



Victoria Fire Department Firefighter Application Guide

2019



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Victoria Fire Department Recruit Firefighter Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

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About This Guide

This application guide outlines the knowledge, skills and qualifications required to be a firefighter with the Victoria Fire Department.

The information contained in this guide is intended to assist potential candidates in preparing for the hiring process. The timeline is an estimate only and is subject to change. All efforts will be made to communicate updates through the City of Victoria website and social media.

Join Our Team

The Victoria Fire Department is looking for individuals who are community-minded, skilled professionals, and trained to use the latest fire suppression technologies and rescue techniques. We strongly encourage all candidates to bring their unique strengths and skill sets to the application process. Our diversity strengthens us and improves our ability to serve our community.

The Victoria Fire Department has a proud and distinguished history of protecting its citizens dating back to 1858. We were the first fire department established west of Toronto and north of San Francisco. Fast forward to today, we proudly deliver fire and rescue services, fire prevention, life safety education, and emergency management to the Capital City of the province of British Columbia.

Today, the Victoria Fire Department consists of 124 professionals who provide a multitude of fire rescue and emergency management services to the citizens of Victoria through three fire stations. Our professional services are delivered through the following divisions: Fire Suppression and Rescue, Communications, Fire Prevention, Mechanical, Administration, and Emergency Management.

Dedication and commitment to community are key to a rewarding and successful career as a professional firefighter with the Victoria Fire Department. We believe better is possible.

What Are We Looking For?

Candidates who have the following qualifications are encouraged to apply. (Please see page 6 for a detailed list of required qualifications and certifications.)

- Proven ability to work in a team environment
- Volunteer work in the community
- Commitment to continuous learning
- Post-secondary education
- Apprenticeship or trade certification
- Familiar with building construction
- Demonstrated experience as a firefighter
- Knowledge of City of Victoria geography, location of streets, major buildings and hazards
- Boating knowledge, skill or experience
- Skilled in operating and maintaining heavy equipment and/or commercial vehicles
- Skilled in the use and operation of hand tools, power tools and portable equipment
- Ability to operate communications equipment

We are an equal opportunity employer and welcome all qualified individuals to apply.

Role of a Firefighter

There's more to the job of a firefighter than extinguishing fires. Firefighters respond to a wide range of emergency situations where they protect people, the environment, and property. These emergencies can involve minimizing distress and suffering, and frequently include numerous hazards.

Firefighters work closely with local schools, community organizations, and citizens to increase fire safety awareness and to help prevent fires from happening in the first place.

Promoting fire safety and enforcing fire safety standards in public and commercial establishments also help protect life and property from fire and other risks.

Firefighters are responsible for maintaining, cleaning, and testing equipment to ensure its daily readiness for use.

Working as a firefighter means continuous learning – exercises, lectures, practice drills and other forms of training are all part of the job.



Duties of a Firefighter

Candidates must be able to fulfill the following duties:

- Respond to fire and rescue incidents, dangerous goods incidents and life hazard emergencies, which may require the removal of people from danger.
- Familiarize and safely operate all firefighting equipment and related rescue tools, including fire streams and other practices as directed through the Standing Orders and Operational Guidelines of the Victoria Fire Department.
- Achieve and maintain a First Responder Level 3 licence and administer first aid to injured people.
- Possess and maintain a valid Class 3 driver's licence with air brake endorsement.
- Perform in-station duties as assigned.
- Perform routine and unscheduled maintenance of apparatus, portable and fixed tools and equipment.
- Perform routine maintenance at fire stations, including cleaning and housekeeping.
- Compose and write comprehensive reports.
- Attend training sessions as directed and maintain a thorough knowledge of all equipment and apparatus, firefighting techniques, Standard Operating Guidelines and Standing Orders of the Victoria Fire Department.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge of the topography of the City of Victoria including streets, block numbers, water distribution systems, and location of target hazard occupancies, such as but not limited to high-rise apartment buildings, seniors' facilities and hospitals.
- Conduct fire inspections.
- Assist in maintaining and entering operational statistics in the computer system.
- Operate motor driven apparatus, fireboats, and specialized vehicles.
- Perform related fire protection and public relations activities.
- Temporarily transfer to the Fire Prevention Division (maximum three years).

