



Fire Fighter

Applicant Handbook



An equal opportunity employer

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Fire Fighter Applicant

This pamphlet was developed for Fire Fighter applicants by the City of Moorhead Fire Department. It explains what the job involves and how to prepare for the examination process. Adequate preparation and familiarization with the various parts of the examination process may greatly improve your chances of passing the tests and becoming a Fire Fighter with the City of Moorhead. Conscientious physical training that develops the upper body and legs and increases stamina will help you to prepare for the physical agility test. Past experience indicates that individuals in poor physical condition find it difficult to pass that test.

Essential qualities for members of the Moorhead Fire Department are:

- The desire to serve
- The ability to perform, and
- The courage to act

Physical fitness, common sense, a desire to serve their community, and the ability to embrace the kind of discipline which ultimately could save their own lives as well as others are pre-requisites for successful Fire Fighter candidates.

If you are serious about an interesting and fulfilling career as a professional Fire Fighter you are urged to prepare thoroughly for the written test, the physical agility test and the oral interview. You are also encouraged to visit one of Moorhead's fire stations and to converse with the Fire Fighters and officers regarding the nature of the job. By doing that, you may better determine whether the fire service is the right career for you.

What is the job of a Fire Fighter really like?

Fire fighting is extremely strenuous and physically demanding work and involves the ability to cope with emergency life-or-death situations. The physical and mental demands of fire fighting are sometimes underestimated; consequently, the challenging examination process employed in the testing of prospective recruits overwhelms many applicants. Rigorous entry standards are absolutely necessary because fire fighting requires a high level of physical fitness and mental alertness.

Fire Fighter recruits must also be good students because Fire Fighters undergo continuous in-service training to maintain their competencies and keep them abreast of new technology and the latest fire prevention and suppression procedures.

It is necessary that a formalized training system be maintained to provide planned progressive work and learning experiences combined with classroom instruction. In-service training includes subjects such as fire fighting tactics, emergency medical procedures, hydraulics, ladder work, hose practices, ventilation techniques, handling of hazardous materials, fire code enforcement, public education in fire prevention, and arson investigation. Fire Fighters would not be able to adequately fulfill the demands of the job without continued training in these areas.

How can I apply to become a Fire Fighter?

File an application with the City of Moorhead's Office of Human Resources, 500 Center Ave., telephone 218-299-5188. Those individuals who meet the established qualifications listed below may participate in and must pass a series of tests.

What are the qualifications and special requirements?

- A. Must be at least 21 years of age and a United States citizen.
- B. Must have a valid drivers license.
- C. Must be of sound mental and physical health and meet all established standards.

Those candidates accepting a qualified job offer will have a pre-employment rigid medical examination.

Must have one of the following:

1. An Associate of Science Degree in Fire Technologies and Administration and national certification as an Emergency Medical Technician.
- or-
2. Fire Fighter I/II curriculums as approved by the National Fire Academy or an equivalent program which conforms to NFPA 1001.
3. Certified Hazardous Materials as Operational Level and within the probationary period be certified at the Technician Level at own expense.

Selection Process

The selection process is comprised of four components designed to measure an applicant's potential for fulfilling the job duties of a Fire Fighter. The sequence and description of selection process testing are as follows:

Written examination, Physical agility test, Oral interview, and Medical examination.

What types of tests must I take?

The written exam, the first stage of the testing process, is comprised of a series of questions that cover various areas of general knowledge, skills and abilities. Below is a list of five sample test questions.

Sample of Written Test

Select the best or most correct response:

1. If Fire Fighter Erstad walked 15 yards up Lake Street, turned left and walked 30 yards down Belleview Avenue, turned right and walked 20 yards up James Street, turned right again and walked 30 yards down another avenue, turned to the right again and walked 20 yards down another street, turned to the left and walked 5 yards, which of the following streets or avenues would the Fire Fighter be located on?
 - A. Belleview Avenue
 - B. James Street
 - C. An unnamed street
 - D. Lake Street
2. If Fire Fighter Jones saved more money from his/her salary than Fire Fighter Smith, and Fire Fighter Smith saved more than Fire Fighter Davis, and Fire Fighter Davis saved more than Fire Fighter Trump, which of the following could not be true?
 - A. Fire Fighter Davis saved more than Fire Fighter Jones
 - B. Fire Fighter Smith saved more than Fire Fighter Trump
 - C. Fire Fighter Davis saved less than Fire Fighter Jones
 - D. Fire Fighter Smith saved less than Fire Fighter Jones
3. If there are 500 candidates applying for the entry-level Fire Fighter position and there are only 20 openings, what percentage of candidates will be successful?
 - A. 4%
 - B. 7%
 - C. 9%
 - D. 25%
4. As a ship sails away from shore it appears to go below the horizon. The one of the following that best explains this observation is that it results from:
 - A. Rise and fall of tides
 - B. Curvature of the earth's surface
 - C. Refraction of light
 - D. Effect of gravity on moving bodies
5. A clay pitcher of water will crack if the water freezes chiefly because:
 - A. During the process of freezing the water expands
 - B. During the process of freezing the water contracts
 - C. The crystallization process of ice formation causes the ice to solidify
 - D. The tension strength of clay decreases as the temperature decreases

