



JOIN OUR TEAM

Career firefighter recruitment 2022-2023 information pack



DFES
Department of Fire &
Emergency Services



The following information is intended to provide a general overview of the firefighter recruitment process undertaken by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES). Applicants should be aware that the selection process is very competitive, thorough and time consuming.

DFES is committed to building a diverse workforce and strongly encourages women, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to apply.

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INTRODUCTION

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) was established on 1 November 2012 and performs a critical role coordinating emergency services for a range of natural disasters and emergency incidents threatening life and property.

Our department comprises of more than 1600 operational personnel and corporate staff members. We also have an extensive network of more than 27,000 volunteers engaged in the delivery of emergency services to the community.

We work closely with other agencies such as Western Australia Police Force and St John WA, helping to coordinate and carry out search-and-rescue missions on land and at sea and we assist at road and traffic emergencies. Additionally, DFES provides advice on emergency management issues to various local, state and national stakeholders.

Across DFES, there is a wide range of expertise and skills and our people play an important part in making Western Australia a safer State. Together with our emergency management partners, we are responsible for delivering emergency management services across the largest jurisdiction in Australia, with a population of more than 2.5 million.

We operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week, on land, in the air and by sea across the vast 2.5 million square kilometres of our great state.



OUR VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES



Vision

All Western Australians
Working Together
for a Safer State.



Purpose

To achieve a safer Western
Australia by enabling and
protecting the community
before, during and
after emergencies.



Values

Teamwork
Leadership
Trust
Commitment

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

DFES supports workforce diversity and inclusion.

We advocate for inclusiveness where all DFES personnel are encouraged to contribute and they are recognised and valued for their differences in an environment that is free from discrimination and the negative effects of bias, both conscious and unconscious.

People from culturally diverse backgrounds, First Nations Australians and people with a disability are encouraged to apply. DFES reserves the right to prioritise recruitment decisions in line with the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)*.

DFES understands the importance of creating a safe and inclusive environment for all employees and with fire stations being a home away from home, privacy is necessary. All new DFES fire stations are built with individual sleeping quarters to provide firefighters with equal space and privacy. Existing fire stations with shared sleeping quarters have been modified with privacy screens and all stations are equipped with lockable, gender neutral, toilet and shower areas to ensure privacy for all individuals and to accommodate for future growth.

THE ROLE OF A FIREFIGHTER

A firefighter works as a member of a cohesive and cooperative team, whether involved in emergency response or work associated with maintaining readiness or community safety activities.

A firefighter directly participates in emergency incidents to assist and safeguard people, property and/or the environment, including responding to fires, vehicle accidents and rescues. A firefighter must be physically fit and capable of responding to emergency calls and rescuing people from life-threatening situations. They must be capable of a rapid physical response, which in the case of a property fire with life involvement would include donning personal protective clothing and breathing apparatus, dragging a line of hose and performing a search-and-rescue operation. They are required to work in awkward positions, often under pressure.

A firefighter must be able to operate vehicles and equipment in emergency and non-emergency situations. They are required to liaise with other agencies, including emergency service personnel, and communicate with members of the public and people under duress.

A firefighter also;

- participates in community education programs and community-centred emergency management activities;
- carries out or assists with inspection of properties for compliance with building codes and fire safety rules, including risk assessments;
- contributes to environmental care through appropriate activities including bushfire mitigation strategies;
- participates in drills, physical training, servicing hydrants, domestic duties and vehicle checks;
- firefighters work a rotating shift work pattern, being two day shifts 0800 hrs to 1800 hrs, followed by two night shifts 1800 hrs to 0800 hrs, followed by a four-day rest period.



ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES

To become a career firefighter, there are several essential prerequisites that must be met. Originals or certified copies of ALL prerequisites MUST be provided to DFES at various stages of the recruitment process.

If you have not obtained the prerequisites within the specified timeframe, you will be unable to continue through the process and will be deemed unsuitable.

