



Nanoose Volunteer Fire Department

Self-Assessment Guide/Application

We appreciate your interest in becoming a member of the Nanoose Volunteer Fire Department (NVFD). In the fall of each year, a panel will review all submitted applications and select prospective candidates for a limited number of seats in our training program. From time to time, seats will be reserved for candidates that can fill certain shortages such as those with daytime availability.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Nanoose Volunteer Fire Department strives to protect and support the community by providing outstanding service in the areas of fire suppression, emergency response, member training, fire prevention, public education and charitable community service.

ORGANIZATION:

The fire department operates under the direction of the Fire Chief, who is responsible to the Regional District of Nanaimo.

In order to deliver the services needed to accomplish the above-stated mission, the department is organized into three major divisions:

- Operations - Responsible for the delivery of emergency services for fire and rescue as well as emergency medical services.
- Fire prevention - Responsible for inspections as required, plan reviews, investigation and public education.
- Training - responsible for achieving and maintaining the skills and expertise to accomplish the department's stated mission.

OPERATIONS:

The NVFD responds to approximately 200 + emergency calls per year, ranging from structure fires to grass fires, from rescues and auto extrication to backup for emergency health services. The department also responds to complaints ranging from outdoor burning concerns to reports of hazardous situations.

PAID on CALL FIREFIGHTERS:

Paid on call firefighters directly participate in fire and rescue operations, including incident response and the operation of all apparatus and equipment. Eligible candidates must:

- a) Reside in the specific Fire Protection Area (Nanoose) or within 10 minutes of the fire hall in order for the department to meet dwelling protection grades.
- b) be between the ages of eighteen (18) and sixty (60) years.
 - The Fire Department may accept Junior Members who are between sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) years of age, and Cadet Members who are between thirteen (13) and fifteen (15) years of age. Junior and Cadet Members may not enter a burning building or drive vehicles. Other restrictions may be laid upon Juniors or Cadets from time to time by order of the Fire Chief.
 - The Fire Department may accept area residents over the age of 60 as senior members. Such members may be assigned to restricted duties as required by any governing regulations and consistent with their ability to perform the duties assigned.
- c) be able to meet the BC competency and training playbook standards (the training program);

- d) be able to meet NFPA 1001 standards as determined by the Fire Department.
- e) meet the physical and medical assessment requirements of the Fire Service, which can include but is not limited to CPAT physical testing and PAR-Q Medical clearance forms. These requirements must be met on appointment and no greater than every two years thereafter. All members of age 55 or over shall be required to have a yearly, complete medical examination at no cost to the individual; and
- f) be of good character, which means at a minimum adhering to the *Firefighters Code of Ethics*

TRAINING - GENERAL:

Over the years, the fire service has evolved into a “public safety agency” providing highly technical and diverse services. The general public has come to rely on the fire department as a “first responder” agency, not only when life and property are threatened by human or natural disasters, but for smaller concerns as well. In order to ensure that all members of the fire department are prepared to deliver the best level of services required, training standards have been developed to provide each member with the skills needed, knowledge and abilities necessary, to deliver fire and emergency first-aid service to the citizens of Nanoose.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS - RECRUIT AND PROBATIONARY FIREFIGHTERS:

All volunteers entering the department, regardless of prior training or experience, must complete a recruit training program led by department officers. The recruit training program is typically about one year in duration, although it may be abbreviated in cases where prior experience can be demonstrated. Recruit firefighters will also be enrolled in the VIERA (Vancouver Island emergency response academy) firefighter certification program. During the recruit training program, recruits are expected to maintain attendance as close to 100% as possible. In addition to weekly practices (Monday nights) recruits may be scheduled to attend occasional extra evenings and possibly one or two weekends per year for training courses.

REGULAR FIREFIGHTERS:

Members are expected to attend a minimum of 75% of weekly practices (Monday nights) each year. During weekly practices, all aspects of fire and rescue evolutions are reviewed through lessons delivered by fire department trainers.

Extra training sessions are provided and include live fire training, emergency medical first responder, auto extrication, along with many other subjects.

In addition, individuals who have the desire to increase their skills may be provided the opportunity for advanced training.

All paid on call members of the department are expected to complete and maintain the NFPA-1001, FF 1&11 training standard along with any other training standards adopted by the fire department.

THE NATURE OF OUR PROFESSION:

The fire and rescue service is one of the most diverse and challenging professions known today. It is this diversity that inspires people to enter the service as volunteers, paid on call, or career firefighters. Imagine having to train to prepare yourself to cope with situations that range from structure fires to motor vehicle accidents to hazardous chemical spills to heart attacks and almost any other possible emergency situation in between. This diversity is coupled with the fact that these skills may be needed at any time of day, seven days a week, in any kind of weather, and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances. These factors contribute to our profession being personally very rewarding.

Our primary goal is to protect the public. This is accomplished in two ways.

- 1- Prevent fires and other emergencies from occurring, through fire prevention, inspections, code enforcement and fire safety education.
- 2- Prepare ourselves to control fire and other emergencies. This is done through education, training, pre-incident planning, state-of-the-art equipment and training, training, training. We are paramilitary profession working in a "hurry up and wait" environment.

This profession is not for everyone. You need more than just a desire to help people. You also need courage and dedication, assertiveness and willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. The fire and rescue service is not for the meek or timid or for those who lose control of their emotions during times of crisis. Our service is one that calls on its members to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments.

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from the fire and rescue service are often beyond description. There is a sense of accomplishment after controlling a building fire, joy and elation when a child is rescued, compassion for accident victims and fulfilment in teaching fire safety. The list goes on.

If after completing the attached questionnaire, you feel you have what it takes to meet the challenge of our business, we welcome you to start the process.