



Recruit Firefighter Program

Expectations

The Recruit Firefighter Program has many challenges that must be met in order for the recruit to be successful in completing the program. Meeting expectations will provide the foundation of the knowledge, skills, ability and positive mental attitude needed for transitioning to a probationary firefighter in your department.

It is the responsibility of the recruit to demonstrate the commitment to their development of becoming a firefighter and meeting the requirements set forth by the Recruit Firefighter Program. Requirements include but are not limited to the Recruit CORE Values, Recruit Rules and Regulations, Recruit Operating Guidelines, verbal and non-verbal orders/directives/requests, and any sponsoring Fire Department values, or related expectations.

Academics

Recruits are expected to meet Academic requirements by managing his/her time to study, complete the required assignments, read and retain the information provided and successfully prepare and pass the subject material quiz. Self-study and group study time is strongly encouraged.

The Recruit Firefighter Program environment promotes a structured and planned study aesthetic. Recruits receive a Class Schedule, Fire and HAZMAT manuals, and related Reference Handouts. Recruits are expected to study at their own pace according to their individual habits. The Program Coordinators and Instructors will instill in Recruits values like responsibility, accountability and initiative so that they are capable of achieving without micromanagement. Recruits must recognize that success is challenging and requires more than an average amount of effort, "for a profession that requires more than an average amount of effort and success".

The course material discussed in Program moves very quickly and a lot is covered in a short time. Unlike many high school classes, most instructors don't follow the textbook. What they present in a lecture will generally be how that subject matter is applied and related in the Connecticut, New England or Northeast fire service. Recruit must have the self-discipline to read and thoroughly understand the material provided in the manuals that homework, quiz and certification examinations are developed from.

Skill Proficiency

A recruit or a company of recruits able to remove a portable ladder from an apparatus, safely carry it to a designated location, and raise it correctly in a training environment would be considered by most to be competent in the deployment of a portable ladder. Recruits must be capable of adapting that skill/task to a live incident. What would those same recruits do when a bush or a shrub is in the way or if the building is built into a hill or the land is sloped? The objective is to develop "thinking firefighters" who will be able to analyze the situation, draw on the information and training they have received, and apply them to the new or different situation.

Firefighters are expected to master their trade throughout their careers. During the Recruit Firefighter Program, recruits are expected to develop proficiency in their attained skills and apply their knowledge safely. Developing those skills requires dedication in order to be able to perform without direction, assistance or supervision. Self-practice and Group practice is strongly recommended to master firefighting skills and tasks.



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Recruit Professional Demeanor

Professional demeanor is not just an important part of the Recruit Firefighter's learning process; it also affects the quality of the learning experience for all class members. How you individually act affects not only how others perceive you, but can also result in a variety of positive or negative consequences. Professional demeanor will be evaluated as part of your in-class behavior, on the drill ground and away from training.

Recruits can demonstrate professional demeanor and class commitment in a variety of general ways through focused on energetic and respectful participation and willing acceptance and completion of course obligations. Professional demeanor also includes dimensions such as punctuality, attendance, maintaining a positive attitude, preparation, use of appropriate language, and respectfulness towards other students, instructors, coordinators and CFA staff. Recruits are expected to come prepared, participate in activities and discussions, and treat others with respect (listening interactively to classmates and the instructor, and respecting others' viewpoints).

Recruits enrolled in the Program may already have experience in portions of the subject area; their unique experiences and contributions to discussions are welcomed. Those who contribute to enriching the experience through participation, bringing outside experiences of interest to class, and generally encouraging a positive learning environment for others, will be recognized.

Work Capacity

It has been said that firefighters expend as much energy during a major emergency as the players in a football game, if not more. This assertion is supported by many studies that demonstrate the need for and benefits of high levels of physical fitness in the fire service. This is why firefighters are often referred to as occupational athletes.

The sedentary hours firefighters may spend in the fire station may be as hazardous for them as fighting a fire. A major reason for firefighters high risk of heart attacks may be that they get little or no exercise while on-duty or neglect to perform while at home. The sudden, intense energy demand that is needed to fight a fire is what puts the firefighter who is not in good physical condition in grave danger. A firefighter's lack of physical fitness can be viewed as a matter of public safety as well as one's individual health.

A firefighter is just like an athlete-being they must be properly equipped, skilled at what they do, and fit for the demands of their jobs. Optimal fitness is a combination of lifestyle, nutrition and habits, but it cannot be reached without an appropriate level of physical fitness.

