

NEW ORLEANS FIRE DEPARTMENT

EST. 1891

The Hiring Process

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Can you take the heat!
Can you take the heat!



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Now Hiring

Employment requirements

Once hired, 24 weeks of paid training as a Fire Recruit

To apply go to:
nola.gov/nofd/recruitment

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The Hiring Process

Employment requirements

This extensive screening process involves eight qualifying steps that you must prepare for and pass before being considered for hire. These steps can take 3-6 months or longer to complete.

Fire Recruit (Class Code 7209)

To apply and begin the application process

Applicants must:

- Be at least 18 years of age to apply
- Have a valid and current driver's license
- Have a High school diploma or GED
- EMT required after Graduation from Fire Academy.

\$33,111.00 Annually
Status: Probationary

Certified Firefighter I (Class Code 7210)

To apply and begin the application process

This position requires a one (1) year probationary period.
No probationary period may last longer than one (1) year.

Applicants must:

- Be at least 18 years of age to apply
- Have a valid and current driver's license
- Have a High school diploma or GED
- Must have (1) year of firefighting experience in a professional/paid fire department.
- The following certifications **must** be obtained from the Louisiana State University's (LSU) Fire and Emergency Training Institute (FETI): Haz-Mat Awareness, Haz-Mat Operational, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II during the probationary period. Failure to obtain all four certifications during the probationary period will result in removal from the Firefighter I classification through termination or demotion to Fire Recruit.
- A Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification **must** be obtained during the probationary period; failure to become certified during the probationary period may result in termination, once a sufficient number of Firefighter I and EMT is reached.

\$36,119.00 Annually
Status: Probationary

The Hiring Process

- Step 1: Application and Documents**
(Fill out Application form, Current Drivers License, High School diploma, —no wallet cards, GED, etc.).
- Step 2: Written Multiple-Choice Examination**
(Written test weighted 100% (24% based on audio component))
- Step 3: Physical Agility Examination**
(Tests your fitness and agility for the position)
- Step 4: Substance Abuse Screening**
(Test for illegal substances—prescription meds)
- Step 5: Nationwide Criminal Background Check**
(Criminal records check in all 50 states)
- Step 6: Conditional Offer of Employment**
(To continue screening work history, social media, etc.)
- Step 7: Psychological Evaluation**
(Psychological screening process for good mental health)
- Step 8: Medical Examination**
(Medical screening process for good physical health)

Once hired, applicants begin 24 weeks of paid training as a fire recruit at the Municipal Training Academy. After graduating from the Municipal Training Academy, Fire Recruits become Probationary Firefighters for a period of 12 months in the fire station. Immediately after graduating, Probationary Firefighters must obtain their EMT certifications if they don't possess them already.

The Applicant's Guide

- The Entry Level fire recruit (Class Code 7209) starting pay is approximately \$33,111,00 a year.
- Firefighter I Level recruit (Class Code 7210) starting pay is approximately \$36,119,00 a year.
- Recruits are scheduled to receive their \$750.00 Uniform Allowance: **Annually**
- 5% raise for EMT certifications.

After one year of Service:

- \$500.00 State Pay: Received **Monthly**
- \$4,000 to \$6,000.00+ Millage: Received **Annually**
- Payroll Deductions for uniforms available.
- A 2% pay raise received from your 3rd year until your 23rd year.

Benefits

- Healthcare coverage
- Retirement pension
- Deferred compensation (457b plan)
- Tuition reimbursement
- Paid vacation & Sick leave + (365 days)
- Paid training
- Career advancement

Fire Academy Rules & Regulations

Firefighters follow the “Chain of Command” with strict rules and even stricter disciplinary actions. Recruits must learn to follow orders.

The Applicant's Guide

Applicants may want to consider the four hiring preferences listed below. Although no positions can be guaranteed from the hiring preferences, they must be included in your decisions for employment.

Hiring preferences are:

- Applicant already possesses their Emergency Medical Technician license (EMT).
- Applicant lives in Orleans Parish.
- Applicant does not possess their EMT.
- Applicant does not live in Orleans Parish.

Public Safety Employees are not required to live in Orleans Parish at this time.



The Applicant's Guide con't

Are you in very good physical shape?

The **Physical Agility Exam** is a series of five timed, role related tests designed to assess the applicants' fitness, *strength, stamina, coordination, dexterity*, ability to work in darkened confined spaces plus, the ability to understand and properly apply information. They are all tests relevant to a professional firefighter's role.

These physical tests are the **minimum physical requirements** and applicants must pass them all.

- Without having any firsthand knowledge of this profession, some applicants believe they have what it takes already and do not prepare for this career which often leads to failure.
- Some applicants run several days per week, play sports or just are in decent physical shape already. These are very good ways to start, but many times not enough to finish. Many applicants believe that exercising and jogging is enough.
- Assuming they are ready, some applicants fail because they don't realize that they don't have the *strength, stamina, coordination and dexterity* from just exercising and running to meet the minimum physical requirements necessary to pass the **Physical Agility Exam**.
- 5. Applicants should contact the NOFD's Office of Recruitment and also speak with firefighters in the stations about the challenges of the job for tips and advice. (Next page)

Note:

If you struggle with the **minimum physical requirements** while wearing only a turnout coat during the **Physical Agility Exam**, training only gets harder the next six months in the Fire Academy as a Fire Recruit.

Fire Recruits wear all 75 pounds of gear and are faced with the **maximum physical requirements** on a daily basis .

The Applicant's Guide con't

What were some of the challenges experienced during the process of becoming a firefighter?

Applicants who travel the path of becoming a professional firefighter in New Orleans face many of the same challenges. These challenges vary depending on the individual.