Factors for Consideration

Like any career, there are challenges to working as a firefighter. Things to consider include:

Shift Work:

- Rotating shifts require firefighters to work a majority of weekends and statutory holidays.
- Shift work may require firefighters to make significant adjustments to their personal schedules.
- Shift work also requires firefighters to be away from home overnight on a regular basis.
- Firefighters may be scheduled to attend training outside of their regular shift rotation.

Physically Demanding:

- The work of a firefighter is physically demanding.
- Firefighters must maintain their physical fitness and lead a healthy lifestyle to perform their duties safely and to guard against the health risks of the job.

Psychologically Demanding:

- The nature of the work exposes firefighters to tragic and traumatic incidents.
- Firefighters must have the emotional fortitude, healthy coping mechanisms, and mental resiliency to deal with these situations.

Minimum Required Qualifications

Below are the minimum qualifications required of a Victoria Fire Department firefighter:

- University of Victoria or University of Alberta Physical Fitness Certificate dated January 1, 2019 or more recent
- NFPA 1001 Firefighter 1 and 2
- WorkSafeBC Occupational First Aid Level 2 or BC First Responder Level 3, or equivalent
- Canadian Citizenship or Landed Immigrant Status
- Proof of Grade 12 or equivalent
- Valid British Columbia Class 3 Driver's Licence with Air Brake Endorsement or equivalent
- Driver's Abstract reflective of no more than six points since July 1, 2016
- Canadian Coast Guard Pleasure Craft Operator Card

General Information

The Victoria Fire Department conducts one recruitment competition every two to three years to establish a Firefighter Eligibility Pool. The number of firefighters hired from the pool may differ each year as the number of vacancies available is based on attrition due to retirements and staff turnover.

All minimum required qualifications must be met for an application to be considered in this competition. The Victoria Fire Department reserves the right to limit the number of candidates that proceeds through any stage.

Due to the large number of applicants, those meeting the minimum required qualifications and successfully passing the physical fitness test in 2019 may not automatically proceed to the next stage of the competition.

Those candidates selected to participate in the Job Skills Assessment Evaluation will be provided a Job Skills Assessment Guide prior to the assessments taking place.

Prior to being offered employment, candidates are required to:

- verify they continue to hold the minimum basic qualifications and certifications
- verify they have the physical fitness ability to successfully perform the duties of a firefighter
- successfully complete a Pre-Placement Assessment Medical Examination
- participate in an interview

Once hired, candidates may be required to live within the Victoria Fire Department's boundaries as set by the Department. The Victoria Fire Department reserves the right to alter testing procedures and qualification at any time without notice.

Compensation

Successful candidates who are hired to work with the Victoria Fire Department will be brought on at the monthly rate of \$5,768 (effective January 1, 2019).

All newly hired permanent employees shall participate in and commence contributions to the Municipal Pension Plan from their initial date of hire.





How to Apply

Before applying online, please make sure that you have met the required minimum qualifications and certifications for the position. Next steps include:

- Go to victoria.ca/jobs and look for the Firefighter posting. In the posting, a button will be labelled “Apply for this job online”. Click on it and follow the prompts.
- Early in your online application you will be asked to upload a resume. You are only able to upload one document. This document needs to be uploaded as a single PDF and must contain all of the following:
 - Cover Letter
 - Resume
 - Copies of the following qualifications:
 - University of Victoria or University of Alberta Physical Fitness Certificate dated January 1, 2019 or more recent
 - NFPA 1001 Firefighter 1 and 2
 - WorkSafeBC Occupational First Aid Level 2 or BC First Responder Level 3, or equivalent
 - Canadian Citizenship or Landed Immigrant Status
 - Proof of Grade 12 or equivalent
 - Valid British Columbia Class 3 Drivers Licence with Air Brake Endorsement or equivalent
 - Driver’s Abstract reflective of no more than six points since July 1, 2016
 - Canadian Coast Guard Pleasure Craft Operator Card
 - Victoria Fire Department Recruit Firefighter Self-Evaluation Questionnaire (see Appendix)
- Once you submit your online application you will receive an email thanking you for applying to the City of Victoria.

