (i.e. steel toed) with a good gripping sole, and coveralls or other suitable full-coverage heavy clothing. Track clothing is not acceptable. Clothing will not be provided by the fire department. Applicants are required to wear clothing that fits well for safety reasons. Candidates with poorly fitting or non-specification clothing will not be permitted to test; and will be considered to have failed the test.
- (g) Under supervision, the candidate shall perform the following tests in succession. Total time allotted for each test is indicated:
- *Ladder Lift:* Candidate shall lift and remove a 25 kilogram (7 meter) fire department extension ladder from brackets located 2 meters above the floor. Place the ladder flat on the floor. After briefly standing upright, the candidate will then lift the ladder from the floor and replace it on the brackets. Time: 2 minutes.  
*Rationale: Firefighters may be required to remove an extension ladder from a pumper truck by themselves in order to effect a rescue. The ladder is a heavy and awkward device and the firefighter must have sufficient upper-body, back and arm strength to perform this task.*
  
  - *Load, Carry and Climb:* Candidate shall, while carrying an approximately 28 kilogram bag of 30 meters of 38 mm fire hose, nozzle, appliances and tools, climb up and down an equivalent of four building storeys of stairs. Time: 5 minutes.  
*Rationale: Firefighters are often required to carry hose and other equipment up and down stairs in buildings and must be able to do so quickly. Firefighters must have the required leg strength and stamina.*
  
  - *Equipment Hoisting:* While standing well back from the edge, hoist one roll of 65 mm fire hose (approximately 19 kilograms) hand-over-hand by rope up to the edge of the roof of a two-storey building, pause and hold one minute the suspended load, and then slowly lower the hose back down again. Repeat once without the pause at the top. Time: 4 minutes.

---

*Rationale: Hoisting equipment by rope is a common requirement for firefighters who must have the necessary grip and arm strength, as well as back strength and manual dexterity.*

- *Confidence with Heights:* Climb to the top of an erected 13 meter ladder, pause for 1 minute at the top and then descend. Time: 5 minutes. Candidate will be wearing a safety harness attached to a safety rope during this test.

*Rationale: The ability to work at heights from ladders is essential for firefighters. Ladder climbing ability will not be evaluated on this test, however, an apparent marked fear of heights will be cause for test failure.*

- *Victim Drag:* The candidate shall drag a 75 kilogram dummy through a 20 meter obstacle course of cones placed approximately every 2.5 meters. Time: 2 minutes.

*Rationale: Firefighters are expected to be able to remove fire victims from buildings and often have to do so without assistance. Firefighters must have sufficient whole body strength and burst energy to perform this function.*

- *Confined Space Confidence:* With a blacked-out mask over the face and while wearing a 14 kilogram supplied air respirator, candidate will navigate, by feel, through a 40 meter obstacle course. Time: 8 minutes.

*Rationale: Firefighters are expected to operate and find their way through narrow and confining spaces with zero visibility. Candidates will not be evaluated on their knowledge of wearing respirators. However, a strong fear of confined spaces or a marked inability to navigate blindly will be cause for test failure.*

5. Individual Interview. Candidates successful in passing the aptitude test, physical/mental abilities test, and group interview stages will be invited to an individual interview by a panel. The Candidate's spouse (significant other) will be encouraged to attend this interview. The interview is one of the final steps in the screening process and will be conducted at a time, place and date to be indicated.
6. Reference Checks. Candidates who successfully pass through the individual interview step will have their references checked.

---

*Candidates who successfully proceed through all screening steps will be **ranked** according to their test and evaluation scores. **Conditional** offers of membership in the fire department will be made to candidates according to their ranking and according to the number of vacancies at the appropriate fire hall. There will not necessarily be sufficient vacancies for all ranked candidates.*

*Ranked candidates who are not immediately offered membership due to a lack of vacancy will be kept on an 18 month eligibility (waiting) list. If any openings occur during this period, they will be made a conditional offer of membership at that time.*

7. Candidates receiving conditional offers of membership will be required to provide within 14 days of receiving the offer, and at their own expense:
- a doctor's certificate of health stating that the candidate is medically fit to be a firefighter (your doctor may charge you a fee for this),
  - a criminal record clearance from the O.P.P. (no fee since this is a volunteer service),
  - an abstract of your driver's record through the M.T.O. (there will be a fee).

*Failure to provide all of these documents within the stipulated time will result in a withdrawal of the offer of membership in the fire department. No time extensions will be granted. Candidates may also be denied membership on the basis of relevant information revealed in these documents.*

8. Candidates accepted as new members in the fire department will join as Recruit firefighters. All Recruit firefighters will be required to successfully pass a 4 month Recruit Training Program. This program is conducted on weekday evenings and some weekends. During this program, tests and evaluations will be conducted on the Recruit's progress. Recruits who fall short of learning expectations will be released from the department. This program will be conducted by fire department instructors. Recruit firefighters will not attend emergencies during this period.
9. A Candidate who successfully completes the Recruit Training Program will be designated as a Probationary firefighter and will be assigned to a regular fire company (fire hall) for further in-service training. Probationary firefighters will be on probation for one year. During this period, their performance and progress will be reviewed regularly. Also during this period, the probationary firefighter will be permitted to attend emergency call-outs in a limited capacity that is appropriate to their skills and abilities.

- 
10. Also during this first year, the Probationary firefighter shall be required to achieve the following milestones:
- Complete any probationary firefighter training program that takes place in addition to regular firefighter training, and on an additional weekday evening or weekends.
  - Obtain a “DZ” licence at their own expense. (The \$50. cost for this will be refunded after the probationary period is successfully completed.
  - Achieve certification in Standard First Aid, CPR and Oxygen therapy (18 hour course).
11. During the second year, the Probationary firefighter should be accepted as a full member of the fire department, provided that all milestones and expected learning outcomes have been accomplished, and provided that the Probationary firefighter receives a satisfactory report from the officers of the department.
12. In subsequent years, the new firefighter will be required to achieve training that is provided both internally by the fire department’s instructors and externally through the Fire College and through other providers. In addition, optional learning opportunities are varied and constantly available.

Firefighters are expected to keep up-to-date and to advance their knowledge as their interest and abilities and the fire department’s needs indicate. The department is currently reviewing its standards for training and skills.

Firefighters who cease to learn become stagnant and out of touch. They are a danger to themselves and to others and cannot adequately perform what is a rapidly evolving “job”.