

**ESQUIMALT**

**OAK BAY**

**SAANICH**

**VICTORIA**

**Joint  
Firefighter  
Recruitment**

**2026  
Application  
Guide**



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# About This Guide

This application guide outlines the competencies, knowledge, skills and qualifications required to be a firefighter with the Esquimalt, Oak Bay, Saanich and Victoria Fire Departments, collectively referred to as the Core Four.

This guide will assist potential candidates preparing for the recruitment process. The timelines listed are estimates only and are subject to change.

# Join Our Team

## VICTORIA FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

The Victoria Fire Department consists of 130 professionals who provide a multitude of fire rescue and emergency management services to Victoria's residents through three fire stations. Our services are delivered through the following divisions: Fire Suppression and Rescue, Training, Fire Prevention, Mechanical, Administration and Emergency Management.

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





## **ESQUIMALT FIRE RESCUE SERVICES**

Esquimalt Fire Rescue Services (EFRS) is seeking passionate and dedicated individuals to join our team. Serving the vibrant and growing community of Esquimalt, which borders Victoria and is home to Canada's Pacific Coast Naval Base, EFRS is at the forefront of emergency response and community safety.

At EFRS, we don't just respond to emergencies — we actively shape the future of our community. With our new state-of-the-art public safety building under construction, replacing our current station in January 2027, we are equipped to handle everything from fire suppression and medical emergencies to specialized rescues like tower crane and confined space.

Our firefighters are committed to being a responsive and progressive force within the community, constantly adapting to its evolving needs. We embrace new technologies and cutting-edge techniques, with a strong focus on training and education to ensure the highest level of service. Our commitment to developing exceptional leaders is central to our mission. We strive to attract top talent and provide a workplace where everyone is valued and empowered to reach their full potential.

EFRS offers an environment where your skills, leadership potential and dedication to community care will be recognized and nurtured. You'll work alongside professionals who are dedicated to innovation and excellence, while becoming part of a community that values and supports its members. Esquimalt views our department with pride, respect and confidence — a trust we are committed to maintaining and strengthening. As Esquimalt continues to grow, so will your opportunities with us.



## **OAK BAY FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Oak Bay is a picturesque suburban coastal community located on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Our municipality is vibrant and unique with a high level of community spirit, participation and benevolence. Oak Bay has many attractions, beautiful neighbourhoods, numerous parks and relaxing beaches.

The Oak Bay Fire Department consists of 34 professionals and responds to a range of emergencies that include structure fires, motor vehicle incidents, confined space rescues and medical aid calls. A career in the fire service is a fulfilling, long-term employment opportunity that carries with it the satisfaction of providing service and care to our citizens and community. The Oak Bay Fire Department serves a population of over 18,000 residents and employs 32 full-time uniformed personnel.

As a professional organization, we value accountability, integrity, motivation, critical thinking, problem solving, respect and service. Through this process, we will be evaluating candidates for these qualities and other critical elements.



## **SAANICH FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Saanich Fire Department was established in 1919 and has grown to 132 uniformed members, seven support staff and three fire stations. The department responds to more than 6,500 emergency incidents per year including fire suppression; medical first responder; vehicle extrication; land and marine rescue; hazardous materials as part of the Capital Regional District Regional Hazmat team; technical rescue, including high angle, low slope and confined space; structural collapse; and mutual aid support. The department also responds to hundreds of public service requests to suppress fires and disasters.

Saanich is a large and growing rural and urban community with increasing call volume and response complexity as the district densifies and adapts to the needs of a growing community. The Saanich Fire Department is proud of the important connection our firefighters have with the community they serve. There is significant opportunity in Saanich to grow and learn as a firefighter to meet these growing complexities. This includes the current development of a replacement fire hall in Royal Oak with a state-of-the-art training facility. Saanich's firefighters have fulfilling careers filled with pride in the department and people they work with. As a member of the Saanich Fire Department, you will have an opportunity to share the values of service.

