

MEAFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

2021 Applicant Information Guide



Introduction to the Meaford Fire Department

The Meaford Fire Department provides emergency fire and rescue services to the residents of Municipality of Meaford. Meaford is a community with a land mass of almost 500 square kilometers. Meaford is located on Nottawasaga Bay, a sub-basin of Georgian Bay and Owen Sound Bay, in southern Ontario.

The community is served by one station and 7 major pieces of fire apparatus. Our station is located as follows:

Station 1 – 81 Stewart St, Meaford, ON



The department responds to approximately 200 incidents annually and has an operating budget of approximately \$700,000. Dispatching services are provided by the Owen Sound Police Department.

Job Description and Physical Demands - Firefighter

Firefighters are responsible for all of the various firefighting and rescue duties needed to save lives and protect the property of residents and visitors including environmental protection activities that are within the scope of work as authorized by Municipal Council. They are required to be physically fit so that they may rapidly and efficiently perform these duties under emergency conditions, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, frequently while exposed to hazards and extreme weather conditions.

Firefighters also routinely check vehicles and equipment and train continuously. Quarterly weekend training sessions are required in order to facilitate more in-depth training.

Firefighters exercise a considerable degree of independence but most often work in teams under the direction of a supervisor – a Lieutenant, Captain or Chief Officer.



Job Description and Physical Demands – Firefighter (continued)

The atmosphere inside a burning building contains products of combustion, flames and heat. In addition, during fire extinguishment with water, steam is created resulting in almost 100% humidity and elevated ambient temperatures. With these conditions, compounded by the insulating properties of the protective clothing, natural body cooling efforts virtually cease to function, which can result in elevated body-core temperatures.

Firefighters are required to perform many tasks requiring a great degree of physical effort including:

- search for, and rescue victims, carrying or dragging them to safety;
- maneuvering fire hose which is heavy and hard to handle due to the nozzle reaction forces during water discharge (similar to dragging and holding 50 – 100 kg or more);
- carry, raise and climb ladders (up to 75');
- climb flights of stairs to reach upper floors in high-rise buildings, carrying firefighting equipment up to 50 kg or more;
- lift, carry and operate portable pumps, electrical generators and power tools, etc. some of which the mass is from 20 kg to 50 kg or more;
- Repetitive bending, lifting, swinging, pulling and pushing from various positions, including such as on a sloped roof, from a ladder, or in a crawling/crouching position.

Selected firefighters are required to drive and operate fire apparatus such as cars, vans, rescue units, pumpers, tankers and aerial devices. Many of these units are considered heavy-vehicles, and require a skilled operator who is physically fit and alert.

In addition to the physical demands, there are related psychological stresses, as firefighters never know when the next alarm will sound. Firefighters can be exposed to traumatic situations such as critical injuries and or fatalities. Depending upon the time of day or night, firefighters may go from a totally relaxed state, even sleeping, to a fully excited state when the alarm sounds. Research has indicated that heart rates can virtually double at this time.

Initial Training

Recruit firefighters in Meaford undertake approximately 120 hours of initial training over 6 months before becoming integrated (paired with an experienced firefighter) to an emergency response role. This initial phase of training is demanding, both from an academic and practical skills perspective.

Following their successful completion of recruit training, recruits will be integrated into the main stream training curriculum for current firefighters for another 6 months. The curriculum is delivered through bi-weekly evenings and 4 (quarterly) single full days held on weekends to gain and hone all of the skill sets that will see them qualify to the National Fire Protection Association standard for firefighters (NFPA 1001 FF 1 & 2).

Throughout their first full year with Meaford Fire, recruit knowledge and skills will constantly be monitored and honed to meet NFPA standards and industry best practices. Fire fighter and public safety are paramount. At the successful conclusion of this first year, recruits will celebrate their accomplishment at a graduation ceremony attended by family and friends.

Remuneration and Benefits

While we cling to the term “volunteer” firefighter, all of our firefighters receive remuneration for the training and emergencies that they attend based on Municipal Council approved hourly rates.

- ✓ Supplemental insurance benefits provided by VFIS including access to our “Employee and Family Assistance Plan”.
- ✓ All required NFPA compliant personal protective clothing for structure fires (helmet, balaclava, individual SCBA face piece, gloves, boots, bunker suits – pants and coat) and wildland fire (helmet, eye protection, fire resistant coveralls)
- ✓ Class A Dress Uniform

Inclusion and Diversity Focus

No matter where you came from, who you are, or what your background is, we believe there is a place for you with the Meaford Fire Department

professionals who are reflective of the community we serve. We actively work towards building a culture within our organization that respects and values everyone.

The focus of our efforts are to help ensure that:

We conduct community outreach efforts that promote inclusivity;

We identify and eliminate systemic biases and barriers;

We provide supports post-recruitment; and

We foster an increasingly inclusive and welcoming culture across our Department.

Serving our community as a volunteer firefighter is a rewarding and enriching experience. There is no reason that a career in firefighting should not be equally inviting and accessible to all who are able and willing.

Hiring Process

The Meaford Fire Department subscribes to the philosophy that a diverse team is a strong team and so if you are 18 years of age or older, in good physical condition, reside within 5km of the fire station, have a valid First Aid/CPR certificate, Minimum G or DZ preferred driver's license and are able to provide a recruit training class each year. Applications are reviewed/processed in anticipation for the establishment of a

The hiring process consists of six stages:

1. Applicants are invited to attend a "Recruiting Open House" (mandatory)
2. Successful completion of the "Written Aptitude Assessment"
3. Successful completion of the "Physical Aptitude Assessment" is required (see next page for more detail)
4. Selected applicants are then invited to appear before an interview panel
5. Selected applicants are invited to conduct pre-employment medical screening and police background checks (vulnerable sector)
6. Successful applicants are provided with a conditional job offer

Physical Aptitude Testing Summary

Being a firefighter is a physically demanding job, so all applicants must demonstrate an aptitude to do the type of work we routinely encounter at an emergency. The

- “Physical Aptitude Assessment” is administered by our own departmental:
1. **Ladder raise and climb** – the candidate is asked to properly lift, carry, raise then climb a ladder; simulates placing and ascending a ladder at a structure fire.
 2. **Roof/wall /floor breach** – each candidate utilizes a sledge hammer to strike a Keiser Machine, this is a simulated forcible entry chopping device.
 3. **Equipment carry** – Each candidate is tasked with lifting and carrying two pieces of equipment (e.g. - electric fan, rescue tool) over a prescribed distance; simulates the ability to transport heavy equipment safely.
 4. **Stair climb** – each candidate is required to pick-up a hose pack, then ascend, descend then re-ascend a flight of stairs; simulates work encountered at an apartment building emergency.
 5. **Limited visibility search** – each candidate dons a fire department “bunker coat”, a “greyed out” air mask face-piece then crawls through a training maze; simulates a search and rescue.
 6. **Hose advancement** – the candidate drags a charged hose-line across a prescribed distance on pavement, then flows water through the nozzle; simulates a fire attack.
 7. **Dummy drag** – lastly, each candidate must drag a training manikin (approx. 170 pounds) over a prescribed distance and course; simulates a rescue of an unconscious person.

Municipality of Meaford - Meaford Fire Department

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