

Bay County Volunteer Firefighter

Frequently Asked Questions

What volunteer opportunities are available with Bay County Fire Rescue?

Our department has a need for volunteers in the following areas:

- Volunteer Firefighter - Engages in direct fire and rescue activities.
- Support Unit Firefighter - Operates outside of the hazard zone to support other firefighters.

Where can I get an application to become a volunteer?

Applications are available on our website. Applications may be submitted online or on the HR kiosk located in the lobby of Human Resources. The HR kiosk is available for use during normal business hours Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Library computers are also available for use.

You may apply online at <http://co.bay.fl.us/hr.php> by choosing "External Job Openings". Click on "Volunteer Firefighter" position and click on the "Apply" link. If this is the first time you are applying using our online job application, you will need to create an account and select a Username and Password. After your account has been established, you can build an application by clicking on the "Build Job Application" link.

To be considered for volunteer status, all sections of the applications must be filled out completely.

What information do I need to submit with my application?

When you submit your application, we will need your Florida Driver's License number, Social Security number, and place of High School Diploma or GED. Proof of High School Diploma or GED Certificate required.

Who sets the requirements to be a volunteer firefighter in Bay County?

All requirements to become a volunteer firefighter for Bay County are governed by the requirements of Florida Statutes 633 and Florida Administrative Code 69A-37.

Is there anything that could prevent me from becoming a volunteer firefighter?

Bay County Board of County Commissioners orders a criminal history check and a MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) on all applicants. An applicant whose driving history does not meet the requirements of the Bay County Board of County Commissioners' Driver Selection Policy or whose criminal history does not meet the requirements of the Florida Administrative Code may be rejected.

Volunteer applicants will also be interviewed as part of the application process. Bay County reserves the right to reject any applicant based on the interview, background check, or physical results.

Is there an age requirement to be a volunteer firefighter?

You must be 18 or over to volunteer with Bay County. Florida Administrative Code requires a firefighter to be 18 or over to attain minimum standards.

Why must I have a high school diploma or GED to be a volunteer firefighter?

A High School Diploma or GED is required by Florida Statutes 633 and Florida Administrative Code 69A-37.

What steps are there in the volunteer application approval process?

Approval to become a volunteer consists of these steps:

- Driver's License Check
- Criminal Background Check
- Drug Screening
- Interview by Command Staff
- Medical Examination
- Approval by the Chief or Deputy Chief of Emergency Services

How long does it take the application process to be completed?

The time to process your application after we have received it varies; however, it usually averages four (4) to six (6) weeks. The majority of this time is spent awaiting your medical examination appointment and obtaining those results.

Do I need to have a medical examination and what medical testing is done as part of the application process?

Yes, you will be required to take a medical examination. The medical examination complies with requirements set forth in NFPA 1582 (Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments). All components of the primary medical examination are paid for by Bay County. However, if you are referred to another physician for clarification of any medical situation, the cost of such visits and treatment is not paid for by Bay County.

Does Bay County provide my uniforms and equipment?

Bay County provides all of your uniform and safety equipment needs free of charge; however, you are responsible for the safekeeping of these items.

How do I know what fire station I would be assigned to?

You will have the choice of which fire station you will be assigned to. Most volunteers choose the station closest to their residence.

What other duties are expected of me as a volunteer?

In addition to responding to emergency calls, you are expected to attend training and meeting nights, and to perform the station duties assigned by your officer.

Am I able to ride at other stations or am I limited to the one I am assigned to?

Yes, once you have been accepted as a volunteer, you may ride along with other stations.

I heard that I must be certified as a Florida State Firefighter I to remain as a volunteer. How long do I have to complete that program?

Yes, you must become at least Firefighter I certified within one (1) year as required by Florida Administrative Code. Volunteers who are unable to attain Firefighter 1 certification will be restricted from certain activities and may be removed from the volunteer roster in certain situations.

There are only a few exceptions to this rule, such as the rehab unit or assisting with public education, so please speak with the Fire Administration staff for information regarding these exceptions.

Does Bay County pay for my training or school classes to become a volunteer?

Dependent on fund availability, Bay County *may pay* for your training and school classes; however, you must be active and in good standing as a volunteer for six months before your fire school is considered for reimbursement. All fees must be paid for up front by the volunteer. Upon proof of successful completion (pursuant to the Bay County Educational Reimbursement Program), and available budget funds, fees may be reimbursed.

If Bay County pays for my schooling, is there a minimum amount of time that I must remain a volunteer?

You are required to remain active and in good standing as a volunteer with Bay County for a period of three (3) years after your fire school has been paid for. You will be required to sign a written agreement regarding these details.

What happens if I do not fulfill my three (3) year obligation to serve as a volunteer after receiving my training paid for by the County?

Should you fail to honor your three (3) year commitment, you will be responsible to reimburse Bay County for funds that were expended. This may be on a prorated basis.

If I volunteer for Bay County, does this guarantee that I will get a career firefighter job with Bay County when positions are open?

No. Volunteering as a firefighter with Bay County does not guarantee that you will be hired as a career firefighter by Bay County; however, all volunteers are welcome to apply for any open positions.

Under what circumstances would a volunteer firefighter be de-rostered?

Volunteers that have not been active for an extended period of time will be removed. Each situation is taken on a case by case basis. Criminal offenses are justification for immediate release. As part of a uniformed Fire Rescue service, all members must comply with County Fire Rescue regulations.

Volunteers may be removed at any time at the discretion of Command Staff.

How do volunteer firefighters get dispatched to calls?

Via pagers and/or radio. After a page is initiated by the Incident Commander, volunteers proceed to the appropriate station and respond with the requested apparatus.

Volunteers are then part of the ICS for the duration of the call and follow the instructions of the Incident Commander.

As a volunteer, am I expected to report to duty during times of disaster such as hurricanes and tornadoes?

Yes, you are expected to report to duty during these times as your schedule allows. Emergencies of this nature increase the demand for volunteers and all personnel are necessary components of the recovery process.

Are Volunteers covered by Workers Compensation Insurance?

Yes, while on duty and responding to calls.