Core Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment Process & FAQ

Click on the links below to learn more about the recruitment process and find answers to frequently asked questions. Please review all of the information in this document before contacting us, as many of the commonly asked questions are answered here.

- **General Recruitment Information and Timeline**
  Includes answers to questions such as:
  - *How many volunteers will you be bringing on?*
  - *When is the academy?*
  - *If I am selected, what is the time commitment?*

- **Recruitment Process**
  Outline of the volunteer recruitment process and what to expect during each step of the process.

  1. Position is posted
  2. Volunteer Interest Night (optional)
  3. Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue Volunteer Application
  4. Phone interview
  5. Chief's interview
  6. Background, driver's license, criminal history, and reference checks
  7. Fire Chief's approval on recommended volunteer recruits
  8. Conditional offer made
  9. Pre-physical and fitness assessment
  10. Uniform fitting and mask fit test
  11. Medical and drug screening
  12. Welcome ceremony
  13. TVF&R Volunteer Recruit Academy and Orientation
  14. WCTA Fire Fighter I Academy
  15. Begin active service

- **Helpful Hints**

- **Frequently Asked Questions**
  Includes answers to questions such as:
  - *I heard there is a new tattoo policy at TVF&R, is that true?*
  - *How do I obtain proof that I am eligible to enroll in an EMT course?*
  - *When will I know the status of my application?*
  - *I heard that there is a Firefighter Intern Program, how can I apply?*

General Information and Timeline

We anticipate bringing on 12 Core Volunteer Firefighters for the upcoming 2012 Volunteer Recruit Academy.

We will be hosting a Volunteer Interest Night on April 5, 2012, for anyone considering volunteer service at TVF&R to come and learn more about the program. This optional event will provide general information about the program, and a forum for questions to be answered. See below for more information.

All applications received during the open acceptance period will be reviewed for qualification; those meeting the qualifications will be considered for a phone interview.

Upon completion of the phone interviews, a selection of approximately 18-24 candidates will be invited to participate in the Chief's interviews. Thereafter, a smaller list of individuals will undergo a background check for criminal history and driving record; references will be checked as well. Upon completion of background and reference checks, we will select up to 12 individuals to participate in the 12-01 Volunteer Recruit Academy.

See the timeline below for the schedule* and time commitment involved in becoming a TVF&R Core Volunteer Firefighter. **Please ensure you are able to meet all of these time commitments before applying.**

Action Item	When	Time Commitment	Location
Application acceptance	March 29 – April 23, 2012 Subject to close earlier.		**Tigard** / jobs@tvfr.com Command & Business Operations Center (CBOC)
Volunteer Interest Night (optional) Learn more about our volunteer program.	April 5, 2012	Begins at 7:00 PM	**Tigard** - CBOC
Phone interviews	April 24 – May 11, 2012	Business hours	n/a
Chief's interviews Select candidates will be invited to an interview.	May 31, 2012	Evening	**Aloha** North Operating Center
Background/ Reference Checks Conducted	June 4 – June 15, 2012	n/a	n/a
Conditional Offers Made	Approx. June 20, 2012	n/a	Notification by phone.
Pre-Physical & Fitness Assessment	June 26 or June 27, 2012	2 hour appointments Business hours, A.M.	**Sherwood** TVF&R Training Center
Uniform Fitting & Mask Fit Test	June 27, 2012	1 hour appointments Business hours	**Aloha** North Operating Center
Physical Exam Appointment	July 9 – July 13, 2012	1 hour appointments Business hours	Designated medical facility (in District).
Welcome Ceremony	August 16, 2012	7:00pm – 9:00pm	**Tigard** - CBOC
TVF&R Volunteer Orientation	August 18 & August 19 August 25 & August 26	7:00am – 5:00pm 7:00am – 5:00pm	**Sherwood** TVF&R Training Center
Fire Fighter I Academy WCTA (required)	Beginning in September 2012 eight weeks	Saturday & Sunday 7-5pm, and Thursday evenings each week, 6-10pm	Various locations – WCTA Facilities

*Dates are subject to change; however, the TVF&R academy date has been finalized. *Back to Top of Page*

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Recruitment Process

1. Position is posted

The volunteer openings are posted on the Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue website, under the Careers section. Select the Volunteer Service link, and then click on Volunteer Recruitment Information to see if there are any currently active openings.
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2. Volunteer Interest Night

