



Firefighter Application Packet

City of Texarkana, Texas

Fire Department
220 Texas Blvd.
Texarkana, TX 75503
(903) 798-3994

Human Resources
PO Box 1967
Texarkana, TX 75504
(903) 798-3916



Thank you for your interest in the Texarkana, Texas, Fire Department. This department is a modern, full career fire agency. We offer an excellent employment opportunity for entry firefighters, with competitive pay, benefits, and retirement. The information that follows is important to understanding your eligibility for this position and the hiring process. Please read it carefully. If you are interested in competing for a position in this department, please complete and return the application that is included in this packet with all applicable documentation.

Position Information

This position involves serving the citizens of Texarkana through providing response to incidents involving firefighting, rescue, hazardous materials, emergency medical, and other emergency response services. Also included in the position responsibilities are participating in fire prevention activities; training; equipment and station maintenance; and public education. The Texarkana Fire Department does not operate a transport Emergency Medical Service.

Salary:

Starting salary is shown in the chart below. After successfully completing the one-year probationary period, salary is automatically increased to the one year step. Further step raises occur at 2, 3, 5, and 10 years. Employees may also be able to increase their pay with incentive pay, educational pay, longevity pay, and, after two years, promotional opportunities.

Firefighters with prior full-time career fire service experience may be eligible for our lateral entry program. Under this program, candidates may be given credit for 1 year of experience for each year of qualified and validated experience with another fire agency (3 years maximum). This prior service credit is used only for determining pay grade, not for determination of seniority or promotional eligibility. Eligible candidates may receive a starting salary as high as the three-year step.

Time in Grade	Annual Base Pay	Time in Grade	Annual Base Pay
New Hire	\$35,116	3 Years	\$40,089
1 Year	\$37,153	5 Years	\$41,645
2 Years	\$38,593	10 Years	\$43,267

(Salaries shown effective October 1, 2011)

Minimum Requirements

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age at the time of the Firefighter Entrance Exam, but not have reached 36 years of age at time of employment. Applicants must have a high school diploma, GED, or equivalent; show proof of U. S. Citizenship; and possess a valid driver's license. All candidates meeting these requirements and submitting a complete application will be eligible to take the entrance exam.

No certifications are required to take the entrance exam. However, City of Texarkana Local Civil Service Rules allow preference in hiring to be given to individuals who possess Texas Commission on Fire Protection certification as a structural firefighter, Texas Department of State Health Services certification

as an Emergency Medical Technician, and prior full-time, career fire service experience. Your chances for employment will be greatly enhanced if you possess both firefighter and EMT certifications.

Examination Information:

The examination is composed of a written Civil Service examination. This exam is based solely on material found in the test preparation manual available from the Human Resources Office. The cost of this manual is \$10, and it will be available immediately following the application deadline for an exam. Only those applicants who earn a score of seventy percent (70%) or higher on the test will receive further consideration. Those applicants having an honorable discharge from the military are eligible for five (5) additional points upon scoring at least seventy percent (70%) on the exam. In order to receive these Veteran's points, applicants must submit a copy of their DD-214 to the Human Resources Office prior to taking the exam. All DD-214 Forms will become the property of the City of Texarkana, Texas and will not be returned to the applicants. In accordance with Section 143.025 (j) Texas Local Government Code, natural born or adopted children of firefighters who suffered a line of duty death while employed by a Chapter 143 city are automatically placed at the top of the eligibility list upon passing the exam with a minimum score of 70%. Anyone meeting these criteria will be required to produce satisfactory evidence of this qualification prior to the date of the exam. Contact the Civil Service Director for additional information. All applicants are required to provide positive identification before being admitted to the written examination. Please bring a valid driver's license or another form of valid identification.

Screening Information:

All applicants must complete a physical ability test consisting of the following three (3) tasks: climbing an aerial ladder, a blind hose crawl, and an obstacle course. The obstacle course consists of several job-related tasks. The aerial ladder climb and the blind hose crawl are timed individually. The obstacle course is timed as one event. You must complete all three sections of the physical ability test within the required time limits to pass the test. You must pass the physical ability test to be considered further for employment.

A formal interview before a review board of fire department officers and a thorough background investigation, including polygraph examination, will be conducted. Examples of disqualifying background information include, but are not limited to, felony conviction, poor credit history, poor employment record, substance abuse, driving under the influence, and excessive traffic violations. Specific requirements on background are found in a subsequent section of this packet.

