

City of Whitefish Fire Department

also serving the Whitefish Fire Service Area

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VOLUNTEER INFORMATION GUIDE

In order to provide depth and breadth to our career firefighter staffing we operate and maintain a group of volunteer firefighters along with a few non-operational volunteers. We are considered a “combination fire department” due to our staffing being a combination of volunteer and career firefighters. This information guide is intended to layout the requirements for membership, the application process, and the ongoing expectations of a volunteer for the City of Whitefish Fire Department.

This Reference Guide is used as a tool to help potential applicants understand the requirements for membership, the application process, and commitment they’re making should they decide to volunteer. If you have the **DESIRE**, the **ABILITY**, but most importantly the **TIME** we’d love to have you apply to be a volunteer member, be it an Operational or a Non-Operational.

Operational members are volunteer firefighters who support our career Firefighter/Paramedics in any number of different job areas by responding to emergency calls and working as part of our team.

Non-Operational members are volunteer members who support the Whitefish Fire Department in many non-operational areas with no emergency response roles.

Besides being part of our team and providing a vital community service, we offer Operational members free firefighting, hazardous materials, incident command, and wildland firefighting training with medical CE (continuing education) opportunities. Both operational and non-operational volunteers are covered by the City of Whitefish’s Workers Compensation insurance policy the City’s also offers a Volunteer Firefighter Pension Program for qualifying Operational Firefighters.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

{per Montana Code Annotated 7-33-4107 & the Whitefish FD}

- ___ 1. Must be a citizen of the United States;
- ___ 2. Prefer a resident within the City of Whitefish or the surrounding Rural Fire Service Area; consideration will be given to applicants residing outside the Whitefish Fire Department response area based on the applicant's ability to meet the emergency response requirements.
- ___ 3. Must be 18-years of age or older;
- ___ 4. Must hold a valid high school diploma or GED;
- ___ 5. Must possess a valid Montana or out-of-state Driver's License. A valid Montana Driver's License must be obtained by all Operational Firefighters prior to completing the probationary period;
- ___ 6. Must not have been convicted of a crime for which the applicant could have been imprisoned in a Federal or State penitentiary; and
- ___ 7. Operational Firefighter Applicants shall be able to successfully complete the Whitefish Fire Department's physical exam, appropriate CPAT (Candidate's Physical Agility Test) and a comprehensive background check.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- ___ 1. Request a tour and/or a ride-along (not required);
- ___ 2. Submit a completed Whitefish Fire Department Volunteer Application;
- ___ 3. You will be contacted to schedule an interview.

INTERVIEW

The Interview Committee consisting of the Assistant Chief and a member from the on-duty career staff shall conduct the interview.

- ___ 1. During the interview the interview committee will further explain the different job opportunities and time commitments;
- ___ 2. Ask you a series of questions;
- ___ 3. Answer any questions you may have;
- ___ 4. Give you a tour of our station and introduce you to the members on hand.

TENTATIVE DECISION

The Interview Committee will meet with the Fire Chief and decide on a preliminary decision.

- ___ 1. The applicant will be notified of the decision;
- ___ 2. If a tentative offer is made, we'll request additional information needed to complete the application process.
 - a. A list of three references we can contact;
 - b. Copy of a GED, High School or College diploma;
 - c. Copy of your Driver's History Report (you obtained from the Motor Vehicle Department);
 - d. Your personal Doctor's OK to partake in the program (form provided);
 - e. We'll sent you for a Drug & Alcohol test;
 - f. Provide information and your approval for us to complete a detailed background check (form provided).

FINAL DECISION

Once all the required documentation is submitted and all the checks come back, the Chief and Assistant Chief will make the decision on a final offer.

- ___ 1. All required info supplied and reviewed;
- ___ 2. CPAT (Candidate Physical Agility Test) scheduled and successfully completed. Must have signed Doctor's approval form before this test.

NOTIFICATION

- ___ 1. Applicant notified of final decision;
- ___ 2. Successful applicants shall schedule an orientation day.

