



EMPLOYMENT-RELATED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These are general questions related to becoming a Firefighter. Please refer to FAQs - FF TESTING for specifics to a job posting.

How do I become a firefighter?

Every fire department uses a different process for recruiting, training, and hiring.

Likewise, there is no single path to become a firefighter in Washington State, but here are some options that may be useful.

- ✓ Obtain a two-year Fire Science degree
- ✓ Successfully complete an EMT or Paramedic certification program
- ✓ Become a volunteer firefighter

Do you have a volunteer program?

We do not have a volunteer program. Local agencies that do are:

- City of Buckley Fire Department
- Graham Fire & Rescue
- Enumclaw Fire Department
- Riverside Fire & Rescue (lower Puyallup River Valley)
- Pierce County Fire District 13 (Browns Point/Dash Point)

What physical demands are required to becoming a firefighter?

Firefighting is a physically demanding job. The Candidate Physical Abilities Test (CPAT) is the standard assessment for measuring an individual's ability to handle the physical demands of being a firefighter. While we require the successful completion of the CPAT, it is not needed to apply. If you receive a conditional offer, you will be required to complete the CPAT as part of the pre-employment process. Candidates with a valid CPAT certification completed within one year prior to the start date will not need to test again. We accept CPAT certification from any testing agency which provides CPAT in accordance with the International Association of Fire Fighters standards. It does not need to be with National Testing Network (NTN).

For more information on the CPAT visit:

https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ergontn-public/ntn/Candidate_Instruction.mp4

What are the requirements to become a firefighter?

Every fire department has its own requirements. We do not require EMT or any fire certifications for our entry-level recruit firefighters. The only exception to this would be if we are specifically recruiting for paramedics, which would be identified in the posting.

Our requirements, subject to change, typically included:

Minimum Requirements

- 21 years of age by date of hire
- Valid Driver's License
- High school graduate or GED certification
- Legally authorized to work in the U.S.
- Ability to read, write, and speak the English language
- Must meet all minimum physical, medical, and suitability standards for firefighter including CPAT, medical exam, drug screening, psychological assessment, and background investigation with criminal history and driving record
- Ability to complete EMT certification, Recruit Academy, and probationary period

If I already have my EMT certification, will I need to attend the EMT course?

Yes, all recruits will need to attend the full Academy, including the EMT course.

What if I have a Paramedic certification?

Candidates will be hired for the position advertised and will need to attend the full Academy. Candidates hired as FF/EMTs that possess a Paramedic certification can request consideration for FF/PM after the successful completion of their probationary period.

Do you accept lateral candidates?

Yes. To be considered a lateral candidate, in addition to the advertised minimum requirements, candidates must be:

- A member in good standing with a minimum of one (1) year field experience as a full-time career Firefighter/EMT by the application close date and must have been employed within the last 6 months of the close date
- Current EMT-B certified
- IFSAC FFI and FFII certified

If lateral candidates are hired as part of an entry-level recruit class process, they may start at a higher salary step depending on experience and will be required to attend the Fire Academy with the other recruits which may include an EMT class.

What does the testing process entail?

Every fire department has their own unique testing process. Ours typically involves the following:

Initial Testing and Application:

- Candidates must test with National Testing Network (NTN) AND apply online with East Pierce Fire & Rescue at www.governmentjobs.com/careers/eastpiercefir by the advertised close date to be considered for a position
- Testing vouchers may be available and will only be distributed during an active job posting. If a position is open, refer to the posted FAQs – FF TESTING for more information
- Tests must be completed within one year prior to the application close date
- Upon completion of the closing date, NTN will forward all candidate scores to EPFR only for those that have selected EPFR as a department
- We use the NTN recommended scoring method which includes the candidate's Public Safety Self Assessment score
- Contact NTN directly with any questions regarding your account
- To find out more about NTN testing, visit [Candidate Frequently Asked Questions | National Testing Network](#)
- Candidates must apply for each posting they are interested in

District Selection Process: Candidates successfully completing each component will advance to the next step

- Only candidates that have completed both the NTN test and EPFR application process will be considered
- Pre-screen Interviews conducted virtually
- Oral Board Interviews conducted at EPFR Headquarters (HQ)
- Chief Interviews conducted at EPFR HQ
- Establish list and extend conditional offers
- Pre-employment process will include CPAT (candidates with valid CPAT certification completed within one year prior to the start date will not need to test again), medical exam, drug screening, psychological assessment, and comprehensive background investigation with criminal history and driving record – EPFR pays all costs associated with the pre-employment process
- Confirmed offers

How do I submit an application on the website?

Online applications are only accepted during an open recruitment via our Careers webpage with a free GovernmentJobs account. For more information on GovernmentJobs, please visit [GovernmentJobs | FAQ | Frequently asked questions](#).

I can't access my GovernmentJobs account. Can you help?

We do not have the ability to reset passwords or troubleshoot your account. For GovernmentJobs technical assistance, please call them directly at 855-524-5627 or visit [GovernmentJobs | FAQ | Frequently asked questions](#).

Do you offer Veteran's Preference?

Please review the Washington State Careers webpage at [Veterans' Preference - careers.wa.gov](#) for veteran definitions and preference categories. Preference is added to final, passing NTN score. You must attach documentation (DD214, NGB form 22 or equivalent) to your online application if claiming preference and request preference from NTN.

How will I be contacted by the District?

Only candidates that have applied online with EPFR (placing them in our system) will be contacted via email. If you only applied at NTN, but not through our website you will not be contacted. Candidates will be notified if they advance in the process or not.

What are the details of your Fire Academy?

Candidates that have received confirmed offers attend the Pierce County Fire Training Consortium (PCFTC) Recruit Academy. This Academy includes EMT-B, FFI, FFII, and Hazardous Materials Awareness Operations certifications. Candidates are not required to have these certifications prior to application. Candidates with these certifications upon hire will still be required to attend the full Academy. The Academy typically runs 22-25 weeks. Candidates receive full salary while attending.

The Academy is not open to the public. It is only for career firefighters hired by one of the PCFTC departments.

Can I schedule a ride along?

Based on volume of candidates, we are unable to accommodate ride along requests during the hiring process. However, if there is not an open recruitment, you can contact the main office at 253-863-1800 for ride along information.

The minimum requirements include successfully passing a background investigation including criminal history and driving record review. Are there automatic disqualifiers for employment?

We encourage candidates to review [RCW 43.43.830](#) for information on background checks. Findings from a civil adjudication proceeding and/or convictions of crimes listed within the RCW are possible disqualifications. Records are reviewed on an individual basis

as a condition of employment. Employees must have the ability to legally operate a vehicle in Washington State and are required to provide proof of a current/valid driver's license prior to hire date.

Is COVID vaccination a requirement of employment?

Vaccination is encouraged but is not an employment requirement. Proclamation 21-14-1 requires firefighters licensed as an EMT or paramedic to provide their employer with proof of vaccination OR have an approved accommodation. Proof of COVID vaccination will be requested upon hire. EPFR has a process for requesting vaccination accommodations.

Please note that this may not be the most up to date COVID information.

What is the work schedule for your firefighters?

EPFR personnel work a "modified Detroit 56" which is three 24-hour shifts (0800 to 0800) every nine days. Once you complete Recruit Academy you will be assigned to one of the three shifts (A, B, or C Shifts). Below is an example of the rotations. Green represents A Shift, red represents B Shift, and blue represents C Shift.

June

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Employees assigned to 24-hour shift schedule shall receive one (1) Kelly day (K-Day) off every 27-day work cycle. K-Days are 24-hour blocks of paid time off, to reduce the average number of hours worked in a work cycle.