# Ideal Candidate Profile

Our fire departments are seeking dedicated individuals who are committed to public safety and demonstrate the following key attributes:

- Exceptional physical and mental resilience
- Decisive problem solving
- Compassionate public service
- Collaborative teamwork
- Unwavering integrity
- Commitment to continuous learning

Core Four personnel are community-minded, skilled professionals, trained to use the latest fire suppression technologies and rescue techniques. We uphold the highest standards of honesty and ethics, serving as trusted representatives of the fire service. Our firefighters thrive in highly structured, team-based settings and communicate clearly and tactfully with colleagues and the public.

We strongly encourage all candidates to bring their unique strengths and skill sets to the application process including communication, resiliency, perseverance, problem solving and teamwork. Our diversity strengthens us and improves our ability to serve our community.



# Role of a Firefighter

There's more to the job of a firefighter than extinguishing fires. Firefighters perform fire suppression, search and rescue, emergency medical assistance and fire prevention activities while working as part of a highly trained emergency response team. They operate specialized equipment, maintain vehicles and tools and participate in ongoing training to ensure operational readiness.

Firefighters respond to a wide range of emergency situations to protect people, the environment and property.

These emergencies can involve minimizing distress and suffering and often include numerous hazards.

In addition to emergency response, firefighters contribute to community safety and wellbeing through public education, inspections and prevention programs. The role involves shift work, including nights, weekends and holidays, and requires the ability to perform demanding tasks in hazardous and high-stress environments.

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

Promoting fire safety and enforcing fire safety standards in public and commercial establishments helps protect people and property from fire and other risks. Firefighters are responsible for maintaining, cleaning and testing equipment, ensuring its daily readiness for use.

Working as a firefighter means continuous learning — exercises, lectures, practice drills and other training are all part of the job. The firefighter's role offers the opportunity to serve the community in a challenging, rewarding and mission-driven profession.





# Factors for Consideration

Like any career, there are challenges to working as a firefighter. Important things to consider are listed below.

## Shift Work

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

## Physical Demand

- 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 guard against the health risks of the job.

## Psychological Demand

The nature of the work exposes firefighters to tragic and traumatic incidents.

- Firefighters must have emotional fortitude, healthy coping mechanisms and mental resiliency to deal with these situations.



# Duties of a Firefighter

Candidates must be able to fulfill the following duties:

- Respond to fire, rescue and dangerous goods incidents and life hazard emergencies, which may require removing people from danger.
- Become familiar and safely operate all firefighting equipment and related rescue tools, including fire streams and other practices as directed through the applicable Operational Guidelines or Standing Orders.
- Achieve and maintain a First Responder licence and administer first aid to injured people.
- Possess and maintain a valid Class 3 driver's licence and air brake endorsement.
- Perform in-station duties as assigned.
- Perform maintenance of apparatus, 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, plus Operational Guidelines and Standing Orders that apply to the department.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge of the topography served by the department including streets, block numbers, water distribution systems and location of target hazard occupancies, including 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 education activities.



## **Minimum Required Experience**

Below are the minimum qualifications for the 2026 Joint Firefighter Recruitment.

- Firefighter Level 1 and 2 certification that meets the NFPA 1010 standard and is accredited by either IFSAC or Pro Board
- Valid certificate from a recognized training program in one of the following categories:
  - First Responder
  - Emergency Medical Responder
  - Primary Care Paramedic
  - Advanced Care Paramedic
  - Critical Care Paramedic

Refer to the Province of B.C.'s First Responder Licensing for a list of [recognized training programs](#).

- Canadian citizenship or Landed Immigrant status
- Proof of grade 12 education or equivalent
- Valid B.C. Class 3 driver's licence with air brake endorsement or equivalent
- Driver's abstract reflective of a safe and responsible driving history dated within 30 days of application
- Successful completion of the University of Victoria or University of Alberta Firefighter fitness test within one year of the job posting.

# Supplemental Experience

The additional skills and experiences below will enhance your application, but do not replace the minimum qualifications.