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue hosts a Volunteer Interest Night to provide an opportunity for interested community members to come to learn more about volunteering at TVF&R. This evening will provide detailed information about the volunteer program, the recruitment process, and an opportunity for questions and answers.
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3. Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue Volunteer Application

Candidates must complete a Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue volunteer application and meet the minimum requirements to be considered. The application can be found at the Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue Volunteer Service page, under Volunteer Recruitment Information. **Please save the application to your computer before filling out, read carefully, complete in full, and save again to your computer before emailing as an attachment to jobs@tvfr.com**. Applications are only accepted during the posted dates. The acceptance period may close at an earlier date if a sufficient number of applications are received. Applications may be emailed to jobs@tvfr.com or delivered to the Command and Business Operations Center in Tigard.
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4. Phone Interview

All applications received during the open acceptance period will be reviewed for qualification; candidates meeting the qualifications will be considered for a phone interview. This process is used to help us to select the candidates that will be invited to a Chief's interview. If you do not qualify, you will receive a phone call to inform you of your status. If you receive a phone interview, we will call you to let you know whether or not you will move forward to a Chief's interview.
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5. Chief's Interview

Approximately 18-24 candidates will be invited to participate in a Chief's interview (panel interview).

If you participate in a Chief's interview you will receive a follow-up call shortly after your interview to inform you of your status in the selection process and whether you will be continuing forward in the process or not.
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6. Background, Driver's License and Criminal History

Following the Chief's interviews, a select number of candidates will undergo an extensive personal reference and work history background check. A criminal history and driver's license check will also be conducted.
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7. Fire Chief's Review and Approval

The information collected through the background, reference, driver's license, and criminal history checks will be compiled and presented to the Fire Chief for review and approval. The Fire Chief will approve the individuals who will receive conditional offers to join the Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue Core Volunteer program.
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8. Conditional Offer

Upon the Fire Chief's approval, the Human Resources Division will notify the successful candidates and extend a conditional offer to join the team as a Core Volunteer Firefighter. Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue makes the offer contingent upon the results of a post-offer physical examination and drug screen, and any pending background check information.
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9. Pre-Physical and Fitness Assessment

Those candidates receiving a conditional offer will be scheduled for a pre-physical and fitness assessment. The date, time and location will be communicated to the candidate.
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10. Uniform Fitting & Mask Fit Test

Those candidates receiving an offer will be scheduled for a uniform fitting and mask fit test. The date, time, and location will be communicated to the candidate.
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11. Medical and Drug Screening

Candidates must pass the medical examination and drug screen as administered by the Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue designated physician, for the contingent offer to be complete.
Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue must ensure, to the extent possible, that each successful candidate is fit for duty.
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12. Welcome Ceremony

The District hosts a ceremony for the new volunteer recruits to celebrate and welcome the new recruits to TVF&R. The new recruits and their families are invited to attend this evening event, just prior to the start of the academy.
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13. Orientation / Volunteer Recruit Academy

Core Volunteer Firefighter Recruits will attend the TVF&R Volunteer Orientation to become oriented to Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, this will be held Saturday and Sunday, from 0700-1700 hours, for two weekends.

The TVF&R Orientation weekends will begin with physical training in the mornings, followed by an orientation to the District and an overview of the benefits and TVF&R guidelines and procedures.
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14. WCTA Fire Fighter I Academy

After the TVF&R orientation has been completed, the Core Volunteer Firefighter recruits will begin an eight week WCTA Fire Fighter I academy. This academy includes the other Washington County fire agencies and their recruits, utilizing various training grounds throughout Washington County. The WCTA Fire Fighter I academy will be held Saturdays and Sundays from 0700-1700 hours, and Thursday evenings each week from 1800-2200 hours; it takes eight weeks to complete.

This academy is required for all TVF&R Core Volunteer Firefighters, regardless of previous Fire Fighter I certification.
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15. Begin Active Service

Volunteer drill is held every Tuesday evening, typically from 1900 – 2100 hours. All volunteers must complete four hours of supplemental activities per calendar quarter. Supplemental activities are defined as any activity that benefits the District and is not a drill or incident response (e.g., community or public education event, assisting a District department, etc.). A large part of the job of the District volunteer is to provide service to the community through attendance at District sponsored activities.