ORIENTATION DAY

During the Orientation Day you will complete:

- ___ 1. Chief's Interview;
- ___ 2. Obtain Target Solutions account (online Training Platform);
- ___ 3. Complete online Target Solutions:
 - CAPCE HIPPA Awareness course;
 - CAPCE Infection Control course;
 - Hazard Communications course;
- ___ 4. Complete HR's Harassment Awareness course (video)
- ___ 5. Read and Acknowledge:
 - FD 's Mission Statement & Core Values;
 - City's Rules & Regulations;
 - FD's SAPs and SOGs;
- ___ 6. Complete an I-9 form and an emergency contact form

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION TERMS

- Applicant:** A person who has submitted a completed application and is active in the selection process.
- Probationary Firefighter:** AKA Probie. The first 6-month period of time allowing the volunteer to learn the position, demonstrate the time commitment needed to be successful, and for the Fire Department's Officers to evaluate a volunteer's potential and performance. During the probationary period the Fire Chief may terminate a volunteer with or without cause.
- Candidate:** A volunteer working towards completion of the initial training requirements for at least one of the volunteer firefighter jobs.
- Rookie:** A firefighter during their first year on the job. A fire service tradition where a new firefighter demonstrates their commitment to the job, this is NOT a hazing period. During this year the new firefighter builds the relationships needed to be a successful member of our highly effective team.
- Operational:** A firefighter who has met all the initial requirements and maintains the incumbent requirements for one or more of the specific Operational Reserve job positions.
- Commissioned Firefighter:** A firefighter who has met all the requirements for the all-encompassing job of a Firefighter/Paramedic for the City of Whitefish Fire Department. {Same requirements as our career Firefighter/Paramedic }
- Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic:** No longer a volunteer, hired by the City of Whitefish as a part-time employee.
- Resident Firefighter:** A volunteer member who is part of the Resident Program who completes their initial training during a summer Fire Academy then covers a set shift in exchange for free living accommodations at one of our remote firehouses. Typically, college students seeking a career in the fire service.
- Career Firefighter/Paramedic:** Full-time employees of the City of Whitefish who meet and maintain all of the training, certifications and licensing of this all-encompassing job.

FIRE DEPARTMENT AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

Whitefish Fire Department: A department within the City of Whitefish that through an intergovernmental agreement also provides fire and rescue services to the surrounding Whitefish Fire Service Area and Emergency Medical Services to a portion of the county through an agreement with Flathead County EMS.

Whitefish Fire Service Area: An area outside the City of Whitefish governed by a Board of Trustees who contract with the City of Whitefish for fire protection.

Whitefish Professional Firefighters Association: The labor union for the full-time career Firefighters' and Company Officers', IAFF Local 3995.

Whitefish Firefighter Association, Inc.: A not-for-profit membership organization made up of all fire department members organized to support the mission of the Whitefish Fire Department. Member includes: Chief Officers, Admin Staff, Career and part-time firefighters along with both Operational and Non-Operational Volunteers.

Fire Department Relief Association of the City of Whitefish, Inc.: An organization that monitors and manages the volunteer firefighter pension funds. {Montana Code Annotated Title 19, Chapter 18}.

INITIAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS **FOR EACH VOLUNTEER OPERATIONAL POSITION**

Operational members are volunteers who fill one or more of our Whitefish Fire Department job positions.

A volunteer shall be classified as probationary for at least their first 6-months, and until they complete at least one of the operational reserve positions. Any probationary member failing to complete the requirements for at least one position within their first year will automatically be dropped from the membership rolls.

Initial Training for **ALL Operational Membership Positions** ***

- ___ - American Heart Professional Rescuer CPR;
- ___ - Complete FEMA's I-700, I-100, and I-200 online training;
- ___ - Review paper-work requirements: 1st Report of Injury, Incident Sheets, Daily Log, etc.;
- ___ - Complete The following online Target Solutions courses:
 - Lock-out / Tag-out;
 - Workplace Stress;
 - Ethics in the Workplace;
 - Back Injury Prevention.

Initial Training for Operational **Ambulance Drivers**

- ___ - Completed the Initial FD Orientation Day training;
- ___ - Complete the Initial Training required for ALL Operational members listed above ***;
- ___ - Hold a valid Montana EMR, EMT, AEMT, or Paramedic license;
- ___ - Completed the Whitefish FD's Emergency Vehicle Driver Course or VFIS' plus TIMs Traffic Management Course;
- ___ - Complete the WFD's Ambulance Driver Task Book with final Approval signatures from each shift Captain.