Eligible candidates must pass a basic physical examination, including hearing and vision screenings, and urine drug screen. Applicants must be in good physical condition, free from disease or defects that would interfere with the satisfactory performance of the duties of the position.

We appreciate your interest in the Texarkana Fire Department. If you have questions about the department or the hiring process, please contact Assistant Fire Chief Chris Black at (903) 798-3994 or cblack@txkusa.org.

Applications must be submitted to:

City of Texarkana, Texas, Human Resources Office 1st Floor,

220 Texas Boulevard, Texarkana, TX 75501

or mailed to:

PO Box 1967, Texarkana, TX 75504-1967

Do not submit applications to the Fire Department

Texarkana, Texas, Fire Department Minimum Background Standards for Employment

Background:

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) is the regulating agency for all career fire departments in the state of Texas. TCFP regulations state, in Section 403.1 (b)

"The duties and responsibilities of persons who hold certifications issued by the commission each involve matters that directly relate to public safety. Fire protection personnel ... often have access to areas not generally open to the public. The public relies on the honesty, trustworthiness, and reliability of persons certified by the commission. Thus, crimes involving moral turpitude, including but not limited to fraud and dishonesty, are directly relevant. In addition, the ability of such persons to function unimpaired by alcohol or the illegal use of drugs, in dangerous or potentially dangerous circumstances, including but not limited to the operation of emergency vehicles is paramount in light of the duty to protect the health and safety of the public."

Based on this regulation and the obligation of this department to provide for the safety of the public and to maintain the trust of our citizens, we have established these guidelines for background investigations. It is our belief that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.

It is understood that many people make mistakes when they are young. Accordingly, all time periods refer to offenses that occurred after age 17. Offenses that occurred at age 17 or earlier will be considered on a case by case basis, considering the severity and frequency of the offense along with the elapsed time since the offense. The Fire Chief and Oral Review Board may consider these same factors of frequency, severity, and elapsed time in any case where it is appropriate. Isolated instances of misconduct that occur within the indicated time periods, but that are not indicative of normal behavior patterns, may be overlooked.

Criminal Convictions:

The honesty and integrity of firefighters is vital to the operation of the department. Home and business owners trust firefighters to enter their premises in emergency situations. This trust is vital to our mission and a history of criminal conviction in our employees could undermine that trust. In addition, the Texas Commission on Fire Protection requires criminal background checks on all applicants for firefighter certification. A history of criminal convictions can prevent an applicant from being certified as a firefighter. For these reasons, the following standards for criminal conviction history will be followed when reviewing the background of employment candidates.

Felony: All degrees - No conviction in adult history. Juvenile convictions will be considered on a case by case basis, considering the severity and frequency of the offense along with the elapsed time since the offense.

Misdemeanor: Class A or B- No convictions in past five (5) years.
No more than one conviction in adult history

Class C- (non-traffic) No convictions in past three (3) years
No more than one conviction in past five (5) years
No more than two (2) convictions in past ten (10) years

All Levels: No conviction that would impact the ability of an applicant to obtain firefighter certification from the Texas Commission on Fire Protection or EMT certification from the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Admissions: Admissions of criminal offenses that did not result in a conviction will be considered on a case by case basis, considering the severity and frequency of the offense along with the elapsed time since the offense.

Driving Record:

All firefighters employed by this department operate and drive departmental vehicles at some point. Driving a fire apparatus that may weigh more than 40,000 pounds under emergency conditions requires a commitment to safety and maturity in driving habits. In addition, the City could face significant liability if an individual with a poor driving record were hired and then had an accident in a fire apparatus. For these reasons, the following standards will be followed in assessing the driving record of potential employees.

Moving Violations: No more than two (2) moving violations in most recent 12-month period
No more than three (3) moving violations in most recent 36 month period

DWI / DUI: No DWI or DUI conviction in past five (5) years. No more than two (2) convictions in adult history.