You must provide evidence of the following four prerequisites:

1. Australian citizenship (birth certificate or current passport) or Permanent Residency for Australia as defined in the *Migration Act 1958* or a Special Category Visa Holder (New Zealand citizen)
2. Current Provide First Aid Certificate (Competency Code: HLTAID011)
3. Current C Class unrestricted driver's licence
4. Response to Written Task (Two questions addressed strictly within a one-page document)

All these documents must be provided in your online application or you will be ineligible to continue. Older competencies for the Provide First Aid Certificate will not be accepted. DFES does not provide Recognition of Prior Learning through this process so each applicant must provide evidence of the exact code above. Higher qualifications will not be accepted.



When requested during the selection process, you must provide evidence of the following:

1. Current Western Australian or National Heavy Rigid (synchromesh gear box) driver's licence
2. Current Provide Advanced First Aid Certificate (Competency Code: HLTAID014)
3. Current Advanced Resuscitation and Oxygen Therapy Certification (Competency Code: HLTAID015)
4. Current Australian National Police Certificate
5. Current Working with Children Check

Stages of the firefighter recruitment process are:



Details of dates, times and location for each assessment stage will be provided to applicants as they progress through the selection process.

It is important to note that not all applicants who are successful in each stage will progress to the next stage of assessment. DFES reserves the right to change these stages, including throughout the selection process, with minimal notice.

STAGE ONE

Online Application

Applications for trainee firefighter positions will be advertised on the DFES website - www.dfes.wa.gov.au, as well as on the WA Government Jobs Board - www.jobs.gov.au

It is essential that you attach the following four (4) documents to your online application:

1. Australian citizenship (birth certificate or current passport) or Permanent Residency for Australia as defined in the *Migration Act 1958* or a Special Category Visa Holder (New Zealand citizen)
2. Current Provide First Aid Certificate (Competency HLTAID011)
3. Current C Class unrestricted driver's licence
4. Response to Written Task (Two questions addressed strictly within a one-page document)

Failure to attach these correct documents to your application will result in you being removed from the selection process.

STAGE TWO

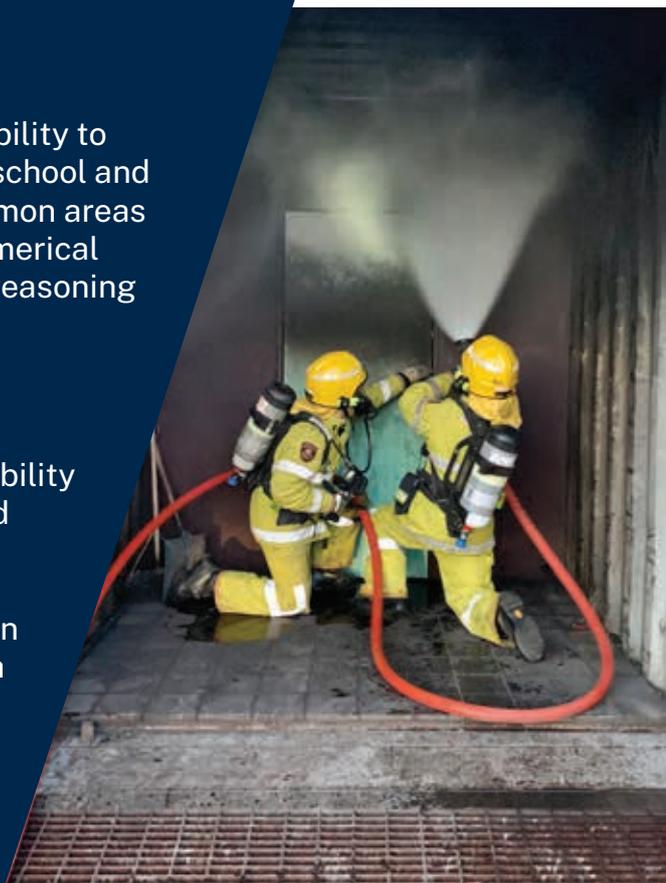
Cognitive Assessment and Personality Assessment

Cognitive assessment

The cognitive assessment is designed to assess your suitability to undertake the academic content of the trainee firefighter school and may be comprised of a number of elements. The most common areas of the cognitive assessments include verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, error checking, spatial awareness, mechanical reasoning and diagrammatic reasoning.

