



How to Become a Firefighter

The Hanford Fire Department (HFD) seeks out qualified, eager individuals who desire a rewarding career in public service. Our department is known for its history, values, and progressive programs. The diverse and dynamic calls create an atmosphere that offer personal growth and career advancement. Incident activity includes:

- Firefighting
- Technical Rescue
- Emergency Medical Services
- Arson Investigation
- Public Education
- Fire Prevention
- And Much, Much More

Qualifications

A Hanford firefighter must be a United States citizen of good character and free from a mental or physical condition that would limit minimum performance standards. You must be 18 years old at time of appointment, a high school diploma or GED, and a valid CA driver's license. You must have successfully completed an accredited CA State Fire Training (SFT) Firefighter I (FFI) academy. Finally, you must have possession, or the ability to possess an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certificate and CPR card. Go to the City of Hanford job specifications link and search 'firefighter' for more information.

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/hanfordca/classspecs>

Selection Process

Written and Physical Ability Tests: Hanford Fire Department utilizes the Firefighter Candidate Testing Center (FCTC) for the written and physical abilities test (CPAT). Testing can be taken multiple times throughout the year to improve your score. It is highly recommended to continue to improve your score. The physical abilities test is pass/fail. You must have a current written exam and CPAT within one year of submitting your application to the City of Hanford. Information about FCTC can be found at: <https://www.fctconline.org/>

Oral Interviews Evaluated your reasoning, problem solving, and interpersonal skills.

Background Investigation: A thorough check of personal and employment histories along with contacting persons who know you and can verify your potential as a Hanford firefighter.

Psychological Evaluation: Determines if you are presently suited to perform the difficult and stressful job of a firefighter.

Medical Examination: Confirms that you are in good health with no conditions which would restrict your ability to safely perform firefighting duties.

Department Interview: With the Fire Chief for final selection.

After completing the entry level testing process, you will face a challenging Firefighter Recruit Academy. This academy is designed to refresh your knowledge received from your approved SFT Fire Academy and introduce you to HFD specific criteria. Upon successful completion of your firefighter academy you will be placed on probation for a period of one year as you demonstrate your abilities to be placed in permanent status.

Recommended Steps to Becoming a Firefighter

1. Sign up for various firefighter recruitment opportunities.
2. Start testing with any fire department that you qualify for. Every test better prepares you for the next one. Figure out your weaknesses and work on them. For example, if you find the math portion of the written exam difficult, then work to improve your math skills.
3. Enroll in and successfully complete an EMT course and get your National Registry certificate as well. This alone will make you eligible to apply for many departments in the U.S. (In most states, EMT courses can be taken at community colleges. Keep in mind that these classes often fill up fast and priority will be given to current students, so you may need to sign up for other classes before enrolling).
4. Take general education courses and work towards a degree.
5. Once certified, apply for EMT jobs with private ambulance companies, hospitals, etc., to get some hands-on experience.
6. Enroll in a Firefighter 1 Academy.
7. Get involved in a volunteer, reserve, intern, or cadet program. If such a program is available in your area prior to obtaining your certifications, get involved now.
8. If considering paramedic school, get enrolled and follow their steps to obtain your paramedic license.
9. Continue working towards your degree, including undergraduate and higher education. All will benefit you throughout your career. Consider fire science, emergency management, leadership, public administration, or similar pathways.
10. Take as many specialized courses as possible: Driver operator/EVOC, wildland firefighter, hazardous materials tech and specialist, rescue systems, high rise tactics, confined space rescue, swift water rescue, truck company operations, engine company operations, etc. Courses can be found on the SFT website.

<https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/state-fire-training/>

The steps outlined above are designed to provide guidance for someone seeking a fulfilling career in the fire service. These steps can be taken out of order. Always seek ways to improve your skills and knowledge to become the best candidate possible. Be assertive, yet humble. Good luck in your endeavors to be a part of something large than each of us. **Following these recommendations are not a guarantee for future employment.**

Information on becoming a City of Hanford employee can be located at:

<https://www.cityofhanfordca.com/210/Human-Resources> or search City of Hanford, CA on your favorite search engine