

## **What should I expect as a Firefighter?**

### **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Strength and stamina enough to climb 6 or more flights of stairs while wearing fire protective ensemble weighing at least 50 lb or more and carrying equipment/tools weighing an additional 20 to 40 lb.

Arm-hand steadiness, manual dexterity, and finger dexterity enough to use manual and power tools in the performance of duties.

Speech, sight, and hearing enough to determine the nature of the emergency, maintain personal safety, and make critical decisions in a confused, chaotic, and potentially life threatening environment throughout the duration of the operation.

Visual acuity enough and motor coordination enough to operate fire apparatus or other vehicles in an emergency mode with emergency lights and sirens.

Physical strength enough to rescue-drag or carry objects and victims from newborns up to adults weighing over 200 lb to safety, despite hazardous conditions and low visibility, in both emergency and non-emergency situations.

Extent flexibility, mobility, and balance enough to bend, twist, and reach out when climbing or working on ladders.

Physical strength enough to advance water-filled hose-lines up to 2.5 inches in diameter from fire apparatus to occupancy (approximately 150 feet); can involve negotiating multiple flights of stairs, ladders, and other obstacles.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

Frequently working both independently and as an integral component of team incidents, where sudden incapacitation of a member can result in mission failure or in risk of injury or death to civilians or other team members.

Subject to extensive time outside exposed to the elements.

Subject to extreme fluctuation in temperature while performing duties. Must perform physically demanding work in hot (400 degrees plus), humid (up to 100%) atmosphere while wearing equipment that significantly impairs body-cooling mechanisms.

Subject to wearing fire protective ensemble that is encapsulating and insulating. Wearing this clothing will result in significant fluid loss that frequently progresses to clinical dehydration and can elevate core temperature to levels exceeding 102.2 degrees F (39 degrees C).

Subject to climbing ladders, operating from heights, walking or crawling in the dark along narrow and uneven surfaces, and operating in proximity to

electrical power lines and/or other hazards. Possible exposure to toxic fumes, irritants, particulates, biological (infectious) and non-biological hazards, and/or heated gases, despite the use of PPE including SCBA.

Subject to wearing a SCBA, which includes a demand valve-type positive pressure face-piece or HEPA filter masks, which requires the ability to tolerate increased respiratory workloads.

Subject to performing firefighting functions (e.g., hose-line operations, extensive crawling, lifting and carrying heavy objects, ventilating roofs or walls using power or hand tools, forcible entry), rescue operations, and other emergency response actions under stressful conditions while wearing personal protective ensembles (PPE) and self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), including working in extremely hot or cold environments for prolonged periods of time.

Subject to performing critical, time sensitive, complex problem solving during physical exertion in stressful life-threatening hazardous environments (including hot, dark, tightly enclosed spaces), further aggravated by fatigue, flashing lights, sirens and other distractions.

Subject to working for long periods of time and irregular hours requiring sustained physical activity and intense concentration.

Subject to working unpredictable emergency requirements for prolonged periods of extreme physical exertion without the benefit of warm-up, scheduled rest periods, meals, access to medication(s), or hydration.

Subject to making life or death decisions during emergency conditions.

Exposed to grotesque sights and smells associated with major trauma and burn victims.

Subject to working in and communicating in (giving and comprehending verbal orders) environments of high background noise, poor visibility, limited mobility, at heights, in enclosed or confined spaces and drenching from hose lines and/or fixed protection systems (sprinklers) while wearing PPE and SCBA.