

Prospective Volunteer Firefighter Handbook



Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District

This document has been created to familiarize the prospective members with the opportunities and benefits offered by joining the membership of the Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District. The guide will briefly explain the history, benefits, mission, and explains the interview and admission process. Thank you for your interest and we welcome your feedback.

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IF YOU...

Want to help others and serve your community,

Enjoy working as a team,

Enjoy continuous learning,

You may be an ideal candidate for a challenging career as a Volunteer Firefighter.

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Dear Citizen,

As a lieutenant of Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District, I am committed to providing the most effective and efficient fire and emergency service delivery system to our community.

You will find that participation as a volunteer member of our organization will bring personal rewards and satisfaction, raise self-esteem, and provide you with a tremendous sense of accomplishment and pride for a job well done. It will also provide your community with a valuable service that has the potential to touch us all.

However, service as a member of our fire department requires a serious commitment. Your decision to join our organization should not be made hastily. This handbook has been developed to provide you with the information needed to make an informed decision that is right for you, and us. Once you understand what is involved in being a Cannon Beach Fire volunteer, we hope that you will be able to make the commitment we need. The service provided by our volunteers is truly valuable to the citizens, businesses and visitors of our community. We hope that you are able to contribute to our community's public safety.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in joining our team.

Sincerely,

Brian Smith,
Lieutenant/Electrician

TJ White
Lieutenant/Police Officer



“After the military, I missed the comradery, challenges, and pride of serving, but found a new family and exciting set of new challenges within the fire industry.”

-Cannon Beach Volunteer firefighter



Why Volunteer?

The fire service is one of the most diverse and challenging vocations today. It is this diversity that attracts most men and women to join our ranks.

Different people volunteer for different reasons. Action oriented people enjoy the excitement and adrenaline rush that emergency services has to offer. Some see the volunteer fire service as an alternative to ‘driving a desk by day’ – by allowing them to ‘drive a fire truck at night!

Many like the feeling they get when they help people in their time of need and some feel it’s their obligation to serve the community. Yet others just want to belong to the team. Whatever motivates you to volunteer – everyone gains the self-satisfaction of being at their best when others are dealing with what is often the worst that life has to offer.

Imagine having to prepare yourself to cope with situations that range from structure fires to childbirth to hazardous chemical spills to heart attacks to almost any imaginable emergency in between. This diversity is coupled with the fact that these skills may be needed at any time of the day or night, seven days a week, in any kind of weather, and very often under potentially stressful and 5 emotional circumstances. Yet these same factors contribute to our profession being so personally rewarding.

We realize that firefighting is not for everyone, but we believe that volunteering can be. There is plenty of work to be done on or behind the scene – including fire prevention education or assisting with rehab operations on a scene.

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from what we do is often beyond description. There is the sense of accomplishment when you control a building fire, joy and elation when a child is born, compassion for accident victims, and fulfillment from teaching fire safety to children.

Additionally, you will find out what you are “made of”. There are many skills and knowledge to learn as well as critical assignments. Learning how to adapt and overcome, operate an engine to successfully and quickly send water to an interior crew, organize and execute fire prevention week, or participating in the annual Ham Dinner are a few key skills to learn.