## PAST EXPERIENCE IN EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Fire
- Forest fire service
- Search and Rescue
- EMS/BCAS
- Healthcare
- Coast Guard
- Law enforcement
- Military
- Work experience programs (WEP)

## PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE THAT TRANSFERS TO THE FIRE SERVICE

- College or University studies
- Second language
- Construction-related trades
- Cultural awareness
- Ability to swim and related lifesaving and rescue certificates
- Marine or boat experience
- Scuba diving experience
- Coaching, teaching or instructional experience
- Community involvement and volunteer experience
- Effective communications skills, both written and verbal, including the ability to speak publicly
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work in a team environment
- Completion of other fire service-related programs or courses
- Knowledge and ability to work effectively with computers, programs and software, including the Microsoft Office suite



# General Information

We are conducting a joint recruitment competition to establish a firefighter eligibility pool. The number of firefighters hired from the pool may differ each year.

All minimum requirements must be met for an application to be considered in this competition. Each individual department reserves the right to limit the number of candidates that proceed through any stage.

Before being offered employment, candidates must:

- Verify they hold the minimum basic qualifications and certifications
- Demonstrate they have the physical fitness ability to successfully perform the duties of a firefighter
- Successfully complete a pre-placement medical assessment
- Participate in an interview
- Provide a clean Police Information Check with vulnerable sector screening

Once hired, candidates may be required to live within the individual departments' boundaries as set by each department.

## COMPENSATION

All terms of employment, including compensation and benefits, will be according to the Collective Agreement of the respective fire department.

All permanent employees contribute to the Municipal Pension Plan.



# How To Apply

All applications will be managed by the City of Victoria on behalf of the participating departments. Only one application is required.

Please make sure that you have met the minimum position requirements before applying.

## APPLY ONLINE

Go to [victoria.ca/jobs](http://victoria.ca/jobs) and look for the firefighter posting. Once in the posting, click “Apply for this job online” and follow the prompts.

Early in your online application you will be asked to upload a resume. You can only upload one document. This document must be uploaded as a single PDF and contain all of the following:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Copies of the minimum required qualifications
  - NFPA 1010 Firefighter 1 and 2
  - EMALB recognized training program certificate or licence – EMA FR or equivalent
- Canadian citizenship or Landed Immigrant status
- Proof of grade 12 education or equivalent
- Valid British Columbia Class 3 driver licence with air brake endorsement or equivalent
- Current driver’s abstract

Once you submit your online application you will receive a confirmation email from the City of Victoria.



# The Process

The table below outlines the major milestones in the 2026 joint firefighter recruitment and selection process. The dates are estimates and are subject to change.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION STAGE		ESTIMATED DATES
1.1	Application submission. Applications received outside the specified timeline will not be accepted.	Opens May 26 Closes June 16, 4:30 p.m.
1.2	Application review, selection and notification for individuals entering the hiring process. Only candidates selected to advance will be contacted.	Late June
TESTING AND EVALUATION STAGE		ESTIMATED DATES
2.1	Written examination and psychometric testing	July 17 & 18
2.2	Joint recruitment assessment days, including mini-interview panel	September 26 & 27
2.3	Panel interviews	Late October
2.4	Reference checks	January 2027
2.5	Selection of firefighter eligibility pool and notification to candidates	February
2.6	Conditional employment offer, Police Information and Vulnerable Sector Check, verification of Firefighter fitness test and pre-placement medical assessment	April 2027 – as needed for intake



# Recruitment Process Details

## 1.1 APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Candidates who meet all required minimum qualifications are invited to apply.

Candidates must follow the instructions in this guide on how to apply. Applications that do not follow the defined procedures, that are submitted outside the specified timelines or do not meet the minimum qualifications will not be accepted.

Applications will be reviewed and screened based on meeting the minimum qualifications.

## 1.2 APPLICATION REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION

Only candidates selected to participate in the hiring process will be contacted about next steps, including written exams details.



## 2.1 WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Written exams will assess the knowledge, skills, abilities and personal characteristics that firefighters require to be successful on the job. Exams will be held online, proctored by BL Associates.

