



EMPLOYMENT-RELATED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These are general questions related to becoming a Firefighter with East Pierce Fire & Rescue.

How do I become a firefighter?

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

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
- ✓ Wildland Firefighting (USFS, DNR)
- ✓ Become a volunteer firefighter
- ✓ Military
- ✓ Hands-On Trades

Do you have a volunteer program?

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

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

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 minimum requirements, subject to change, typically included:

- 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

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.

For more information on the CPAT visit:

[Candidate Physical Ability Test \(CPAT\) - IAFF](#)

[CPAT at NTN](#)

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 complete all testing and pre-recorded interview requirements with National Testing Network (NTN) AND apply online with East Pierce Fire & Rescue at www.governmentjobs.com/careers/eastpiercerefire 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
- NTN Tests must be completed within one year prior to the application close date

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

- Only candidates that have completed the NTN requirements and EPFR application process will be considered
- Oral Board Interviews conducted at EPFR Headquarters (HQ)
- Chief Interviews conducted at EPFR HQ
- 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

How do I submit an application on the website?

Online applications are only accepted during open recruitment via our Careers webpage with a free GovernmentJobs account. You can find open positions at [Job Opportunities | East Pierce Fire & Rescue](#). For more information on GovernmentJobs, please visit [GovernmentJobs | FAQ | Frequently asked questions](#).

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, please visit [Ride-Alongs | East Pierce Fire & Rescue](#) for ride along information.

Do you offer Veteran's Preference?

Yes. 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.

What are the details of your Fire Academy?

Candidates that have received confirmed offers attend the Red Knights 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 participating agencies.

Are there automatic disqualifiers for employment?

The pre-employment process includes successfully passing a background investigation including criminal history and driving record review. 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.

What type of benefits are offered?

This position is represented by IAFF Local 3520. In addition to our competitive pay, generous benefits include:

- District paid medical, dental, vision, VEBA, and Medical Expense Retirement Plan
- Enrollment in the Washington State Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters (LEOFF) retirement system
- Vacation, Holidays, and Sick Leave
- Deferred Compensation in the amount of 6%
- Life and Disability Insurance
- Longevity
- Educational Incentive and Tuition Reimbursement

What opportunities does EPFR provide?

Exciting opportunities include:

- Hazardous Materials Special Operations Team
- Technical Rescue Special Operations Team
- Water Rescue Special Operations Team

- Wildland Special Operations Team
- Paramedic School
- Ad Hoc committees (we regularly utilize personnel for special short-term and long-standing committee work)
- New stations, apparatus, and equipment

What is the probationary period?

All new entry-level employees shall be on a probationary status from their start date to twelve (12) months after the completion of the fire academy.

All new lateral employees shall be on a probationary status for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of hire.

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		

Kelly Days (K-Days): A K-Day is a twenty-four (24) hour shift taken off to reduce average hours worked within a 27-day work cycle. Twenty-four (24) hour shift personnel shall receive approximately 16 K-Days per year.