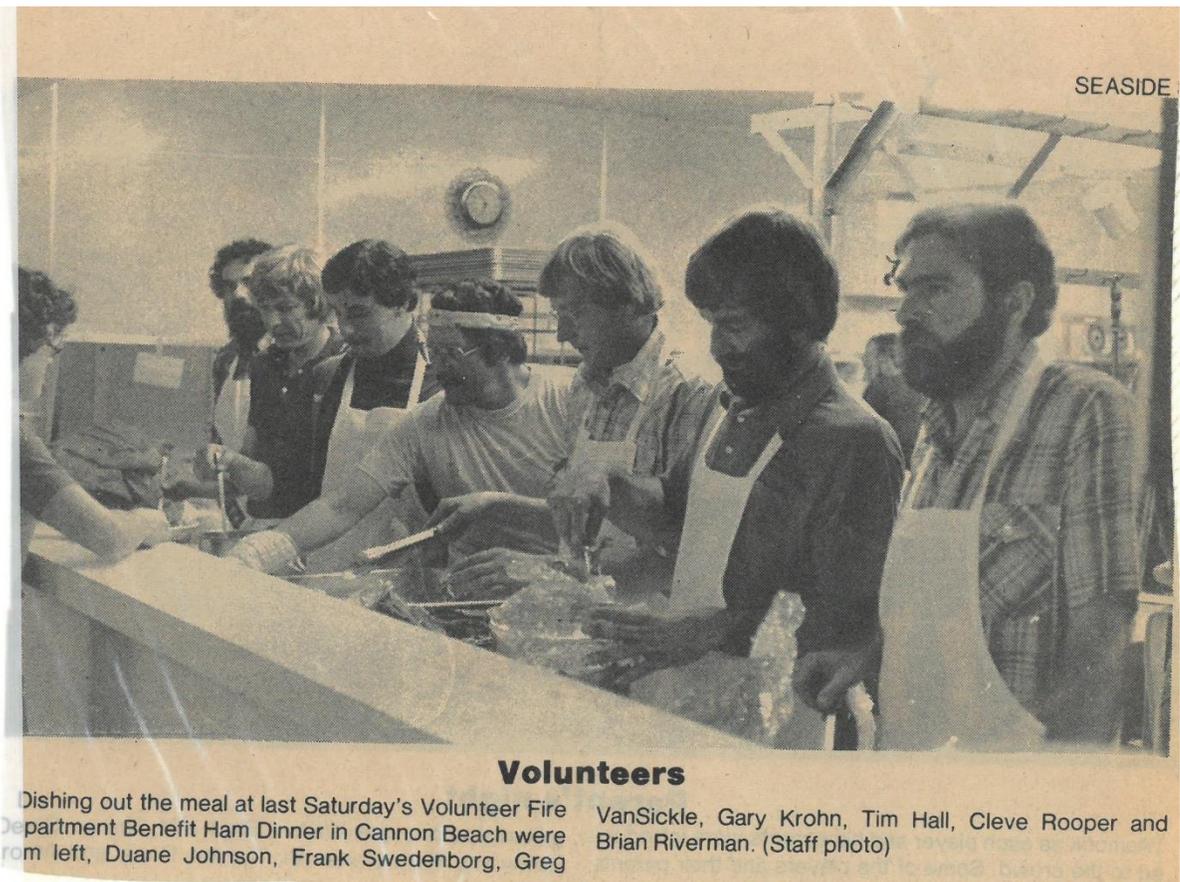


Figure 1. 1980 Ham Dinner

The bottom line in our business is measured by the loss of life, pain and suffering, and the property damage we have prevented and reduced.

Volunteering in emergency services is one of the most important decisions you may make. We hope that you give this decision the time and serious consideration it deserves, and decide to join our ranks.

About Cannon Beach Fire

The Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District was formed in 1947 to protect the citizens of the Cannon Beach area from the threat of fire.



Figure 2. 1980s Burn-to-learn



Figure 3. Chief James Hicks (1947-1955) and Chief Del McCoy (1955-1968)

The voters approved formation of the district and elected its first board of directors.

The first station was built primarily with volunteer labor, and a group of community spirited volunteers became the area's first firefighters. As the area grew so did the need for more space and equipment.

The original station was added onto several times and a second station was added in Arch Cape. In 1996, the original downtown station was replaced with the current station at 188 E. Sunset Boulevard.

The original mission of the volunteers was to extinguish fires; however, it soon became apparent that there were other demands for service. Search and Rescue came first in the 1950's, and in the 1970's Emergency Medical Service was initiated. Soon after, High Angle Rescue and Surf Rescue joined the list of provided services.

Today Cannon Beach Fire District personnel respond to emergencies in Cove Beach, Falcon Cove, Arch Cape, Cannon Beach and all points in between. Cannon Beach Fire District also responds to calls for help along Highway 101 south of US-26 junction and in Ecola State Park. Cannon Beach Fire District assists neighboring fire departments through the Clatsop County Mutual Aid Agreements and in turn they respond to Cannon Beach.