Initial Training for Operational **EMS Providers**

- ___ - Completed the Initial FD Orientation Day training;
- ___ - Complete the Initial Training required for ALL Operational member listed above ***;
- ___ - Hold a valid Montana EMR, EMT, AEMT, or Paramedic license;
- ___ - Obtain permission to operate at your EMS level from the department's Medical Director;
- ___ - Successfully complete the WFD's EMS-Provider Task Book with approval signatures from each shift Captain

Initial Training for Operational **Exterior Firefighters** (non-SCBA use)

- ___ - Completed all the Initial FD Orientation Day training;
- ___ - Complete the Initial Training required for ALL Operational Members listed above ***;
- ___ - Must complete the following portions of NFPA Firefighter 1
 - Fire Service History
 - NFPA 1500 Safety
 - Accountability
 - PPE
 - Communications
 - Fire Behavior
 - Building Construction
 - Scene lighting
 - Fire extinguishers
 - Rope webbing knots
 - Forcible entry
 - Ground ladders
 - Water Supply
 - Fire Hose
 - Public Education
 - Fire Inspection / preplanning
- ___ - May complete NWCG Wildland Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2)

Initial Training for Operational **Interior Firefighters**

- ___ - Completed all the Initial FD Orientation Day training;
- ___ - Complete the Initial Training required for ALL Operational Members listed above ***;
- ___ - Complete NFPA's Hazardous Materials Operations Level
- ___ - Complete NFPA's Firefighter I
- ___ - Complete NWCG's Wildland Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2)
- ___ - Prefer completion of NFPA's Firefighter II

Initial Training for Operational **Driver / Operator**

- ___ - Completed all the Initial FD Orientation Day training;
- ___ - Complete the Initial Training required for ALL Operational Members listed above ***;
- ___ - Complete NFPA's Hazardous Materials Awareness Level.
- ___ - Completed the Whitefish FD's Emergency Vehicle Driver Course.
- ___ - Complete the TIMs Traffic Incident Management course.
- ___ - Complete each of the WFD's Driver Task Book with approval from each shift Captain for each vehicle category: Brush trucks (type 5 & 6 engines), Tender, Rescue, and our Fire Engines (type 1 engines) This includes pumping and drafting;
- ___ - May complete WFD's Driver Task Books with Captains' approval for our UTV, Hover Craft, and our Fire Boats.

Initial Training for an **"Extra Board"** position

which would allow the volunteer to fill a vacancy in the on-duty staffing level when none of the career staff is available. Must have completed the following:

- ___ - Operational EMS-Provider, prefer a Paramedic but must be at least an EMT;
- ___ - Operational Ambulance Driver;
- ___ - Operational Interior Firefighter;

VOLUNTEER MEMBER PARTICIPATION

In order to truly meet the purpose of the Whitefish Fire Department's Volunteer Program our volunteers' respond to emergency calls and assisting the career staff in meeting the operational duties of the Whitefish Fire Department.

Firefighting is a PARTICIPATION team activity.

As Chief Alan Brunacini says, "It's all about who shows up and goes to work".

To be quite honest for those volunteers interested in the position of Ambulance Driver and/or EMS-Provider that means:

1. Spending time at the station where the on-duty Captain can assign you to a position on our 1st out ambulance or
2. Being on-call where the Captain could contact you for our scheduled IFT (Inter-facility transfers) or
3. Respond to the station whenever the 1st ambulance responds to a call, in order to provide coverage for our 2nd out ambulance.

For those volunteers interested in assisting during fire and rescue situations you either need to be here to respond with the crew or be cleared to drive and operate our vehicles so when you respond to the station you can bring equipment to the scene. Our career staff does not wait.

RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

NFPA - The National Fire Protection Agency sets standards for the fire service, for example NFPA # 1001 is the standard for Firefighter I and II.

IFSTA - The International Fire Service Training Association develops curriculum that meets the NFPA standards for example for the text book "Essentials of Fire Fighting" used for Firefighter I and II.

