



Volunteer Recruitment Process & Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Want to learn new skills?
Want to be part of something bigger than yourself?
We invite you to explore how to become active with Fire District 13!



"The greatest strength our volunteers at Banks Fire have is the pride and commitment they have in serving the community and taking care of those around them." – Chief Rodney Linz

Recruitment Process

Background Investigation

Following the receipt of application, candidates will undergo an extensive background investigation.

Interview and Screening

All information collected will be compiled and presented to the Training Officer who will interview and screen all applicants that made it past the background check.

Time and training commitment will be gone over in detail to make sure applicant can meet these requirements.

Conditional Volunteer Offer

Upon the Fire Chief's approval, successful candidates will be notified and extended a conditional offer to join the team as a Volunteer Firefighter or Auxiliary Volunteer.

Fitness Assessment

Those candidates receiving a conditional offer for Volunteer Firefighter will be scheduled for a fitness assessment.

District Apparel and Protective Equipment Fitting

Those candidates receiving an offer will be issued district apparel.

Welcome Reception

The District hosts a reception for the new volunteer recruits, to celebrate and welcome the new volunteers to Banks Fire District #13. The new volunteers and their families are invited to attend this evening event that occurs just prior to the start of the academy.

Volunteer Recruit Academy

Volunteer recruits are required to attend the Washington County Recruit Firefighter Academy which are held twice a year (fall and spring).

Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) Course

This is a six-week basic medical course consisting of six 2-hour classes on Tuesday night, and five 6-hour classes on Saturday's.

Active Volunteer Service

First year of service is probationary.

Drills

Volunteer drills are held every Monday evening, typically from 7PM – 9PM. All volunteers must attend 75% of drills, unless enrolled in a District-approved training program (e.g. Emergency Medical Service Provider, Fire Science).

Incident Response

Volunteer Firefighters are expected make a good-faith effort to respond to incidents and must maintain contact with the Duty/Training Officer.

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, that you are able to attend the *entire* volunteer academy, and that you are able to make a commitment to the expectations for active service.
- Read all of the information on our website; most questions can be answered in the material found there.
- Check email frequently for updates and notices.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

About the Volunteer program
Volunteers and the Minimum Requirements
EMT Status
Application Process
Academy Schedule

What is the Volunteer Program?

The Volunteer Program was established to provide hands-on experience for individuals interested in supporting their community. We offer medical response training from the First Responder level, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), to Paramedic. Volunteers train in firefighting, rescue, and serve with public outreach programs like Fire & Life Safety and preventative practices. You'll learn new skills, build your resume, be part of a team, help others in need, and develop a potential future career.

We are currently recruiting volunteers for firefighting as well as for auxiliary and support tasks. So if your strengths don't necessarily fall under the category of fighting fires, but you still have the desire to serve, we have support roles for you to fill while still serving a vital role with Banks Fire District 13.

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I heard there is a Student-Volunteer Firefighter Program, can I apply?

The District does have a Student-Volunteer Firefighter program that is made available to the District's current Volunteers. This program is designed to recruit and train 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 a successful fire-service career. Applicants must meet the following minimum qualifications to apply for the Student-Volunteer Firefighter program:

- You must be currently enrolled, or in the process of enrolling, in one of the following:
 - Associate's degree program in Fire Protection Technology
 - Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
 - Fire Science
 - Fire Prevention
 - A field closely-related to the above which grants academic credit for participation in the Student-Volunteer Firefighter program.
- Must be physically able to perform all the essential functions listed in the firefighter class specification.

What is the role of a Volunteer Firefighter?

The Volunteer Firefighter role provides hands-on experience for individuals interested in supporting their community, offering a great exploration opportunity for those interested in a fire service career.