Figure 4. Fires



Figure 5. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)



Figure 6. Wildland Fires



Figure 7. High-Angle Rescue



Figure 8. Fundraiser Events



Figure 9. Public Relations and Education

Role of a Volunteer Firefighter

POSITION SUMMARY

Working as part of a team, under the direction of the Fire Chief, providing first response, fire suppression, rescue and specialized operations as required.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Participate in regularly scheduled training sessions and maintain a minimum of 60 training hours.
- Maintain a minimum 10% call volume.
- Performs fire ground operations within Clatsop County, specifically City of Cannon Beach, so that lives are protected and property loss and damage to the environment is minimized. Some specific operations are, but not limited to:
 - Recognizes hazards to prevent injuries to patients or rescuers
 - Secures water supplies
 - Advances hose lines
 - Operate portable pumps
 - Performs search and rescue operations
 - Carries, positions, raises, climbs, and works from ground ladders
 - Ventilates structures
 - Extinguishes vehicle, structural, and ground fires
 - Conducts salvage operations
 - Overhauls fire areas
 - Performs other duties as assigned
- Performs rescue operations within Clatsop County, specifically City of Cannon Beach, so that the patient is removed from an area of danger to an area of safety while preventing injury to the rescuer or patient. Some specific operations are, but not limited to:
 - Performs vehicle extrication
 - Secures area of structural collapse
 - Performs land-based water rescue
- Performs emergency patient care
 - Responds to incidents as a first responder