Challenges that each person may face regardless of gender include:

1. Competing for a **highly competitive job where hundreds of applicants apply** for a few positions. You need to stand out from the crowd. This includes being educated, dedicated and having life experience. Some of the qualities that can make you stand out are: (Currently working for a paid fire department or as a Emergency Medical Technician, Military experience, Fitness Background to include organized sports, life experience, well spoken and articulate, Fire Science Degree, Bachelor or Masters Degree.
2. **It is important to stay focused and diligent** so that as a candidate you are at the top of your game in being prepared at short notice for written exams, oral interviews and pre-hire physical ability tests and or the recruit academy.
3. **It is often difficult to balance your family** life with the rigorous demands of trying to become a firefighter. **It is very important to have a strong support system** so that you can remain focused and dedicate the time necessary.
4. **Making connections with firefighters** from the department you would like to work for is important. Current firefighters can spend time with you explaining the philosophy of the organization, their mission statement, and culture.
5. **You should be extremely fit at this point in your life.** Your fitness level (to include muscular strength, muscular endurance, and aerobic capacity) should be that of a top athlete. Do not wait to get hired to get in shape. You will be behind the game and struggle not only in the academy but also for the rest of your career. Lack of fitness leads to failing the physical abilities test to get hired, failure in the recruit academy or injury in the academy and on the line.
6. **In regards to being a woman entering the fire service challenges can often be seen as obstacles if you are not adequately prepared.** We all face the same demands regardless of gender.

The culture of the fire service is like no other so take time talking to firefighters to see if it is a good fit for you. As an individual, you must be very confident both physically and mentally to take on this position. Adequate preparation and a high fitness level help you obtain both of these. Women have been in the Fire Service in New Orleans since 1991. Many of the obstacles that existed years ago are long gone thanks to the women who paved the way and the leadership of this organization over the years. Men and women work side by side with pride and dedication to their work. Because women are built different than men, we must work to develop and maintain upper body strength. Some women have no problems since they may have a background in sports and fitness since they were very young. Having this background aids both men and women in being successful. Much of what we do as firefighters takes strength and endurance. It also requires technique and training. "Train for your job" and you will be successful. Think of yourself as a professional athlete. Always ready for game day. **We all have weaknesses and must work to overcome them.** Good advice would be to find a strong mentor to guide you through the process.

Testing and Qualifying Process



Applicants must qualify through a series of examinations and physical challenges.

The testing and qualifying process applicants must go through is designed to give the applicant a small example of the types of situations and incidents he/she will encounter and the physical and mental stressors and strain their bodies will be required to endure possibly for long periods of time.

The Physical Agility Exam



The Physical Agility Exam consists of five timed events. The obstacles are designed to mimic conditions you will encounter during a working fire incident. Applicants have two attempts to successfully complete each event. These five entry level events are only a few of the minimum physical requirements necessary to become a New Orleans professional firefighter.

The Fire Academy



In the Fire Station

Upon graduating from the Municipal Fire Training Academy (MTA), Fire Recruits will become Probationary Firefighters, a title they will hold for the next 12 months until being promoted to Firefighter.

Recruits will be assigned to a Platoon or Shift. The NOFD has three Platoons, **A-1st**, **B-2nd**, and **C-3rd**, platoons.

Firefighters work 24 hours on duty and 48 hours off duty. Ten days per month.

Firefighters respond to fires, emergency medical calls, explosions, and numerous calls for assistance.

Work in extreme temperatures; day and night; in rain, extreme heat, ice and storm/hurricane conditions.

Exposure to fumes, gases, noxious odors, dust and poor ventilation.

Work at heights on ladders, on roof tops and in closely confined and darkened spaces.

Work around potential hazards: fire, explosives, chemicals, electrical shock, structural hazards, fast moving vehicles, etc.

Intense exposure to water and/or other liquids.

Exposure to blood, serious injuries and death.

Exposure to a wide range of highly emotional and traumatic events.

Exposure to noise and vibration from tools, equipment, machinery, etc.

Work within restrictions of personal safety equipment (e.g., breathing apparatus, steel-tip boots, hearing and eye protection, firefighting turn-out clothing, and hazardous materials gear).

A firefighter must perform physically demanding work, requiring good judgment under adverse working conditions.

During a “State of Emergency” like natural or man-made disasters, all three platoons may be required to report to work which may last as long as the emergency incidents remain. You could remain at the station for several days or weeks.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. Do I have to live in New Orleans to get hired?
A. No. Public Safety Employees are not required to live in Orleans Parish at this time.
- Q. When will the NOFD start hiring again?
A. The application process is open.
- Q. How often does the NOFD hire?
A. Continuously
- Q. Is there a test to become a firefighter in New Orleans?
A. The extensive screening process involves eight qualifying steps that you must pass including an **Entry Level Fire Recruit or Firefighter I Written Exam** and a qualifying **Physical Agility Exam**.
- Q. Does the NOFD have Volunteer Firefighters?
A. No. The NOFD disbanded their Volunteer Firefighting Service in 1891.
- Q. What can I do to make myself a better candidate for the position?
A. Obtain your EMT license, live in Orleans Parish, get a Fire Science Degree or higher and learn about firefighting in New Orleans.
- Q. I have my Haz-Mat Awareness certification already, would I have to retake it?
A. Fire Recruits must obtain their Haz-Mat Awareness, Haz-Mat Operations, Firefighter I and Firefighter II certifications to NOFD's standards.
- Q. Is the fire academy hard?
A. The fire academy can be difficult for most people, especially if you are not prepared. The best way to describe the fire academy is Firefighter Boot Camp. You will train in the practical and safe use of equipment and take knowledge based exams after each lesson daily. You will also exercise, jog, run up six flights of stairs ten times non-stop and other required physical training.



New Orleans Fire Department



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