Minimum attendance requirements to be considered a Core Volunteer in good standing with the District include:

- Attendance at four Tuesday Drills per quarter and 15 drills biannually (calendar year).
- Incident responses will be evaluated based upon the station's call volume and overall response of its personnel.

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Helpful Hints

- Before applying to become a volunteer, please read the entire posting, including the time requirements. Be sure that you are able to meet all of the required appointments and that you are able to attend the entire ten weeks of the volunteer orientation/ academy.
- Read all info on our website; most questions can be answered in the material found there.
- Visit the website frequently for updates.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

About the Volunteer Program
Core Volunteers and the Minimum Requirements
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About the Volunteer Program

The volunteer program was established to provide hands-on experience for individuals interested in supporting their community. We currently have openings for Core Volunteer Firefighters, who serve our communities through community activities, public education, and emergency response functions. We also have openings for Auxiliary Volunteers, who serve the community through community activities, public education, office support, training, and/or assistance with the antique fleet.

Q. I heard there is a Firefighter Intern Program, can I apply?

A. The District does have an uncompensated Firefighter Intern program that is made available to the District's Core Volunteer Firefighters. This program is designed to recruit and train TVF&R volunteers to become full-time professional firefighters. The District's goal is to provide an opportunity for academic and practical skill development to individuals who demonstrate potential for successful fire-service careers and who may come from backgrounds underrepresented in the fire service, or who otherwise have faced obstacles to gaining educational and/or experience in this field.

Applicants must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- **Core Volunteer with the District for at least one year and in good standing at the time of application.**
- Be currently enrolled, or in the process of enrolling, in an associate's degree program in fire protection technology, fire science, fire prevention, or closely related field, which grants academic credit for participation in the Firefighter Intern Program.
- Be physically able to perform all of the essential functions listed in the firefighter class specification. All applicants, upon conditional acceptance to the program, must receive a physical examination provided by the District if it has been more than one year since their last physical. All physicals and necessary vaccinations will be provided at the District's expense. The applicant may be disqualified if not deemed fit for duty per the District's standard operating guidelines.

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Core Volunteers & Minimum Requirements

Q. What is the role of a Core Volunteer Firefighter?

A. The core volunteer firefighters support their community through community activities, public education, and in an emergency response role. Duties include:

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Community Activities

Participating in community activities, public education, standbys, fire watches, station tours, and other events that require positive public interaction.

Drills, Classroom Training, Field Training

Core volunteers participate in fire and EMS related drills, attend classes to attain and maintain necessary skills related to fire suppression, life safety, rescue operations, property conservation operations, clean-up projects, and other related activities.

Fire & EMS Service

Rehab unit staffing and response, medic standby, and water tender operations; responding to alarms; performing firefighter related duties, including the use of hoses, pumps, equipment, emergency apparatus, and tools; maintaining and testing apparatus, equipment, and facilities.

Q. What are the requirements for a Core Volunteer Firefighter?

A. The minimum requirements are:

- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- High school graduate or equivalent required.
- Must have a valid Oregon driver's license.
- Must pass criminal background check, reference check, pre-academy physical exam, and drug screen.
- Must live within TVF&R jurisdiction at the time of application and throughout time of service. See "About Us" at www.tvfr.com for TVF&R service area information. If your address is near a District border, determine whether your address is within the TVF&R service area by going to www.portlandmaps.com, enter your home address, click on the *assessor* tab, and verify that TVF&R is listed under *Fire*.
- Must attend and successfully complete 100% of the academy, approximately ten weekends.
- Must be able to provide proof of EMT-Basic certification, or prove eligibility to enroll in an Oregon EMT-Basic course in order to receive EMT-Basic certification within one year of becoming a volunteer. (EMT-B certification costs may be reimbursed upon completion.)
- Must be Fire Fighter I certified, or have Fire Fighter I certification within one year of becoming a volunteer. (The District will provide this training.)

Successful candidates will also have the following:

- Key characteristics well suited to the philosophy and values of the District, including a strong community and customer-service orientation and high level of professionalism.
- Demonstrated use of good judgment and decision making.
- Excellent physical conditioning.
- An "unremarkable" criminal background and driving record.

Q. I am an older individual considering volunteer service. Is there an upper age limit given the physical demands of the job or for any other reason?

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A. No, there is no age restriction (outside of being 18 years or older). TVF&R encourages all individuals, regardless of age, to consider a rewarding experience as a volunteer. We have many examples of individuals who begin volunteer service later in life and are very successful. All candidates are required to pass the same physical exam and are held to the same physical performance expectations.