IFSAC - The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress is one of two agencies that have established an accreditation system for many fire service positions for example Firefighter I and II. This seal is nationally recognized certifying that an individual meets the NFPA standard through demonstrated skills and testing.

ProBoard - The National Board for Fire Service Professional Qualifications is the other agency that has established an accreditation system for certifying.

FSTS - The Fire Service Training School is attached to the Extension Services of Montana State University and provides certification testing that is the only Montana testing service recognized by both IFSAC and ProBoard.

INCUMBENT TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Once a volunteer is cleared to operate in one or more of the job-positions they must maintain the position by meeting the MINIMUM requirements for each position they hold as listed below. Besides the training requirements placed upon us by governing agencies like OSHA, Montana's Board of Medical Examiners, FEMA, NWCG, ISO, and the NFPA, to name a few, firefighting is a team sport and we must practice together as a team.

The world we operate in is always changing so we must maintain the knowledge and skills obtained during our initial training and develop new knowledge and skills to keep pace with our changing world. More important that an individual's knowledge and skills is the synergy of our team, that can only be developed by training and working together. In the nut shell that means, "Our Operational members must SHOW UP".

On-going requirements to maintain an Operational **Ambulance Driver's** position:

- ___ - Maintain a valid Montana EMR, EMT, AEMT, or Paramedic license (CEs and skill testing);
- ___ - Attend a yearly ambulance driver safety training;
- ___ - Complete Annual Safety Refresher Training, including HIPAA, Infection Control, HAZCOM, etc.;
- ___ - Drive the ambulance on at least 10 EMS calls or drills annually;
- ___ - Successfully complete annual FIT testing for an N95 mask.

On-going requirements to maintain an Operational **EMS Provider's** position:

- ___ - Maintain a valid Montana EMT, AEMT, or Paramedic license (CEs and skill testing);
- ___ - Attend at least 2-hours of EMS training per month here with the Whitefish FD career staff;
- ___ - Complete Annual Safety Refresher Training, including HIPAA, Infection Control, HAZCOM, etc.;
- ___ - Attend to or assist with at least 10 patients per year;
- ___ - Successfully complete annual FIT testing for an N95 mask.

On-going requirements to maintain an Operational **Exterior Firefighter's** (non-SCBA use) position:

- ___ - Attend at least 6-hours of Firefighter Training per quarter here with Whitefish FD;
- ___ - Attend at least 4-hours of Hazmat Training per year here with WFD;
- ___ - Attend an NWCG RT-130 class w/ shelter deployment practice annually;
- ___ - Complete annual FIT testing for an N95 mask;
- ___ - Complete the appropriate NWCG pack-test if responding to wildland fires;
- ___ - Respond to at least 12 calls and/or events per quarter or spend 36-hours on shift with the on-duty crew per quarter, minimum 4-hour blocks.

On-going requirements to maintain an Operational **Interior Firefighter's** position:

- ___ - Attend at least 6-hours of Firefighter Training per quarter here with WFD;
- ___ - Attend at least 12-hours of smoke/live-fire training per year here with WFD;
- ___ - Attend at least 4-hours of Hazmat Training per year here with WFD;
- ___ - Attend an NWCG RT-130 class w/ shelter deployment practice annually;
- ___ - Complete the annual IPAT (Incumbent Physical Agility Test)
- ___ - Complete annual FIT testing for an N95 mask & SCBA mask;
- ___ - Complete annual arduous NWCG pack-test;
- ___ - Respond to at least 12 calls and/or events per quarter or spend 36-hours on shift with the on-duty crew per quarter. Minimum block of 4-hours.

On-going requirements to maintain an Operational **Driver / Operator's** position:

- ___ - Must attend a yearly driver safety training
- ___ - Must attend at least 4-hours of pump-op training per quarter here with WFD;
- ___ - Respond to at least 9 calls and/or events per quarter or spend 8 hours on shift with the on-duty crew per quarter.

To maintain an **Extra Board** position each of the following positions must be maintained:

- ___ - Operational EMS-Provider, Paramedic preferred;
- ___ - Operational Ambulance Driver
- ___ - Operational Interior Firefighter.