



What you need to know to become a Rochester Firefighter.

What are the requirements to be eligible to test?

There are no requirements that need to be met prior to testing for the Rochester Fire Department. Prior to receiving a conditional job offer, the candidate must have, in hand, certifications for Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2, and Emergency Medical Technician. Also, they must possess a High School Diploma/GED and valid driver's license. If your name comes up as next up on our eligibility roster, the candidate will be asked if they meet the requirements. If yes, they will move on with the hiring process. If no, they can remain on the eligibility roster but be bypassed until the next hiring. The Chief typically makes conditional offers every June for the Fall recruit academy and in January for the Spring recruit academy.

How long are the eligibility rosters good for?

Typically speaking, each list is certified for two years. The commission that certifies this list has the option to extend a list up to one year after the initial two-year certification if they choose.

How long does it take to get hired?

Simple answer: it depends. Hiring off of the eligibility roster is done to fill vacancies accrued through attrition or when new positions are created. Hiring depends on the amount of turnover from current staff and each year is different. A recruit academy is sought when approximately three or more positions are vacant or need to be filled. Typically, recruit academies begin in either the spring and/or fall.

How many people are placed on the eligibility roster?

Historically, 50 people make up the eligibility roster. If less than 50 people make it through the hiring process, the list would be made up of those who successfully complete the hiring process in ranked order.

How many people typically test for firefighter?

On average, around 125 people have taken the entrance exam when it is given. Over the last ten years, we have seen numbers vary from test to test.

What does the initial testing process entail?

The current testing process includes an application process, an online Personnel Evaluation Profile, and an in-person panel interview.

How long does it take to get the certifications?

Generally speaking, firefighter 1, firefighter 2, and HazMat operations are lumped into one group of classes that typically take around six months to complete. Emergency Medical Technician generally takes another six months to complete. Timelines may vary depending on the layout of the course and the institution one uses to complete them.

Where do you get the EMT class?

Most community technical colleges offer EMT programs. In close proximity to Rochester, you may look into Rochester Community and Technical College and Riverland in Austin, MN. Aside from that, SEEMS (Southeast EMS) has a list of all of the local ambulance services who run their own classes as well. Some of these courses are completely in person while others may be a blended learning where the coursework is completed at home and the practical skills are completed in-person.

<https://www.riverland.edu/customized-training/emergency-medical-services/>

<https://www.rctc.edu/program/emt/>

<http://www.seems.com/>

Where can you get firefighter 1 and 2?

The closest school locally that offers the firefighter courses is Riverland in Austin, MN or Century College in White Bear Lake, MN. However, many local volunteer fire departments may have options for you as well.

<https://www.riverland.edu/customized-training/fire-rescue-training/>

[Firefighting and Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\) | Century College](#)

Is there a physical agility test?

There is no graded physical agility test during the initial hiring process. However, there is a pass/fail physical agility test that must be completed after a job offer has been extended as part of the conditional employment offer. Here is a video of another candidate doing the physical test.

<https://youtu.be/3sdQgY5YuyU>

What do you do if you have the certifications but are not affiliated with a fire or EMS agency and my certifications may lapse before I get a job offer?

Currently, you need to do whatever is necessary to keep your certifications active, as they are required upon hiring. Keep the certifications current even if that means challenging the certification test before it expires to keep it active. We cannot guarantee how every situation may play out with the certification board so it is always best to come in with active, current certifications to avoid any issues.

As for EMT, one option is to look into local ambulance services as many of them offer programs where they maintain your certifications in exchange for you carrying a certain amount of hours or call-time during the month. Lake City, Hayfield, Dodge Center, Elgin, Chatfield, and other smaller services offer these programs but availability changes over time. If you are facing the end of your certification with the National Registry, another option is to challenge the test for renewal. One viable option people have had great luck with is an on-line recertification process that can be found at <https://alliedmedtraining.com/emt-refresher-course/>.

What does the recruit academy entail?

The 10-week recruit academy builds upon your initial certification training and we dive deeper into every aspect of fire, rescue, EMS, HazMat, etc. We work to show you the fine intricacies of how Rochester operates and gives you a detailed look at our equipment, policies, and procedures. During the recruit academy, you will be assigned to the Training Division and will work a 40-hour week until after graduation when you are assigned to an operations Battalion.

What is the starting pay rate for a new firefighter?

Per the collective bargaining agreement for local 520, City of Rochester and IAFF Firefighters, the pay rates are as follows:

2022- \$ 21.598 hourly or \$63,941.70 annually

****These rates are based on a shift schedule of 2912 hours worked annually.*

The pay scale for firefighter tops out after 4 years of service with the department. Top scale after four years are as follows based on the same collective bargaining contract:

2022-\$29.266 hourly or \$85,222.59 annually

****These rates are based on a shift schedule of 2912 hours worked annually.*

Does RFD accept lateral transfers from other departments for various positions?

No, not at this time. We do not accept lateral transfers from any position from other departments.

How long until I can work on promoting within the fire department?

As with any organization, there are limits on when you can start working towards promotions to Captain and Motor Operator. To test for Motor Operator (Driver), the employee must be employed within the RFD for 4 years. To be eligible to test for Captain, the employee must be employed within the department for 5 years.

Also, there are opportunities within our Fire Marshal's office than can be explored after 2 years of service to the department in conjunction with experience and/or education.

What kind of person does well at RFD and what is the department looking for?

We are looking for people of character. The citizens of Rochester love our firefighters, not because of their skills, but because of how they are treated. We are not looking for experienced firefighters, although we will gladly take them if they meet our demands for good

character. We will train you to be a firefighter. We can take a good person and make them a great firefighter, but we cannot make a great firefighter a good person. We want to know what you have done for others. We want to know what you have done to make your community, your State, your Nation, the World a better place because of your efforts. We are looking for humble, servant leaders that put service before self.

How does a criminal history affect my possible employment with the City of Rochester?

Certain offenses on a background investigation may disqualify you from being hired with our organization. For details on specific questions, we would advise you to call our Human Resources department at 507-328-2555 to speak with a specialist.

Our current standards for employment with previous criminal convictions follow those of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians which can be viewed here:

<https://www.nremt.org/CMSPages/GetAmazonFile.aspx?path=~\storage\files\national-registry\aa\aa97f12c-1c28-4abf-a0fc-02dd8b61aaaf.pdf&hash=ae76fa1bbfab33c9ff2bad785ac816d4605cc5904c223a7d32a3f8e77dc0822>