Recruits are expected to participate at their highest possible level in order to develop and demonstrate continuous improvement to the level of physical fitness, dexterity, flexibility and strength required for Firefighting Work Capacity related activities.



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Expectations

Recruit Firefighter Performance Expectations

- Work Ethic:
 - Actively seeks academic and technical knowledge for self-improvement.
 - Completes tasks assigned without shortcuts and without repeating of tasks.
 - Completes work thorough and in a professional manner.
 - Actively seeks out additional work as it improves the team's ability to thrive.
 - Accomplishes tasks or goals with a "safety first" attitude.
 - Keeps commitments and meets deadlines.
 - Can be trusted with confidential information.
 - Can be trusted with the property of others.
- Judgment & Problem Solving:
 - Makes responsible and safe decisions when attempting to accomplish a task or solve a problem.
 - Approaches problems in a safe, logical and well thought-out fashion.
 - Seeks pro-active solutions to problems.
 - Applies critical thinking skills to complex and varied situations.
- Time Management:
 - Constantly punctual and completes assignments on time.
 - Manages work so that quality of work is satisfactory and not hurried, incomplete or overwhelming to self and team.
- Teamwork / Interpersonal Skills:
 - Places the success of the team above self-interest.
 - Effectively works with others in order to accomplish tasks or solve problems.
 - Offers to help other recruit members.
 - Understands and follows Chain of Command.
 - Is courteous and respectful of peers and supervisors.
 - Does not undermine team.
 - Helps and supports other team members.
 - Is committed to help at off-duty CFA functions as necessary.
- Adaptability / Stress Management:
 - Remains calm in stressful situations.
 - Adapts behavior in order to deal with changing situations in a safe manner.
 - Adapts behavior in order to accomplish individual, Fire Department and Recruit Firefighter Program goals.
 - Recognizes symptoms of stress in self and others and seeks to deal with stress appropriately, and provide peer support where appropriate and necessary.
 - Communicates with others to resolve problems.
 - Remains flexible and open to change.
- Practical Skills Competence:
 - Demonstrates a desire to develop skills that are above minimal performance levels.
 - Accomplishes multiple tasks in succession.
 - Retains and recalls previously mastered skills.
 - Strives to improve practical abilities.
 - Knows all applicable safety behaviors and actions related to practical skills.



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- **Communication:**
 - Uses appropriate tone of voice.
 - Makes eye contact when receiving or delivering messages.
 - Articulates in a clear, logical and understandable manner.
 - Displays confidence in message.
 - Is persuasive and makes a positive impression.
 - Demonstrates additional appropriate non-verbal communication techniques.
 - Avoids letting stress control a communication process or method.
 - Writes legibly using correct grammar and punctuation.
 - Listens actively.
- **Initiative / Motivation / Decisiveness:**
 - Accomplishes tasks or goals without being ordered, coerced or motivated by others.
 - Demonstrates desire for personal and professional development.
 - Makes decisions definitively and consistently.
- **Empathy:**
 - Shows compassion for others and responds appropriately to heightened emotional responses.
 - Demonstrates a calm, compassionate and helpful demeanor towards those in need.
 - Is mindful of the impact of his/her demeanor on those in need, classmates, family, bystanders and to other members of the public.
- **Community Awareness:**
 - Exercises compassion and willingness to help persons in various situations with varied backgrounds.
 - Is sensitive to individuals and cultural differences.
- **Appearance and Personal Hygiene:**
 - Always clean, neat, well-groomed and in good personal hygiene.
 - Always wears appropriate uniforms in excellent condition.
- **Physical & Mental Work Capacity:**
 - Identifies critical elements of physical health, which include social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and environmental health.
 - Identifies and adapts to conditions of wellness, moving forward and climbing toward a higher potential of functioning.
 - Maintains a high level of physical fitness, dexterity, flexibility and strength through on going fitness program participation.
 - Demonstrates continuous improvement in Firefighting Work Capacity related activities.
 - Maintains concentration and focus of duties at all times.
 - Works at a pace that is safe, efficient and effective
 - Demonstrates an understanding of pacing the task when appropriate
 - Practices appropriate breathing techniques to maximize work capacity
 - Maintains a reserve capacity for emergencies
- **Sponsoring Fire Department:**
 - Will, at all times, comply with any & all of the Recruit Firefighter's sponsoring Fire Department and City/Town policies, procedures and/or guidelines.
 - Knows the role a member of the fire department represents to the community.
 - Is committed to help at off-duty FD functions as necessary.