

QUESTIONS ASKED MOST OFTEN BY PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEER MEMBERS:

Firefighters dedicate themselves to the protection and service of their communities. They are asked to provide a wide variety of tasks to keep people safe over the course of their daily lives. These volunteers routinely display heroic coverage while battling fires, rescuing people from emergency situations, and providing medical care as needed. They are local heroes in the community.

Firefighting offers a strong sense of fulfillment that you cannot always find in other positions. The comradery that comes from being accountable for one another's life safety on the Walkerton Fire Department and the powerful feeling and personal reward you will experience from being trained to help your family, friend or a neighbour in need in the community is unparalleled. The overwhelming feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment that comes from saving a person's life or property in the community from joining as a volunteer member is tremendous.

Making a commitment to serve as a Volunteer Firefighter is a serious decision. Read this FAQ carefully as it will provide you with some information about the level of commitment required to be successful in this role. Once you understand what is involved in being a member of a Volunteer Fire Department, we hope you will be able to make the commitment our community requires. The service provided by Volunteer Firefighters is truly valuable to the citizens of our municipality and we hope that you are able to contribute to the community's public safety.

Q. What is the cost to me of the required training?

A. The required training for volunteer firefighters is provided by the Municipality of Brockton free of charge. Transportation to and from accredited additional training is paid for by the Municipality of Brockton.

Q. How much will I have to pay for my protective clothing?

A. All required protective clothing is provided by the Municipality of Brockton, at no cost to the individual.

Q. What is the format of the volunteer member's training schedule?

A. The Training Program is spread over a 12 month period. Training will require week nights and may include some full day weekends. Entry level CPR and First Responder training (if applicable) is handled in a similar manner.

Q. Who provides insurance coverage for my activities as a volunteer firefighter?

A. WSIB coverage is in effect whenever the individual is working for the department. The Municipality of Brockton also has accidental death and disability coverage as well as a special life insurance policy for all members.

Q. Are volunteer firefighters directly paid in any way?

A. Firefighters who pass recruit training and are promoted to probationary firefighters will receive an hourly rate for calls and training. As training is acquired, firefighters can move through the ranks and will be compensated accordingly.

Q. After my initial training, how much time will I be expected to give as an active member?

A. While the exact time requirements vary, the average training and call out time is approximately 6-12 hours per month.

Q. How often will I be on call to respond to emergencies?

A. Our system depends upon volunteer firefighters being available to answer all emergencies. The department therefore expects that volunteer firefighters, when in their fire protection area, will be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This is a major commitment that needs careful consideration before you undertake it. The department realizes that no one can be available all of the time, but it relies on the commitment from volunteer members to respond whenever they are available. Potential members should be aware that this commitment cannot be taken lightly; their response to emergencies is a lifeline to the public that they serve.

Q. How quickly will I have to respond to emergencies?

A. The department would normally expect that all available members would respond immediately to a page out while following all rules set out in the Highway Traffic Act (obey stop signs and speed limits).

Q. How long do emergency call outs last?

A. The average callout lasts less than an hour. A working structure fire may extend to 3 to 4 hours. Major, multi-alarm fires may last 8 to 10 hours. Very rarely, a major emergency may extend for days.

Q. How can a recruit firefighter become a suppression firefighter?

A. Recruit firefighters will be started on the training path of NFPA firefighter certification. A pay scale incentive program is in place to reward firefighters as they move through the ranks to becoming a certified suppression firefighter.

Q. Will there be physical tests prior to acceptance by the department?

A. Yes. There are tasks that require good physical fitness and you will be required to provide a Medical Clearance Check.

Q. Is there a social aspect to belonging to the fire department?

A. Yes. In addition to the contribution to the community, firefighters often find a personal satisfaction in belonging to the fire department community. Members participate in a range of fire department events throughout the year. In addition, members are invited to join the Walkerton Firefighters Association which is involved in many community events and initiatives.