All applicants meeting the selection criteria will be given the written test administered by the City of Moorhead Human Resources Department. Those applicants that score 70% or more on the written test (not to exceed the top 25 applicants) will be permitted to attempt the physical agility test.

Physical Agility Test

The physical agility test is conducted by the Fire Department Director of Training or his designated representative and is the second stage of the testing process. All eligible candidates will be notified as to the date, time, and place that they are to appear for the physical agility test. The exercises that you will be required to perform are representative of duties actually performed by Fire Fighters at the scene of an emergency. The physical agility test is a timed and scored event which comprises 20% of the applicant's total score. Failure in one phase of the test constitutes failure of the entire test.

In order to participate in the physical agility test, the applicant must obtain a signed statement from a physician stating that the applicant can safely participate in the test (See Attachment 1). The applicant must also sign a release from liability form (See Attachment 2).

Preparing for the Physical Agility Test

It must be emphasized that regardless of their level of fitness, individuals should be in good health before beginning any physical training program.

There are several ways to approach physical fitness training. One way is to join a gym or spa where a fitness specialist will help design a training routine to fit your needs. Another less expensive method is one that you can accomplish by designing your own program. Preparation for the physical agility test can be attained by general exercises such as weight lifting, push-ups and pull-ups for muscular strength, jogging, running in place, and deep breathing for cardio-respiratory fitness. Most people can improve their level of physical fitness through an intensive training program.

Moorhead Fire & Rescue Division Acceptance Test

Full fire fighting turnout gear including SCBA will be worn during this event. Any personal fire gear brought by the applicant must be approved by the fire department before testing. We will fit you with the proper size. Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes and long pants - no shorts. We suggest that you bring a towel and an extra shirt, as you will perspire. Drinking water will be available at the test. No showers are provided.

Hose Roll Event

Roll and unroll one 50-foot length of 3-inch fire hose. Roll hose tightly. This will help prevent hose from falling apart. Applicant must be in contact with hose continually while unrolling it, throwing the hose to unroll it is not acceptable. Coupling must be returned to the starting point.

Hose Line Advance Event

Pick up nozzle attached to a 3-inch hose, place over shoulder and drag 150 feet to a designated line. Nozzle may be on the front or back of the shoulder. You may pick up additional hose and carry it in hand. After crossing line, turn around and return nozzle to starting point. Place the nozzle at the starting point. Forward progress must be maintained during this event.

Ladder Carry Event

Remove a 14-foot ladder from mounting bracket by grasping two rungs. Turn and carry ladder walking around the traffic cone, and return the ladder to the mounting bracket. The total distance traveled is 90 feet. At no time shall the ladder touch the ground.

Fire Extension Event

Here you will crawl through an opening onto simulated ceiling joists spaced 16 inches apart. You are to crawl on hands and knees to the opposite "wall". After touching the "wall" with one hand, return again by crawling and exiting through the same opening. You must stay on the joists.

Ladder Hoist Event

This event utilizes a 40-foot extension ladder. Grasp rope and using hand over hand motion, pull until the ladder stops, then lower the ladder fly. Do not allow rope to slip through the hands. You must maintain a standing position while raising and lowering the ladder.

Ventilation Event

This event is meant to simulate chopping a hole in a floor or roof. The candidate uses a sledgehammer to drive a 170-pound steel beam a distance of five feet.

High Rise Event

This event is divided into three continuous parts.

Part 1. Carry a 50-foot package of 1.75-inch hose and a 2.5-inch to 1.5-inch gated wye from a designated point at ground level to the fourth floor of the building taking one step at a time. This equipment is then set down on the landing of the fourth floor.

Part 2. Now grasp a rope from a test monitor. Pull until the hose is within reach. Now grasp the 1.75-inch hose and pull in 50 feet. At this point the monitor will take control of rope and hose.