Personality assessment

The personality assessment is used to ascertain your suitability to the role of a firefighter based on your personal traits and preferences, by exploring several different behavioural dimensions. The personality assessments are designed to assess your suitability against the competencies outlined in the Firefighter Success Profile and your ability to deal with the demands of the job.



STAGE THREE

Physical Aptitude Tests: Working At Heights, Tunnel Crawl, Beep Test and Circuit.

The following aptitude tests measure an applicant's ability to meet the physical standards required to undertake the role of firefighter. Assessment is based on using the equipment safely not on the applicant's technique. The physical aptitude tests are based on physical tasks expected of firefighters during the course of their duties.

Working at heights

This is a pass or fail assessment and is a stand-alone physical aptitude test.

Applicants climb an extension ladder to level 1 of a training tower (approximately 10 metres from ground level), then continue to level 4 of the tower (approximately 20 metres from ground level) via the internal ladders. At level 4, applicants will be required to perform a task before returning to level 1 via internal ladders then onto the long extension ladder and descend to ground level.

Tunnel crawl

This is a pass or fail assessment and is a stand-alone physical aptitude test.

Applicants wearing breathing apparatus and a frosted mask must navigate a series of tunnels and obstacles. This assessment must be completed in 10 minutes.

Beep test

This is a pass or fail assessment.

The beep test (also known as the shuttle run test) is used to measure an applicant's level of cardiovascular fitness. The required level that applicants must meet is 8.7. Applicants will be stopped once they have reached this level. Applicants who fail to reach 8.7 will not proceed to the next stage of the selection process.

DFES reserves the right to modify any or all elements of the physical aptitude tests, including throughout the selection process, with minimal notice.



Circuit

This is a pass or fail assessment.

This is a circuit style of physical assessment (continuous movement from one task to the next) which must be completed in an allocated time frame. The applicant must undertake the entire circuit wearing breathing apparatus or weighted vest (14 kilograms).

The tasks may include:

1. LOADED STAIR CLIMB

Remove a 12kg kettlebell from the locker of an appliance and carry it to the top of a staircase and back down a total of two (2).

2. SIMULATED RESCUE

Drag an 80kg dummy around a 30 metres course. Applicants can only use the short shoulder strap to complete the drag and must always maintain control and continuous movement of the dummy.

3. EQUIPMENT HANDLING STAGE ONE

With the assistance of a firefighter, remove a long extension ladder from the top of the appliance and place it on to the ground. The applicant then moves to another ladder attached to a base plate and underruns it to the vertical position, holds for five seconds before returning it to the ground.

4. EQUIPMENT HANDLING STAGE TWO

With the assistance of a firefighter, rehouses the long extension ladder.

5. HOSE DRAG

Drag a fully charged 40mm hose a total of 180m. The hose length is 30m. The drag is completed in increments (30m, 60m, 60m and 30m) and water is shown for five seconds on three occasions.

6. HEAVY TOOL LIFT

Hold the Lucas Cutters and Spreaders at three different positions at varied heights for 20 seconds each. A maximum of a 20 second rest period is allowed between each tool holds. The tools weigh 19.5kg and 19.7kg respectively.

STAGE FOUR

Written Assessment, Speed Interview and Panel Interview

Written assessment

The written assessment is used to gauge your ability to review available information and present your response in a clear, concise and professional manner. In the written assessment task, you are required to strictly adhere to a one-page response which addresses aspects of the Firefighter Success Profile.

Speed interviews

The speed interviews require applicants to sit down one-on-one with an assessor and answer interview style questions. The speed interviews involve small groups of applicants being interviewed and assessed by four panel members in a single session. Applicants will rotate to the next assessor every 10 minutes, a total of four times. The interview questions are designed to assess behaviours, competencies and experiences.