The Process

The table below outlines the major components of the Victoria Fire Department's firefighter recruitment competition and selection process.

The dates are estimates only and are subject to change.

Stage	Application and Selection Stage	Estimated Dates
1.1	Application submission (Applications received outside of specified timeline will not be accepted.)	July 15 – 8:30 a.m. August 30 – 4:30 p.m.
1.2	Application review, selection and notification for individuals entering the hiring process.	September 1 –15
	Testing and Evaluation Stage	
2.1	Written Examination #1 – In Person	September 21
2.2	Job Skills Assessment	October 5
2.3	Written Examination #2 – In Person	October 5
2.4	Panel Interview	October 28 – November 8
2.5	Reference Checks	To be determined
2.6	Creation of Firefighter Eligibility Pool/Notification to Candidates	Prior to December 31
2.7	Conditional Offer of Employment, Criminal Record Check – Vulnerable Sector, Pre-Placement Medical Assessment	To be determined
2.8	Interview with Fire Chief	To be announced



Stage 1.1 Application Submission

July 15 – August 30, 2019

Candidates who meet all required minimum qualifications are invited to submit an application for consideration in the hiring process.

Candidates must follow the “How to Apply” instructions contained within this guide. Applications not submitted in accordance with the defined procedures, those submitted outside of the specified timelines, and those not meeting the minimum qualifications will not be accepted.

Stage 1.2 Application Review and Notification

Completed by September 13, 2019

Only candidates selected to participate in the hiring process will be contacted regarding next steps, which will include information on dates, times, and locations for written examinations.

Stage 2.1 Written Examination #1 – In Person

September 21, 2019

Written examinations will be held in-person to assess the knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics firefighters require to be successful on the job.

Stage 2.2 Job Skills Assessment

October 5, 2019

As in the previous stage, only those candidates selected to continue in the process will be contacted regarding the Job Skills Assessment.

At this stage, candidates will be evaluated on job-related tasks specific to the position of firefighter with the City of Victoria.

A Victoria Fire Department Job Skills Assessment Guide will be provided in advance to those candidates who have been selected to participate in the assessment.

Failure to complete any of the required skills as instructed or in the time period specified will result in the candidate not proceeding to the next stage of the competition.

Stage 2.3 Written Examination #2 – In Person

October 5, 2019

Candidates invited to participate in the Job Skills Assessment will also complete a second written examination. The written exam will be administered in person prior to or immediately following completion of the Job Skills Assessment.

Stage 2.4 Panel Interview

October 28 – November 8, 2019

The next step in the selection process is the Panel Interview. The Panel Interview will include Fire Department Chief Officers and representatives from IAFF Local 730 Executive and the City of Victoria Human Resources Department.

The Panel Interview will include behavioural-descriptive questions, which will focus on previous life experiences as they relate to the position of firefighter.

Stage 2.5 Reference Checks

Prior to selecting a candidate for the Firefighter Eligibility Pool, we will complete reference checks. Ideally, candidates will supply two contacts they have worked for recently and who they reported to in some manner.

Stage 2.6 Eligibility Pool Created

Prior to December 31, 2019

Following the interview stage, candidates will be contacted and advised whether or not they have been selected for the Firefighter Eligibility Pool. Selection to the Firefighter Eligibility Pool does not guarantee an individual will be offered employment. The Victoria Fire Department hires based on attrition and candidates will be contacted when and if a vacancy becomes available.

Stage 2.7 Conditional Offer of Employment – Criminal Record Check – Pre-Placement Medical Assessment

Candidates for consideration may be contacted and provided a conditional offer of employment.

An updated Criminal Record Check – Vulnerable Sector and a Pre-Placement Medical Assessment will be required prior to commencing employment. Verification of licensing or certification may also be required at this stage. All newly hired employees will serve a probationary period of 12 consecutive calendar months in accordance with the Firefighter Collective Agreement.