Q. Are you accepting applications for Auxiliary Volunteers?

A. Yes. We are accepting applications for both Auxiliary Volunteers and Core Volunteer Firefighters at this time. See the Auxiliary Volunteer FAQ for more questions about the Auxiliary Volunteer program.

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EMT Status

Q. Do you have to be EMT-B or EMT-P certified in the state of Oregon to be a Core Volunteer Firefighter?

A. An EMT-B certification is required for Core Volunteer Firefighters, though not at the time of application. Core Volunteer Firefighters are required to obtain their Oregon certification within one year of graduating from the volunteer academy.

Q. How will you verify my EMT status, or eligibility to enroll?

A. If you advance further into the recruitment process, you must be able to show proof of EMT-B certification, proof of EMT-B course enrollment, or proof that you meet the basic math and English requirements to enroll in an EMT course at a local community college.

Requirements for enrollment into EMT Basic course:

ASSET Test Scores
45 for Writing
42 for Numerical Skills
42 for Reading

If WR 115, MTH 20, RD 90 have been completed within the last five years with a "C" grade or better, the appropriate Asset Placement scores or Compass test equivalents are not required. College transcripts with passing grades in equivalent courses will be accepted.

Q. How do I obtain proof that I am eligible to enroll in an EMT course?

A. You can obtain proof by taking a Placement Test at a community college. Placement tests may be taken at any PCC testing center (click on link). You can contact the Portland Community College office at 503-244-6111, or you may contact one of the other community colleges of your choice.

Q. What if my EMT certification is from out of state?

A. If your certification is out of state, you should contact the Oregon Health Authority (Emergency Medical Services & Trauma Systems) to request the paperwork to establish reciprocity.

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Q. How do I contact the state of Oregon?

A. Click here for the State of Oregon Emergency Medical Services & Trauma Systems contact page.

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Application Process

Q. Can I turn in an application any time?

A. No. Applications for TVF&R Fall 12-01 Volunteer Recruit Academy will only be accepted from March 29 through April 23, 2012. If a sufficient number of applications are received, the opening may close at an earlier date. You may place your name and contact information on our interest list at any other time throughout the year.

Q. When is the application due for the 12-01 Volunteer Recruit Academy?

A. The application must be received at the TVF&R Command & Business Operations Center in Tigard (or jobs@tvfr.com account), no later than 4:30 PM on Monday, April 23, 2012. If a sufficient number of applications are received, the opening may close at an earlier date.

Q. Is it okay to hand-deliver the application?

A. Yes, during open recruitment periods applications may be hand-delivered to the TVF&R Command & Business Operations Center, located at 11945 SW 70th Avenue, Tigard, OR. (near Dartmouth & 72nd) Office hours are 8am-4:30pm, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). We do not have a mail slot for after hours drop off.

Q. Will you notify me when you receive my application?

A. Yes, we will email you if you electronically submit your application by attachment to jobs@tvfr.com. If you mail or hand-deliver the application, you will not be contacted until we schedule phone interviews.

Q. What are the Command & Business Operations Center (CBOC) hours?

A. 8:00am-4:30pm, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays).

Q. How many volunteers do you typically accept each year?

A. The number of volunteers we accept each year depends on the number of vacancies at each volunteer station. For the 12-01 Volunteer Recruit Academy, we anticipate bringing on 12 Core Volunteer Firefighters.

Q. Do I need to live in the TVF&R District to serve as a volunteer?

A. Yes, you are only eligible to become a TVF&R volunteer if you live within the TVF&R District boundaries, at the time of application and throughout the time of service (see our "About Us" on www.tvfr.com for more boundary information). To determine whether your address is within the TVF&R District, go to www.portlandmaps.com, enter your home address, click on the *Assessor* tab, and verify that TVF&R is listed under *Fire*.

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Selection Process

Q. When will I know the status of my application?

A. For the 12-01 Volunteer Recruit Academy, we expect that phone screening will be complete by the end of the third week in May. After applications have been reviewed, you will receive a phone call to inform you of your status in the process. This may take some time, depending on how many applications are received. All applicants will receive a phone call notification, whether they are selected to move forward in the process or not.