- **Fire & EMS Response and Service:**
Respond to incidents as a member of a fire/ems company. May also provide standby staffing in the event of greater alarm incidents.
- **Community Activities:**
Participate in community activities, public education, station tours, and other events that require positive public interaction.
- **Drills, Classroom and Field Training:**
Participation in drills and classroom attendance to attain and maintain necessary skills required of a Firefighter/EMS provider.

What are the requirements for a Volunteer Firefighter?

- 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 fitness exam, and drug screen.
- Must be able to attend and successfully complete 100% of the academy.
- Must meet the medical/physical standards established by the District.
- Must obtain an Oregon Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) or Oregon Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certificate within one year of selection as a Volunteer Firefighter, or, at the start of the Volunteer Firefighter Academy.

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 with a high level of professionalism.
- Demonstrate use of good judgment and decision making.
- Excellent physical conditioning.
- An "unremarkable" criminal background and driving record.

What certification do you need to be a Volunteer Firefighter?

The Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) certification is required, although not at the time of application. Volunteers are required to obtain their Oregon certification within 12 months of becoming a volunteer (at the District's expense) or maintaining an existing licensure as an EMR. Additional information can be found on the [Oregon Health Authority EMR – First Responder page](#).

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?

No, there is no age restriction (outside of being 18 years or older). Banks Fire 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 considered for Volunteer Firefighter positions are required to pass the same physical exam and are held to the same physical performance expectations.

Are you accepting applications for Volunteers?

Yes. We are accepting applications for Volunteers now.

Do all applicants get accepted?

No, this is a selective process and some individuals will not make it through the selection process.

Application Process

Can I turn in an application any time?

Yes.

How many volunteers do you typically accept each year?

The number of volunteers we accept each year depends on the number of vacancies.

Do I need to live in the Banks' District to serve as a volunteer?

No, but preference points are given to those residing within the District.

Selection Process

When will I know the status of my application?

Spring Academy: We expect to complete the review of applications by the end of February. All applicants will receive notification by the beginning of March as to whether or not they have been selected to move forward in the process or.

Fall Academy: We expect to complete the review of applications by the end of August. All applicants will receive notification as to whether they are selected to move forward in the process or not by the beginning of September.

What if I don't receive any notification?

Please call the business office at (503) 324-6262.

Will I be invited to an interview?

Not everyone will move forward to the interview stage. Applicants that apply within the opening dates, meet the minimum qualifications, and follow the application instructions will be considered further. The individuals moving forward to the on-site interview will be determined through the application review. After the review of applications is complete, applicants will receive notification of their status in the process.

Why are some applicants disqualified?

Applicants may fail to be considered due to the following reasons:

- Failure to meet the minimum qualifications.
- Candidates must have a valid Oregon driver's license.
- Complete applications are required. If your application is missing the requested information, it will not be considered.
- Responses to the supplemental questions on the application will also be important considerations. From the many qualified applicants, only a few are selected to move forward to the interview stage.

Academy Schedule

When and how long is the Volunteer Academy?

The academy begins in March (Spring) and September (Fall). The Academy is on Wednesday and Thursday nights (6:00 to 10:00) and Saturday and Sunday (8:00 to 5:00).

Typically, there is 1 month of online work followed by 1.5 months of hands on training.

Miscellaneous

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

The District 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.

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?

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.

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

The District will review your certifications before making this determination.

Do you have an Explorer or Cadet program?

No, at this time we do not have an Explorer or Cadet program.

How much do volunteers get paid?

Volunteers are not employees, however, volunteers will receive a small stipend to offset expenses and are subject to withholdings and taxes.

I've heard that you reimburse for college courses; how does this process work?

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

Why is your process so extensive? I just want to serve my community.

A big part of our excellence as an EMS and fire service provider is the quality of our personnel. We take the commitment to serve our community very seriously. As a result, we also take recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers that join our ranks just as seriously. We are committed to the volunteers that join us, and as such, we hold each volunteer to the same level of standards and commitment in return.

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

Yes. We can be reached at 503-324-6262 during normal business hours.