Drug Usage:

Firefighters respond to emergency situations that threaten the lives and property of the citizens of Texarkana. To effectively respond, make decisions, and take actions to protect the citizens and their property requires a mind that is functioning at full capacity. In addition, each firefighter depends upon fellow firefighters to be unimpaired. No amount of impairment due to substance abuse is acceptable. The City of Texarkana, Texas, through its personnel manual, recognizes the problems of substance abuse in our society and the negative impact of that abuse on the workforce. This same manual establishes a policy of a drug-free workplace. While recognizing that some experimentation with illegal drugs is common and that rehabilitation is possible, the following guidelines will be used to insure that applicants for employment have established themselves in a drug-free lifestyle.

Marijuana: No use or possession within two (2) years.
Use or possession beyond two years will be considered on an individual basis with the severity and frequency considered.

Hallucinogens: No use within five (5) years and no recurrence of side effects.

Other controlled substances: No use within five (5) years.

Possession to distribute: Not ever

Please note that all standards listed are minimum standards. This department intends to hire the best possible employees, so meeting minimum standards does not insure employment.

Are you a natural-born or adopted child of a firefighter who suffered a line of duty death while covered by Chapter 143, Texas Local Government Code, and therefore entitled to special consideration under Section 143.025 (j)?

Yes No (If yes, submit documentation of your status to the Civil Service Director for verification.)

Are you a citizen of the United States? Yes No If No, Alien Registration # _____

FIREFIGHTER CERTIFICATION STATUS

Check the applicable box below that best describes your current firefighter certification level.

- I am currently certified as a Basic Structural Firefighter (or higher level) by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection. (Attach copy of certification)
- I am currently enrolled and actively participating in a course that leads to Structural Firefighter certification by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection. (Estimated course completion date _____)
- I have completed a training program and my firefighter certification is pending. (Attach Course Completion Certificate)
- I have equivalent training from another jurisdiction (state or military) that is equivalent to the Texas training curricula and that qualifies me to challenge the Texas Commission on Fire Protection certification exam and obtain the required certification. (Attach verification of training or certification – i.e. copies of other state certifications, military certifications with IFSAC seals, etc.)
- I have no firefighter certification and I have not attended a fire academy.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION STATUS

Check the applicable box below that best describes your current Emergency Medical Technician certification level.

- I am currently certified as a Basic EMT (or higher level) by the Texas Department of State Health Services. (Attach copy of certification)
- I am currently enrolled and actively participating in a course that leads to Basic EMT certification by the Texas Department of State Health Services. (Estimated course completion date _____)
- I have completed a training program and my EMT certification is pending. (Attach Course Completion Certificate)
- I have equivalent training from another jurisdiction (state or military) that is equivalent to the Texas training curricula and that qualifies me to challenge the Texas Department of State Health Services EMT certification exam and obtain the required certification. (Attach verification of training or certification – i.e. copies of other state certifications, National Registry certification, etc.)
- I have no EMT certification and I have not attended an EMT training course.

PRIOR FIRE SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Check the applicable box below that best describes your fire service experience.

- I have full-time career fire service experience. (List previous employer and # of years.) _____
- I have no prior full-time career fire service experience.

Applicant's Certification and Agreement

I hereby certify that the facts set forth in the above employment application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that falsification of statements on this application will result in my rejection for potential employment. I understand that, if employed, falsified statements on this application or any pre-employment paperwork shall be considered sufficient cause for dismissal. I understand that my position on the eligibility list provides an order of consideration for employment, not a guarantee of employment. I understand that candidates who meet one or more of the following criteria will receive preference in employment: valid Texas Commission on Fire Protection Structural Firefighter certification, valid Texas Department of State Health Services Emergency Medical Technician certification, and/or prior full-time career fire service experience. I understand that, as a part of the employment process, I am subject to a screening procedure that includes a physical ability test, background checks, a polygraph examination, an oral review board, a psychological examination, a physical examination, a urine drug screen, and other screening tools deemed appropriate by the Fire Chief. In exchange for consideration for employment, I hereby agree to participate in these processes. The City of Texarkana, Texas; the Texarkana, Texas Fire Department; or authorized agents are hereby authorized to make any investigation of my personal or work history deemed necessary. If approved for employment, I understand that I will be required to complete a "Pre-employment Agreement" prior to the effective date of my employment. This agreement has been approved by the Civil Service Commission of Texarkana, Texas and is available in the Local Civil Service Rules or from the Fire Department. If employed, I understand that I will be required to satisfactorily complete a one year probationary period during which time my employment may be terminated, without recourse, for failure to meet the minimum standards required by my employment.

Date _____

Signature of Applicant _____