## 2.2 JOINT RECRUITMENT ASSESSMENT DAY

Based on the written exam results and the application review, we will invite selected candidates to the in-person joint recruitment assessment day, which will include a mini-interview station.

## 2.3 PANEL INTERVIEW

The next step is the panel interview, which will include behavioural-descriptive questions focusing on past life experiences as they relate to the position of a firefighter. From this stage onward, all steps will be conducted by the individual fire departments.

## 2.4 REFERENCE CHECKS

Before selecting a candidate for the firefighter eligibility pool, we will complete reference checks. Candidates should be prepared to provide two contacts they have worked for recently, who they reported to in some manner.

## 2.5 ELIGIBILITY POOL

Successful completion of the University of Victoria or University of Alberta Firefighter fitness test dated within one year of the eligibility pool's creation may be required by individual fire departments.

Following the interviews and reference checks, candidates will be notified whether they have been selected for the firefighter eligibility pool. Being in the eligibility pool does not guarantee a candidate will be offered employment. Candidates will be contacted if a position becomes available.

## 2.6 CONDITIONAL OFFERS: POLICE INFORMATION AND VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECK AND PRE-PLACEMENT MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

An updated Police Information Check with vulnerable sector screening, driver's abstract and a pre-placement medical assessment will be required before employment. Verification of licensing or certification may also be required.



# Appendix

## FIREFIGHTER SELF EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

A career with a Core Four Fire Department on south Vancouver Island offers opportunities for personal and professional growth. Firefighters take pride in knowing they play a vital role in the protection and preservation of life, property and community. Citizens rely on firefighters’ broad technical skills to assist them with a variety of issues. Responding to calls for help and providing an essential service to the public is very rewarding.

The position of Recruit Firefighter requires a high level of personal dedication and a strong commitment to continuous learning. 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 to help you determine whether to apply for this position.

JOB FIT: ASK YOURSELF	YES	NO
Does my lifestyle align itself with the values of the Core Four Fire Departments? 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 or personal life (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 as outlined in the 2026 Application Guide?		
Am I dedicated 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?		

<b>WORK ENVIRONMENT: ARE YOU WILLING AND ABLE TO...</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Work in extreme and 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, smoke and limited to no visibility while utilizing self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)?		
Work for extended periods, potentially up to 24 hours, with breaks determined by operational requirements?		
Work a regular rotating shift schedule?		
Work weekends and holidays based on a rotating shift schedule?		
Spend the first 12 months of employment in a probationary status, with extensive classroom and on-the-job training, receiving daily mentoring, critiques and evaluations?		
Read and study numerous training, procedure and policy documents and manuals, and take written tests?		
Attend scheduled training outside of your regular shift schedule?		
<b>SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION: ARE YOU WILLING AND ABLE TO...</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Take direction from your supervisor and other senior staff in front of the public and your co-workers?		
Work both supervised and unsupervised?		
Regularly answer questions about why you took a certain course of action?		
<b>JOB STRESSORS: ARE YOU WILLING AND ABLE TO...</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Be calm and professional during challenging, tense or escalated interactions with the public?		
Avoid and resolve conflict with the public in a professional manner, sometimes involving emotionally challenging situations?		
Use personal experience, departmental resources and outside support to deal with the emotional impacts of acute and traumatic events sometimes involving vulnerable members of the public and/or co-workers and other first responders?		



# Thank you for applying.

We look forward to your application. Please contact us if you have questions.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### City of Victoria

People and Culture Department  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6  
250.361.0232  
careers@victoria.ca  
victoria.ca

### Township of Esquimalt

Esquimalt Fire Rescue Services  
101-1151 Esquimalt Road  
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3N6  
250.414.7126  
fire@esquimalt.ca  
esquimalt.ca

### District of Oak Bay

Oak Bay Fire Services  
1703 Monterey Avenue  
Victoria, BC V8R 5V6  
250.592.9121  
firechief@oakbay.ca  
oakbay.ca

### District of Saanich

Saanich Fire Services  
760 Vernon Avenue  
Victoria, BC V8X 2W6  
250.475.5503  
fireadmin@saanich.ca  
saanich.ca