Panel interviews

The panel interview is in front of four members, which may include both operational and corporate personnel from DFES and external consultants. You must provide your resume prior to the panel interview.





STAGE FIVE

Validations

Applicants who successfully meet Stages 1 through to 4 of the assessments, may be selected for progression to the final stage of assessment - Validations.

The final validations ensure applicants are suitable for employment as a firefighter.

Physical workplace capacity assessment

The physical workplace capacity assessment (PWCA) is designed to simulate tasks performed by firefighters. Applicants are required to perform the tasks multiple times. It provides a realistic assessment of the applicant's functional mobility (e.g. stable shoulders under load, spine flexion). Applicants will be rated on their ability to complete the test and any potential for increased risk of injury when undertaking firefighting tasks. The outcome of the PWCA is provided to the medical practitioner and is considered part of the medical assessment.

Driving validation

The driving validation assessment is overseen by driving instructors from the DFES Fire and Emergency Services Training Academy. The assessment will review each applicant's ability to safely handle a heavy rigid vehicle. This assessment is likely to occur at the same time as the physical workplace capacity assessment.

Medical assessment

These examinations, undertaken by a medical practitioner appointed by DFES, are designed to highlight any conditions that would prevent or hinder an applicant from effectively carrying out firefighting duties and which may put the individual, DFES personnel, or members of the community at risk. The medical practitioner provides DFES with an applicant's suitability for the role of firefighter based on all the information available.

Applicants who do not meet the required standards of any part of the medical examination will not be offered a position as a trainee firefighter. Where any increased risk of injury or other potential issues is identified, these will be considered - taking into account the nature of the concern and the likelihood of injury or other impact in the short term. While not an exhaustive list, the following provides further information on the medical requirements.

General assessment

Applicants are required to fall within the category of being occupationally, physically and medically fit and free of any disease, disability or impairment that would prevent them from carrying out all operational duties of a firefighter. Examples of medical conditions generally considered not compatible with unrestricted operational firefighting duties include, but may not be limited to, previous heart attack, implantable defibrillators, epilepsy, diabetes requiring insulin, hearing aids, permanent need for blood thinning medications, joint replacement surgery or eyesight disorders.

Medical history

Emphasis is placed on an applicant's medical history and the applicant may be questioned closely about specific aspects. Failure to disclose medical history or deliberately providing misleading information will result in applicants being removed from the selection process.

Drug and alcohol screening

Applicants will be tested for alcohol, amphetamine type substances, benzodiazepines, cannabinoids, cocaine, methadone, and opiates. The tests also check for adulterants, creatine levels and specimen temperature in compliance with the current Australian/New Zealand Drug and Alcohol Testing Standards.

If you have any questions regarding a significant medical condition or injury, email DFES Firefighter Recruitment team at firefighter.recruitment@dfes.wa.gov.au. Please note, while the team may be able to provide general advice, it is unable to provide individual assessment. Medical conditions can be complex and appropriate individual assessment is needed to determine a candidate's ability to satisfy all medical requirements.

Referee checks

All applicants must undergo referee checks. Ensure you have provided contact details, including the email address of two referees at minimum one of your referees must be your current or immediate past employer (supervisor or manager, not peer). Your second referee is preferably a previous supervisor or manager. Please ensure you inform your referees that they may be contacted. DFES also reserves the right to seek alternative referees.



National police certificate

Applicants recommended for appointment to the position of trainee firefighter will be required to provide a satisfactory National Police Certificate prior to being offered a position as a trainee firefighter.. This may be requested by DFES at any stage of the selection process.

Criminal records

A criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant from the selection process. Generally, single, non-recent, petty offences do not disqualify an applicant. Multiple offences, sex offences, violence, dishonesty and habitual theft may disqualify an applicant. If rejection of an applicant is considered purely because of a criminal record, they will be given the opportunity to discuss the matter before a final decision is made.