Q. What if I don't receive a phone call by the end of the third week in May?

A. Please call the Command & Business Operations Center at (503) 649-8577 to determine your status.

Q. When are Chief's Interviews?

A. For Core Volunteers, interviews have been scheduled for the evening of Thursday, May 31, 2012. If you are invited to the interviews, you will receive **a phone call, followed by an email** informing you of your interview check-in time.

Q. Will I receive a Chief's interview?

A. Not everyone will move forward to the Chief's interview. Applicants that apply within the opening dates, meet the minimum qualifications, and follow the application instructions are eligible for a phone interview. The list of individuals moving forward to Chief's interviews will be determined through the phone screening. After the phone interviews are complete, all candidates that applied will receive a phone call notifying them of their status in the process.

Q. Why are some applicants disqualified?

A. Applicants that do not meet the minimum qualifications will not be considered. Candidates are often disqualified because they live outside of our District boundaries. It is a primary requirement that candidates live within the District service area.

Candidates must have a VALID Oregon driver's license.

Complete applications are required. If your application is missing any requested information, it will not be considered.

Not all candidates who receive a phone interview will be selected to move forward to the Chief's interviews. From the many qualified applicants, only a few are selected to move forward to the interview process.

If you have further questions about the minimum qualifications, please review the first section of this FAQ.

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Academy Schedule

Q. When and how long is the TVF&R Volunteer Academy?

A. The next TVF&R academy begins on August 18, 2012.

Core Volunteer Academy Schedule:
TVF&R Volunteer Orientation lasts two weekends, Saturday and Sunday, 0700 – 1700 hours;
Core Volunteer Firefighters will also be required to attend the WCTA Fire Fighter I Academy, beginning in September, this will last for eight weeks.
The WCTA Fire Fighter I Academy will be on Saturdays and Sundays, from approximately 0700 – 1700 hours, and Thursday evenings each week, from 1800 – 2200 hours.

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Miscellaneous

Q. I heard there is a new tattoo policy at TVF&R, is that true?

A. Yes. All employees and volunteers hired after February 10, 2012, will be required to cover tattoos and body art while in work, duty, or dress uniforms. This includes tattoos, branding, scarring, piercings, and body art.

Q. I have some convictions and some traffic violations in my history. How do I know if those will disqualify me from consideration?

A. TVF&R does not apply a blanket policy for consideration of candidate conviction histories and driving records, but reviews circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Our considerations take into mind the obligations we owe to our citizens to protect them, as well as what a conviction history and/or driving record indicates about a candidate's judgment, respect for the law, maturity, and general character. Crimes against persons as well as property crimes are taken very seriously.

Q. I have some significant convictions in my past, but they do not represent the person I am today. How can I make sure those don't pose an obstacle to being selected for appointment?

A. You must make a compelling case for why the District should consider you in light of your conviction history. You may do this on the application itself, or if you feel you can be more effective by attaching a separate statement, that is encouraged.

Q. If I live outside of TVF&R's boundary, but really close to one of your stations, can I apply?

A. Unfortunately, no. You are not eligible to apply unless you live within our service boundary.

Q. I don't live within your District, but if I'm accepted as a volunteer I will move into your District. Is that okay?

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A. Unfortunately, no. You are not eligible unless you live within our service boundary. However, we anticipate future recruitments and you may apply once you reside within the District service area.

Q. If I have already been a volunteer at another fire department, do I still have to go through the entire academy?

A. Yes. All volunteer recruits must complete all required training, including the TVF&R Orientation and Fire Fighter I academy (regardless of previous certification).

Q. Do you have an Explorer or Cadet program?

A. At this point we do not have an Explorer or Cadet program.

Q. Is there any age requirement?

A. Volunteers must be age 18 or older.

Q. How much do volunteers get paid?

A. IRS rules preclude us from paying our volunteers. However, we make every effort to reimburse for any expenses (the law allows) that you may incur while volunteering for us. One example of this is that we reimburse for mileage from your home to your station.

Q. I've heard that you reimburse for college; how does that work?

A. Yes, this is one of the benefits of being a Core Volunteer Firefighter. With pre-approval, you may be eligible for reimbursement of classes that relate to fire service.

Q. If I still have more questions, may I call you?

A. Yes. Or you can contact us by email via the Feedback & Questions form located on our website under Contact Us. **Please check our website first as we update it frequently.** Please direct telephone inquiries to the Command and Business Operations Center, at (503) 649-8577.

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