Role of Fire Corps

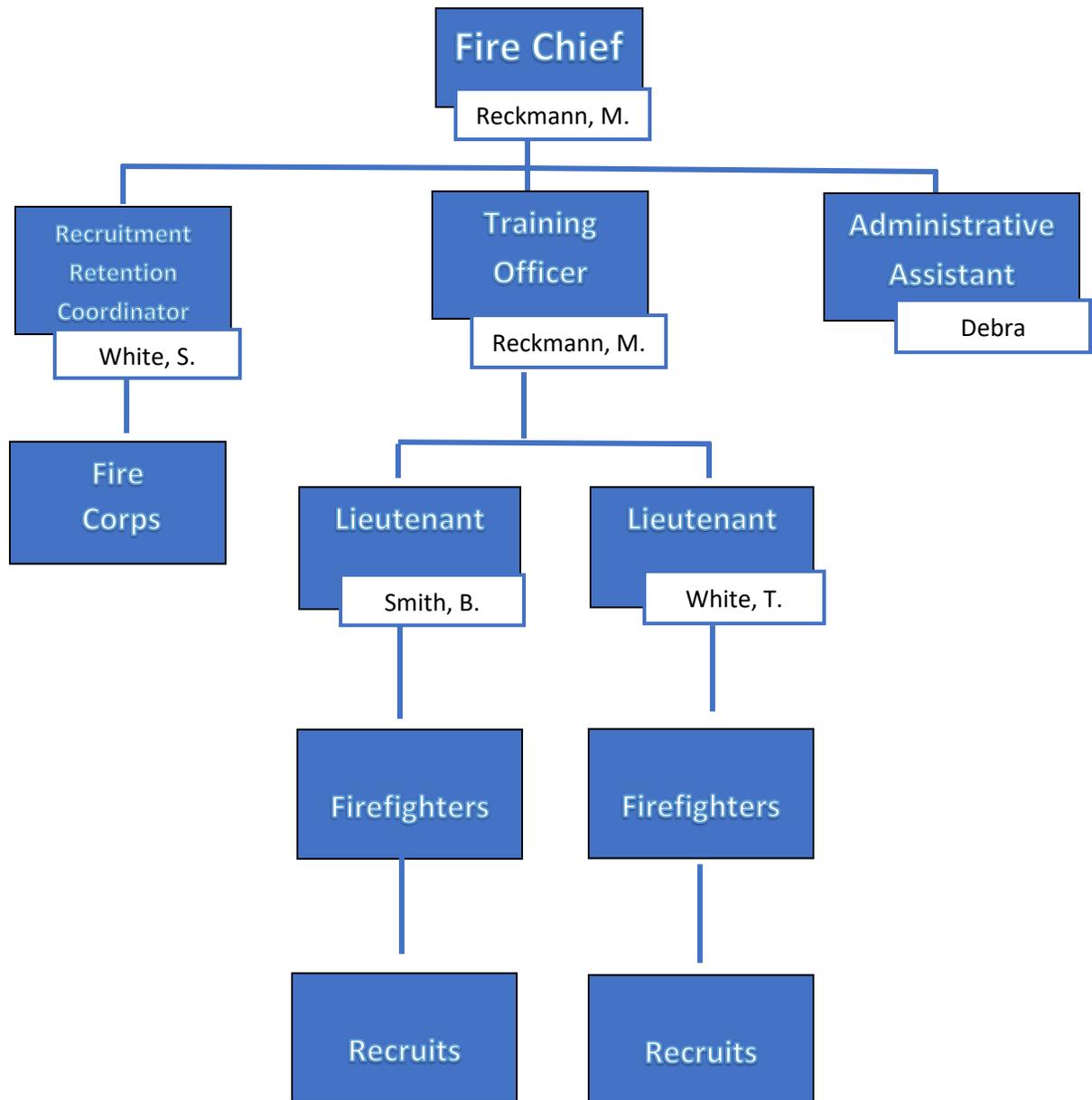
POSITION SUMMARY

Fire Corps members are not intended as substitutes for fire and emergency service personnel. Members will be utilized to support department functions, and will receive training appropriate to the duties that they may be called upon to perform.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- It is the policy of the Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District to assign auxiliary members to duties as may be determined appropriate and necessary. The members will be utilized to assist emergency management and other related community service functions in non-operational roles as needed and determined by the Fire Chief or his/her designee. The following jobs are indicated below, but are not limited. auxiliary members must also comply with applicable District policies and procedures.
 - Administration/Clerical: perform administration within a district station or headquarters, such as data entry, filing of reports and general office duties.
 - Grant Writer: will work with District staff to identify grant opportunities, write grants, and administer the awarded grant.
 - Fire Department Photographer: will work with District staff to obtain photographic and video images, maintain the District electronic photo and video library, and manage the District ID card program (future).
 - Fire Ground Support: assist the Incident Commander in on scene activities to include traffic control, assisting personnel with replacing empty self-contained breathing bottles, setup and manage a rehab area during training activities and emergency operations.
 - Fire Prevention: assist with the installation and maintenance of smoke / CO alarms, address signs, and participate in public education events.
 - Technical Support: assists with technical duties to include but not be limited to radio programming, computer, finger printing, and other technically related skills.
 - Fundraisers: Help develop, plan, set-up and participate in yearly fundraiser and special events to raise money for the Association.

Department Organization



The operations division of the fire company is led by the fire chief. The chief serves as the COO or Chief Operating Officer of the department and oversees what is called the 'chain of command.' This chain of command is very important in that it provides a clear direction, line of communication, and accountability for everyone involved in the chain.

Under this system, each level only reports to one supervisor. Firefighters report to a Lieutenant, who then reports to a Captain. The Captains reports to the Assistant Chief, who are responsible to the Fire Chief.

Teamwork is the foundation of our success – during an emergency or back at the station. Before you can become a good leader, you need to learn to be a good follower. Knowing and understanding how you fit into the chain of command will be one of the most important lessons you can learn. Know your position and play it well.



Figure 5 Lt. Whites company performing extrication drills

Our Mission

Cannon Beach is dedicated to protecting life, property, and the environment.

Volunteer Firefighter Facts

Number of Firefighters in the U.S., 1983, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2015-2017

Year	Total	Career	Volunteer
1983*	1,111,200	226,600	884,600
1990	1,025,650	253,000	772,650
2000	1,064,150	286,800	777,350
2010	1,103,300	335,150	768,150
2015	1,149,300	345,600	814,850
2016	1,090,100	361,100	729,000
2017	1,056,200	373,600	682,600

-  NFPA estimates there were approximately 1,056,200 local firefighters in the US in 2017. Of the total number of firefighters 682,600 (65%) were volunteer firefighters.
-  Most of the volunteer firefighters (95%) were in departments that protected fewer than 25,000 people.
-  In 2017, 77,900, or 7%, of the firefighters were female. Of the career firefighters 13,400 (4%) were female firefighters. There were 64,500 volunteer firefighters who were female, 9% of the total number of volunteer firefighters.
-  There are an estimated 29,819 fire departments in the U.S. Of these, 5,405 (18%) were mostly volunteer and 19, 313 (65%) were all volunteer.

 Nationwide 39% of fire departments provided no emergency medical services, 46% provided basic life support (BLS) and 16% provided advanced life support (ALS).

 42% of volunteer firefighters have 10+ years of active service.

Benefits

Quality Training - You provide the commitment and we provide all of the training for FREE. From local and county training, DPSST certified courses, to regional and national seminars and conferences - we offer you the opportunity to explore every avenue of emergency services and train you to be the best at what you do.