Stage 2.8 Interview with Fire Chief

The final stage of the selection process is an Interview with the Fire Chief. At this stage, candidates should be prepared to illustrate how they have continued personal and professional development since their selection to the Firefighter Eligibility Pool. Successful completion of this interview must be achieved to move forward in the process.



Appendix

Victoria Fire Department Recruit Firefighter Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

A career with the Victoria Fire Department offers opportunities for personal rewards and professional growth. There is satisfaction in knowing you provide a vital service to the public and a growing awareness that citizens increasingly rely on firefighters to assist them with a broad variety of technical skills and respond to their calls for help. Firefighters with the Victoria Fire Department take pride in knowing that, on a daily basis, they play a vital role in the protection and preservation of life, property, and community.

The position of Recruit Firefighter with the Victoria Fire Department requires a high level of personal dedication and a strong commitment for continued learning. Victoria Fire Department fire suppression personnel should be aware they may be faced with unique challenges not commonly experienced in other fields of work. This self-evaluation questionnaire is intended to provide a sense of what it is like to serve the public as a Recruit Firefighter with the Victoria Fire Department. It is intended to help you determine whether you are making a sound decision when applying for this position.

Please take time to reflect on each question and answer the questions honestly. **The completed form is to be submitted with your application.** Your answers will assist us during the interview stage where we will be happy to further explore any of the position requirements.

Job Fit: Ask yourself...	Yes	No
Does my lifestyle align itself with the values of the Victoria Fire Department? Honesty, Respect, Integrity, and Teamwork		
Can I disengage from emotional suffering or tragedy in order to complete essential job tasks?		
Do I possess the emotional fortitude, coping mechanisms, and mental resiliency to effectively deal with and work through tragic and traumatic incidents?		
Do I have a support system in place at home for debriefing and stress relief?		
Have I considered the impact of rotating shift work on my family environment (e.g., missing birthdays, special occasions, etc.)?		
Am I familiar with and able to effectively operate within a paramilitary working environment?		
Am I able to work harmoniously in close quarters with others while promoting positive working relationships?		
Do I meet all of the minimum requirements for Recruit Firefighter as outlined in the 2019 Application Guide?		
Am I prepared to commit to ongoing training and educational opportunities throughout my career?		
Do I have a strong commitment to customer service and a motivation to serve the public?		
Work Environment: Are you willing and able to...		
Work in extreme, sometimes hazardous, conditions for extended periods of time without opportunities for structured or scheduled breaks?		
Work at heights, in confined spaces, and in environments with heat and smoke with limited to no visibility while utilizing self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)?		
Work for 14 hours or longer with breaks determined by operational requirements?		
Work a regular rotating shift schedule (two 10-hour day shifts, two 14-hour night shifts, and four days off)?		
Work weekends and holidays, possibly for many months in a row, based on your rotating shift schedule?		
Spend the first 12 months of your employment in a probationary status, during which you will spend a considerable amount of time undergoing classroom and on-the-job training, receiving daily mentoring, critiques and evaluations?		
Read and study numerous training manuals and take written tests?		

	Yes	No
Read and study numerous procedure manuals and policy documents and take written tests?		
Be assigned to the Flex-Firefighter Pool, be required to work up to 24 consecutive hours and be scheduled for work outside your regular shift schedule as operationally required without notification restrictions?		
Attend scheduled training outside of your regular shift schedule?		
Be assigned to an alternate division within the Department for an undetermined period of time but not exceeding three years?		
Supervision and Evaluation: Are you willing and able to...		
Take direction from your supervisor and other senior staff in front of the public and your co-workers?		
Work both supervised and unsupervised, and be prepared to answer questions routinely about why you followed a certain course of action without taking it personally?		
Job Stressors: Are you willing and able to...		
Deal calmly and professionally with angry citizens when their problems are not your fault?		
Listen to abusive and profane language and deal with it impersonally and unemotionally?		
Deal with a crisis incident – where a child has died; a firefighter has been injured; someone is trapped and in need of rescue – while remaining calm, objective, and professional and carrying out the tasks you have been directed to do?		

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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