

# James City County Firefighter Hiring Process-Session 2022B

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How do I apply for this firefighter position?

Go to the James City County Career Center webpage at <https://jobs.jamescitycountyva.gov> and create a *profile* (on the right of the screen). Follow the instructions and provide current information. Applications will remain open year round. However, applications will be processed two times per year.

### 2. What is the minimum age to apply?

You must be 18 years of age by the anticipated hire date, which means you may apply at 17 years of age. There may be parental, or guardian permissions required for certain components or required documents.

### 3. I have a question about my application, whom do I contact?

Human Resources can assist you with any questions or concerns regarding your application. Call 757-253-6680 during normal business hours or visit Human Resources at <https://jamescitycountyva.gov>. Information regarding this process can be found at <https://jamescitycountyva.gov/fire> by viewing *Employment* then *Fire Recruitment*.

### 4. I have submitted my application, what happens next?

Immediately after applying you will receive a confirmation email, if not, check your spam folder or files. You will also receive an email identifying the next steps in the process from the Fire Department Recruitment Office, typically within 7-10 days after applying. Once applications internally close for the session (two times per year), eligible applicants will receive an email with registration information for the mandatory Eligibility Session.

### 5. What is the *Eligibility Session*?

All applicants must attend an Eligibility Session. You may attend an in-person or virtual session. The Eligibility Session includes an information session on James City County and the Fire Department; benefits; hiring process steps; and background investigation overview. Applicants can submit copies of diplomas, certifications, military records, etc. Applicants may also briefly meet with a background investigator privately to discuss any concerns regarding any potential employment disqualifiers. The in-person Eligibility Session will last 1-1½ hours. Virtual sessions will include the same presentation materials. Eligible applicants will be sent an email within three days after applications close with links to register for one of several in-person sessions or view the virtual Eligibility Session with instructions on submitting documents.

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**6. What is the primary form of communication used for this process? How will I receive information about the process?**

You will be required to submit your email address in order to apply so we may communicate important information about the process to you. It is very important to check your email regularly. It is also important check your spam files or folders to ensure you are receiving our emails.

**7. I have applied previously for jobs in James City County, do I need to complete another profile?**

You should be able to access your existing profile at the James City County Career Center at <https://jobs.jamescitycountyva.gov>. Your profile information will be automatically uploaded into the new application. Please ensure all the information remains current and correct. You must always submit a new application to apply for open positions.

**8. How many vacancies do you usually have?**

Typically, we have several vacancies per year. At any time, there may be several firefighters eligible for retirement.

**9. How many negative points can I have on my driving record in order to apply?**

There is no automatic disqualification but if you have four or more DMV demerit points (-4, -5, -6, etc.) your driving record will be carefully considered—if selected to continue, the background investigator will factor moving violations and other indicators of unsafe driving practices.

**10. How long can it have been since I last used drugs?**

Illegal drug use and/or possession will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Changes to Virginia law effective July 1, 2021, allow possession and use of marijuana in certain situations. Firefighters are considered “safety sensitive” positions in James City County in which pre-employment drug testing is required in addition to post-accident drug testing or if a reasonable suspicion exists at work. A positive pre-employment drug test including detection of marijuana may result in a permanent offer of employment not being made. Once employed, anyone testing positive for marijuana is subject to termination under current policy.

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### **11. If I meet an automatic disqualifier, can I still go through the process?**

You should review the [Automatic Disqualifiers](#) list found on the Hiring Process page. If you are unsure and would like to speak with a background investigator regarding your specific situation you may be able to do so at your scheduled eligibility session. If you know you meet a disqualifier and are not truthful about it on your application or at any point in the process, you will be disqualified.

### **12. If I have passed CPAT with another jurisdiction, do I still have to take your physical ability test?**

You may be exempt from the Applicant Physical Ability Test (APAT) as long as you can provide valid documentation that you have successfully passed CPAT with a jurisdiction licensed under the IAFF and IAFC within the previous six months of your scheduled applicant physical ability test.

### **13. If I fail the Applicant Physical Ability Test (APAT), am I discontinued from the hiring process?**

Each applicant may attempt APAT twice within the application period of one year. If you fail on your first attempt, you may try one more time at a later scheduled test. Test dates are scheduled in advance and posted on the *Hiring Process* page. Contact the Recruitment Coordinator for details regarding opportunities to train and how to register for the next test.