Investigations, suspensions from employment and pending criminal charges

If an applicant is under investigation for any matter or suspended from employment or volunteering organisation, information on the matter must be provided to DFES. Applicants will similarly be required to provide information as to whether they have had any legal proceedings against them or whether they are subject to any pending criminal charges, both nationally and internationally. It is important to note that if an applicant was subject to a disciplinary investigation with the WA public sector and either leaves the public sector or is employed by another public sector agency, the investigation may continue, and this may impact on future employment with DFES.

Declarations associated with the above will not automatically disqualify an applicant from the selection process. If rejection of an applicant is considered appropriate based on the information provided in a declaration, they will be given the opportunity to discuss the matter before a final decision is made.

Working with children check

Applicants will be required to obtain a working with children check upon receiving a formal offer of employment as a trainee firefighter.





ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following assessment criteria will be used to determine the suitability of an applicant, in conjunction with other criteria aligned to DFES Values and Behaviours and the Firefighter Success Profile.

- High level of physical fitness with no medical conditions that may inhibit performance as a firefighter.
- Ability to work effectively as a team member in a workplace or community settings.
- Demonstrated problem solving ability, including the capacity to learn and follow instructions.
- Good written, oral and interpersonal communication skills.
- Demonstrated understanding of DFES and the role of a career firefighter within the WA community.
- Ability to cope with difficult and stressful circumstances.

Additionally, applicants will be assessed on the following Firefighter Success Profile competencies:

- Adapts to the team
- Builds relationships and establishes rapport
- Achieves goals and work tasks
- Demonstrates integrity
- Copes with pressure and setbacks
- Adapts to change
- Follows directions and procedures
- Development focus
- Innovation.

TRAINEE FIREFIGHTER SCHOOL

Successful applicants may be offered a place as a trainee firefighter in a trainee firefighter school. The training school is a fixed-term, paid, intensive training program of 20 weeks duration (plus an induction week) at the WA Fire and Emergency Services Academy located in Forrestfield. This school is not a live-in program and trainees are required to arrange their own accommodation where necessary.

The school is designed to train recruits in the following areas:

- Breathing apparatus
- Fire prevention and fire safety awareness
- Communication and teamwork
- Firefighting skills
- Practices and procedures
- Driving
- Specialist equipment
- Rescue awareness (road, confined space, urban)
- Hydrants and extinguishers
- Radio procedures and signals
- Ropes, knots and hose layouts
- Hazardous materials

The majority of the training is conducted at the Academy, with excursions to other locations when required. The hours of duty at the school are generally Monday to Friday between 0700hrs and 1700hr; however, trainees may be required to work weekends and/or evenings, often with little notice. Therefore, it is advised that you clear your schedule over this period, including participation in team sports and other non-essential major commitments you may have.

Upon graduation from the school, a trainee firefighter has gained the necessary competencies to undertake the role of a firefighter. It is at this stage that appointment to the position of firefighter may be offered. Failure to complete the school and graduate will result in employment being terminated. Additionally, other circumstances may result in DFES not offering a position and therefore the employment contract would cease.



EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

Shift work pattern

Firefighters work a cycle of four days on duty followed by four days of rest. This amounts to an average of 42 hours per week and consists of two 10-hour dayshifts (0800hrs to 1800hrs) followed by two 14-hour nightshifts (1800hrs to 0800hrs). Firefighters are paid for 40 hours per week with the additional two hours per week accruing as additional annual leave.

Superannuation

Membership of the Fire and Emergency Services Superannuation Fund (FESSuper) is compulsory for firefighters. FESSuper is a Defined Benefit Fund, designed to provide a lump sum benefit based on the member's period of service, final average salary, and accrual rate (currently 18%). Members are required to contribute 6.25% of their gross salary per week with DFES contributing 11.75%. Salary sacrificing of the employee contribution is available. For further information regarding the FESSuper Fund, please visit www.fessuper.com.au or call on (08) 9382 8444.

Annual leave

Firefighters accrue 56 calendar days of annual leave per annum taken on a roster of 32 calendar days every 208-day cycle. As the leave is rostered, there is minimal opportunity to change the leave a firefighter is allocated.