Part 3. Return to stairway, pick up the 50-foot package of hose and the fitting, and return them to ground level taking one step at a time. The hose and fitting are to be set down outside the first floor window in the designated area.

Rescue Event

You will drag a 185-pound dummy to the designated finish point (60 feet) where it is to be set down.

Time limit for the above items - 12 minutes.One Hundred Foot Ladder Climb

Applicant will climb to the top of ladder, extended to 75-degree angle. The applicant is required to wear full fire fighting turnout gear with SCBA for this event.

This exercise determines if an applicant has vertigo or acrophobia; also tests ability to climb ladder with mask on.

Oral Interview

Applicants who have successfully passed the written and physical agility test will be given an oral interview examination.

All eligible candidates are notified by mail as to the date, time, and place that they are to appear for the oral examination.

The oral interview is conducted by a panel consisting of Moorhead Fire Department personnel and an individual from Human Resources.

The types of questions that could be asked are:

Why do you feel that you would like to pursue a career as a Fire Fighter?

A Fire Fighter's duty day is 24 hours long. Do you feel you have the ability to work closely for an extended period of time with a group of people? Explain why you feel the way you do.

Qualified veterans are eligible for veteran's preference as per State and Federal Law. Any questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the Office of Human Resources.

Background Investigation

Each qualified candidate is investigated as to his or her character and reputation. The candidate's present and previous employer(s) may be contacted for information regarding the work history of the candidate. Personal references listed on the application form may be contacted and interviewed on matters relating to the character and reputation of the candidate.

The background investigation also includes a thorough check into the candidate's police records.

Medical Examination

Prior to appointment the candidate must undergo a medical examination. The examination shall be in accordance with the current edition of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) pamphlet 1582, *Standard on Medical Requirements for Fire Fighters*.

The examination is conducted by a medical authority designated by the City of Moorhead's Office of Human Resources or a Fire Department representative and is paid for by the City of Moorhead. The Office of Human Resources or Fire Department representative will notify the candidate as to the date, time, and location of the medical examination.

Miscellaneous Information

All applicants should be aware that the normal tour of duty for fire suppression personnel encompasses a twenty-four hour period, commencing at 8:00 AM one morning and ending at 8:00 AM the following day. While on duty, the employee will be allowed to leave his or her duty station ONLY at the discretion of the Officer in charge.

The new employee will serve a probationary employment period of one year and will be evaluated every six months therein.

The Fire Department is paramilitary in nature and the employee will be required to dress in a proper uniform, which is furnished by the City of Moorhead.

All uniformed fire personnel shall live and reside at a location which is no more than ten miles from the Main Fire Station.

Any questions that an individual may have pertaining to the pay scale and employee salary in general should be directed to the City of Moorhead Office of Human Resources.

We hope that the material contained on the previous pages will help answer any questions that you may have regarding the procedures as they apply to persons seeking the position of Fire Fighter with the Moorhead Fire Department. Should you need any additional information, please feel free to call the Office of Human Resources at 218-299-5188 or the Moorhead Fire Department at 218-299-5432.

Sample test answers

1. a 2. a 3. a 4. b 5. a

Good Luck-!

ATTACHMENT I**Notice to Applicant for Fire Fighter Position at Moorhead Fire Department:**

We require, as part of the employment process, that you participate in the physical agility test consisting of the elements attached to this document. In order to participate in this test, you must complete the following statement and have a physician complete the applicable portion no earlier than 30 days prior to the scheduled test date. **Any and all costs incurred to complete this form are the responsibility of the applicant.** You must bring this document with you when reporting for the **Physical Agility** portion of the testing procedure. You will not be allowed to take the test without this document and therefore, will not be considered in the current selection process for this position.

Applicant's Statement

I, _____ (please print full name) understand what is required as described in this document and in the physical agility test. I am aware of my physical condition and I understand that I am not required to perform this test if I believe it would endanger my health or well-being. I have decided to take this test and will assume all risks associated with this test.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Physician's Statement

Physician's Name

Mailing Address

It is my opinion that this individual **CAN** safely participate in the physical agility test attached to this document.

Physician's Signature

Date

ATTACHMENT 2

Physical Agility Test Moorhead Fire Department

RELEASE

I, _____ (please print full name) am an applicant for Fire Fighter with the Moorhead Fire Department. As part of the application process, I am required to undergo a physical agility test. I hereby release the City of Moorhead and its employees or agents from any liability as a result of any injuries that may be sustained resulting from my performing the physical agility test.

Candidate's Signature

Date

Witness