### **14. I do not see a written test listed as part of the selection process.**

We do not incorporate a written test as part of our selection process. Selection for initial interviews is based on points awarded on several criteria including fire/EMS certifications, public safety experience, military service, and college education. There may be multiple pools established for interviews dependent on the overall number of eligible applicants. Applicants with zero points may still be eligible for an interview.

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**15. Am I required to have an EMT or Firefighter certification in order to be hired?**

No. While there are preferred qualifications, the minimum requirements are 18 years of age, high school diploma or equivalent, and US citizen or Permanent Resident Alien able to work in the US. Over the years, we have hired firefighters with years of experience, as well as, those with no job-related experience.

Preferred qualifications include:

- Tidewater Regional Fire Academy or Hampton Roads Fire Academy (TRFA or HRFA) graduate or equivalent,
- Full time career firefighter or firefighter/medic experience
- Practicing National Registry Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider as Virginia attendant-in-charge
- College degree
- Military experience

**16. I attended a fire academy elsewhere. Would I have to attend another fire academy?**

The Fire Department will determine if a fire academy other than TRFA or HRFA meets the same criteria; the minimum is a full time (40 hours per week) structured fire academy with Virginia certificates issued.

**17. Will everyone get an interview?**

This process is very competitive, not all applicants may get an invitation for an interview.

**18. How long is the hiring process?**

The Firefighter Hiring Process typically takes three months after applications are internally closed for each session. Applications are processed typically twice per year.

**19. I have applied before and the process is different now.**

The Fire Department altered the firefighter hiring process in response to COVID-19 concerns since 2020. All hiring process components remain, but some have been adjusted.

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### 20. What precautions are being taken relative COVID-19?

All in-person contacts will be conducted in accordance with the current James City County policies in conjunction with state and federal recommendations, including:

- County employees may be screened upon reporting to work; applicants may be screened (and temperature taken) at all hiring process entry points
- Masks may be required to enter County facilities
- Applicants will be provided scheduled appointment times and check-in instructions

Some virtual or remote options are provided; however, some components cannot be completed virtually or remotely. Several components have reduced number of applicants per session to accommodate social distancing.

### 21. What is the starting salary?

Effective April 16, 2022, Firefighter I (recruit) starting salary is \$47,175 per year.

### 22. What are James City County Fire Department's career ladder levels?

James City County has for career ladder levels:

Firefighter I	entry level or recruit
Firefighter II	2 years of service plus 80 hours of acceptable specialized training
Firefighter III	3 years of service plus 160 hours of acceptable specialized training
Firefighter IV	5 years of service plus 240 hours of acceptable specialized training, and 60 semester hours of accredited college coursework or Associate degree.

### 23. I am an Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider. Does James City County Fire Department offer pay incentives?

James City County Fire Department does offer ALS add-on pay for Virginia Intermediate and Paramedic certifications. Effective October 1, 2022, James City County is increasing pay for precepted Intermediates to \$6,000 per year, and, for precepted Paramedics to \$12,000 per year. This is a pay add-on and not a stipend or bonus—this incentive is added to your base salary which increases the overtime rate and will affect retirement benefit calculations. The incentive is available to all ranks and firefighter career ladders. For newly hired ALS providers, the pay add-on is not applied until precepted (completion of field training) as an Intermediate or Paramedic. For those with National Registry Paramedic certification, reciprocity for Virginia Paramedic is available through the Virginia Office of EMS.

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### 24. I currently work at another fire department; can I earn above starting salary?

James City County will hire firefighters in lateral entry. Those meeting the following qualifications may be given a competitive salary offer:

- Tidewater Regional Fire Academy or Hampton Roads Fire Academy (TRFA or HRFA) graduate or equivalent (as determined by James City County Fire Department)
- Full time career firefighter or firefighter/medic experience
- Minimum of National Registry or Virginia EMT; however, Advanced EMT is our minimum level of EMS certification—if only an EMT, successful completion of AEMT will be required and provided by James City County Fire Department.

Competitive salary offers will be made based on comparing current James City County firefighters with the following criteria from the applicant:

- Years of service as a current or recent full-time career firefighter with a comparable fire department (similar to or larger than James City County Fire Department)
- Hours of documented *acceptable specialized training* as defined in the James City County Fire Department Career Ladder policy (generally fire service and EMS training beyond basic or initial certification training).

Comparisons will be made based on the appropriate career ladder level determined—James City County Fire Department has four. Lateral entry salary offers will not exceed existing firefighter salaries of equivalent years of service and career ladder level.

Example: If an applicant has the years of service and documented training meeting the requirements for Firefighter III, then comparisons will be made with equivalent James City County Firefighter IIIs to determine salary offer.