Outside Training- Firefighters are encouraged to seek outside training and conferences, and expenses including travel and lodging are generally covered by the District.

EMS Training: Although not required, all responders are highly encouraged to attend EMR or EMT training, these are several months long and require many hours of outside studying and paid for by the department with a passing grade.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - We protect our firefighters with the latest technology in fire resistive coat, pants, boots, gloves, Nomex hood and traditional style fire helmets complete with a leather front.

Dress Uniforms - Look professional and show your Cannon Beach Fire Department pride in your navy-blue dress uniform. Uniforms are provided immediately upon becoming a member.

Social Events - Members and their guest enjoy our annual Awards Banquet dinner held each February to recognize and appreciate the members family dedication. There is an end of summer picnic every year for the family to relax and enjoy the last weekend of the summer. Throughout the year we offer a variety of opportunities for you and your family to get to know the other members of your department in a relaxing atmosphere. From conventions to parades, parties, family picnic and fund-raisers - we not only work hard - we play hard too!

Peace of Mind - We recognize that firefighting and providing emergency services is an inherently dangerous business. That's why we take extra measures to protect our volunteers.

Expectations

Although no previous experience or training is required, you need more than just a desire to help people. You also need courage and dedication, assertiveness, and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. The fire service is one that calls on its members to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments.

Fire service volunteers need to be team players, respecting each other's role and contributions. You need to be able to work on-call and to deal with occasional interruptions to your lifestyle, dropping what you're doing when the 'tones go off' to respond to the emergency needs of your fellow citizen.

A new member can expect to spend between 5-10 hours each week on fire company business. This entails meetings, training, emergency responses and other miscellaneous activities. Some weeks will be more and other weeks much less. The days of the week or times may vary depending on the level of activity.

We've listed a lot of the benefits you can expect from us, and in return there are certain objectives we expect you to meet:

TO APPLY:

- At least 18 years old
- You must be a citizen of the United States
- High School Diploma, G.E.D. or equivalent
- Valid Driver's License
- Good physical condition
- Possess good reading, writing and record keeping skills
- Possess qualities necessary to perform team tasks
- Ability to perform tasks in confined spaces
- You must be physically, intellectually and emotionally capable of performing the duties according to your area of assignment.

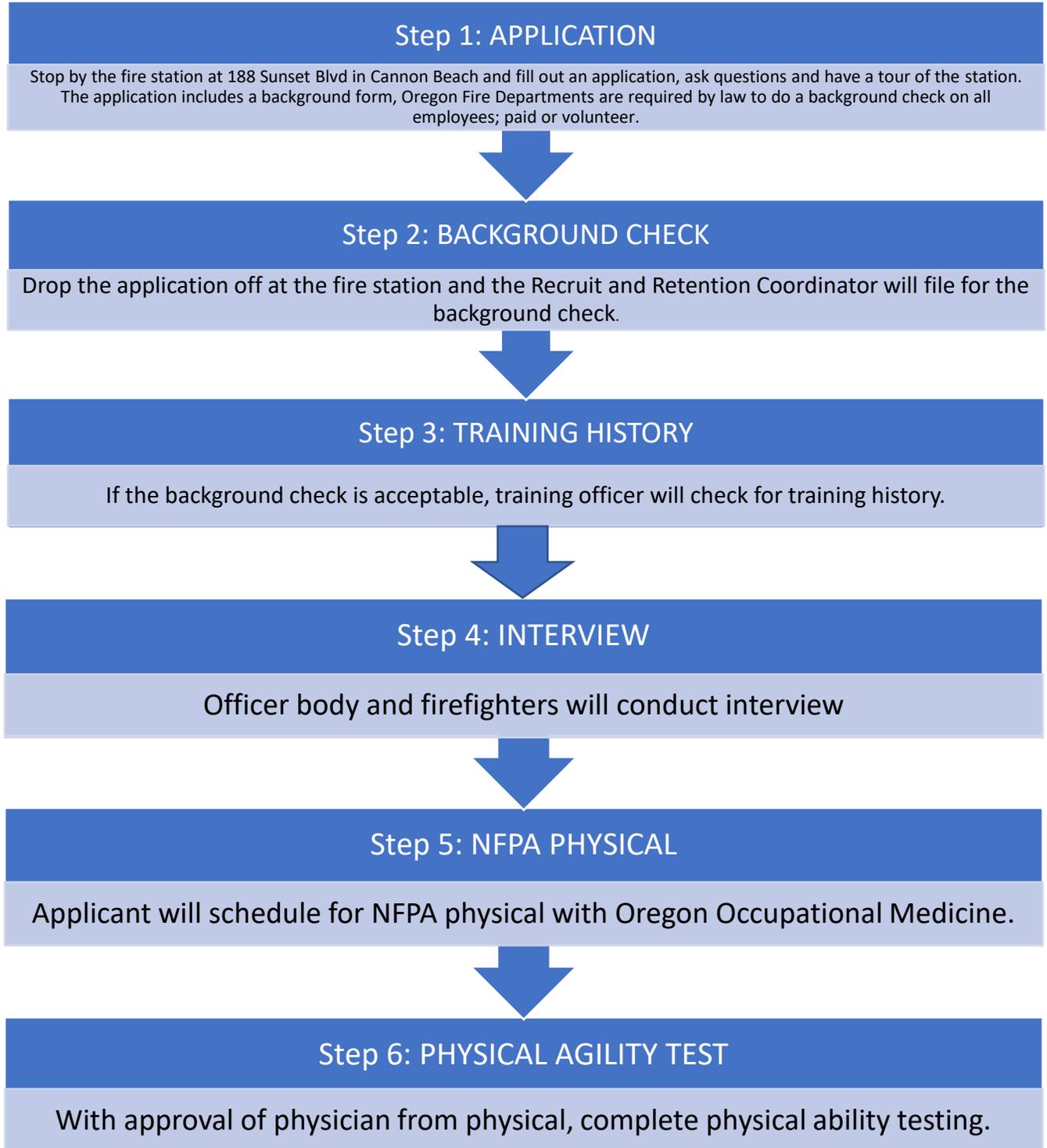
UPON ACCEPTANCE:

- New members must complete a recruit orientation
- New recruits must successfully pass an NFPA physical examination and paid for by the fire department.
- New members will be on probation for a period of 1 year. Their probationary activities will be reviewed within thirty days following 1 year start of hire and the probationary member will be recommended for either continued probation, continued full service, or separation.
- Removal from probationary status requires that the requirements be fulfilled along with the probationary requirements of their membership classification.
- All new volunteers must complete a basic fire academy, this is the first step in training as a volunteer. This will be a mix of online training, Wednesday night drills, and weekend training.
- Weekly drills: Weekly drill are every Wednesday evening from 7 to 9. All volunteers are required to attend 60 hours of training a year. The goal is to train to the firefighter 2 level in your first 24 months.
- Call Response: Each volunteer will be issued a pager upon completion of the basic fire academy. Volunteers are required to make 10% of the calls each year to keep in good standing with the District.
- EMS Training: Although not required, all responders are highly encouraged to attend EMR or EMT training, these are several months long and require many hours of outside studying.

New volunteers must be willing to commit to a significant amount of time to the Fire District. The decision to join should be made in concert with your family as your active participation will have significant impact on their lives as well as your own. A few time commitments are outlined below.

Volunteer Firefighter Enlistment Process

The selection process for becoming a volunteer firefighter will consist of the following components:



Step 7: BASIC ACADEMY

Basic Fire Academy, this will be conducted with online training, Wednesday night drills, and weekend training, or may be sent to the Clatsop County Firefighter's academy. This is a demanding time, will require you to be flexible, and diligent in your training.



Stage 8: PROBATION

At the end of the academy starts your 6-month probation. You will be given a pager and are expected to respond to calls. At the end of 6 months you will be tested on your firefighter skills to achieve your firefighter 1 certification and tested on your knowledge of the District and policies to complete your probation.

We want to acknowledge the effort every applicant puts into the pursuit of being a firefighter and the desire each possesses to assist in the protection of the community.

Thank you for considering joining Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To obtain an application, or to ask any questions regarding this handbook or the application process, contact

Recruitment and Retention Coordinator

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Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District is an equal opportunity agency. It is the policy of the Fire District not to discriminate in accordance with the requirements of all applicable state & federal laws, on the basis of race or creed, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, covered veteran status, marital status, handicapping condition, political affiliation, pregnancy, gender identity or age.