Long service leave

Thirteen weeks accrued after the first 10 years of service and every seven years thereafter. This leave is also taken in accordance with a roster.

Public holidays and weekends

Firefighters rostered on shift on public holidays and weekends do not receive time off in lieu or additional pay. The firefighter rate of pay incorporates loadings for this work.

Personal leave (for illness, injury, carers leave etc.)

Firefighters receive a total of 126 hours per annum (16.8 hours per annum non-cumulative) in personal leave. Cumulative credits not used during the year are carried forward into the next year. Evidence of the reason for leave is required for more than five days in any calendar year or more than two consecutive days of leave.

Overtime

Overtime is payable for any time worked outside your ordinary rostered hours. Additional allowances for meals and travel may also apply in some instances.

Firefighter development program

Once you have graduated from trainee firefighter school and have been promoted to the rank of 5th Class Firefighter, you will commence the compulsory five-year Firefighter Development Program (FDP). As you progress through the FDP and obtain the required practical experience and theoretical knowledge, you will be promoted through the ranks up to 1st Class Firefighter, then Senior Firefighter.

Promotional opportunities

DFES offers equal opportunities for all staff. Career progression is offered to all firefighters and all applicants are selected on merit.

Once firefighters have completed their mandatory five-year Firefighter Development Program, they have obtained all the necessary competencies to be considered for other opportunities. This includes promotion to Station Officer and higher, with further training provided. There are also opportunities to work in more specialist areas including training, state operations, rescue, and many more. The rank structure is included below in the table below:

Current firefighter gross (inclusive of allowances)

CLASSIFICATION	WEEKLY	YEARLY
Trainee	\$1,463.40	\$76,340.70
5 th Class Firefighter	\$1,588.70	\$82,877.20
4 th Class Firefighter	\$1,620.10	\$84,515.20
3 rd Class Firefighter	\$1,698.50	\$88,605.10
2 nd Class Firefighter	\$1,745.50	\$91,056.90
1 st Class Firefighter	\$1,902.20	\$99,231.40
Senior Firefighter	\$1,980.60	\$103,321.30
Station Officer 1	\$2,215.70	\$115,585.70
Station Officer 2	\$2,294.00	\$119,670.40
Area Officer*	\$2,490.70	\$129,931.50
Instructor*	Various	
District Officer	\$2,687.40	\$140,192.70
Superintendent	\$2,872.90	\$149,869.70

*The Area Officer and Instructor classifications do not form part of the rank structure but are other opportunities available to FRS personnel under the WA Fire Service EBA.

There are higher ranks outside of those listed above,, including Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner.

Further information regarding rates of pay and other terms and conditions can be found in the Western Australian Fire Service Enterprise Bargaining Agreement 2020, available on the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission website, wairc.wa.gov.au.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applications must be made via the [DFES website](#) or jobs.wa.gov.au. The recruitment process is open for a short period of time. Applications that proceed through the selection process will be assessed on an as needs basis and may be subject to departmental priorities.

Assessment occurs throughout all stages of the recruitment process. Any observation of discriminatory behaviour, harassment, racial bias, inappropriate language or lack of respect may result in you being removed from the process immediately.

Communication during recruitment

Communication to applicants will occur by email so please ensure you regularly check your email to give you the greatest opportunity to be available for each assessment stage. Further, you will be required to book in your own session times and dates. Therefore, the earlier you book, the greater opportunity you have to select your desired time.

Additionally, during an active recruitment process, it may be more difficult to contact Firefighter Recruitment team, therefore, if you leave a telephone message or email, please allow at least 48 hours for a response, with additional time over weekends and public holidays.

Exceptional circumstances

Due to the large number of applicants undertaking the process, applicants must be able to attend each stage at specific dates and times. You must be available for all stages throughout the selection process and failure to arrive to a test session or a stage will result in you no longer be considered.

If you are scheduled for a test and cannot make it, you may be able to re-book for a later date if a place is available.. If there is not, no special considerations will be made, you will no longer be considered and will be removed from the process.





CONTACT US

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