

# Professional Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment Orientation Guide



## FIRE DEPARTMENT

*This document has been created to familiarize prospective members with the opportunities and benefits offered by joining the membership of the Iqaluit Fire Department. This guide will briefly explain the minimum qualifications needed to become a member and serves to explain the admission process. We welcome your application and feedback.*

Iqaluit Fire Department  
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## **Our Mission**

THE MISSION OF THE IQALUIT FIRE DEPARTMENT IS TO SERVE THE CITIZENS AND GUESTS OF THE CITY OF IQALUIT BY UTILIZING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SAFELY PROTECT LIFE, PROPERTY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT FROM INCIDENTS INVOLVING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, FIRE, AND OTHER EMERGENCIES.

## **Our Core values**

Service • Professionalism • Integrity • Respect • Constant Improvement • Trust • Community Service and Involvement • Health • Safety • Teamwork • Leadership

## **Our Vision**

- To provide an acceptable level of emergency care and fire protection for the community in times of need.
- To be a community oriented service provider while maintaining focus on our core values.
- To treat our fellow citizens with the consideration and compassion they deserve in their time of need.
- To be good neighbors throughout the local community.
- To encourage, educate, develop and promote our youth as our community's most valuable resource and asset.
- To treat our fellow members with respect, admiration and compassion for the challenges they face in volunteering and in life.
- To appreciate our members for their dedication, recognize them for their contributions and reward them for their achievements.
- To be fair and honest in our dealings with the city government and outside agencies.
- To be recognized as leaders in our industry and our community.
- To continually monitor our operations, administration and service delivery, recognize our limitations and swiftly implement effective change when necessary.

## **Letter from the Department**

**Dear Applicant,**

Thank you for your interest in becoming a professional volunteer firefighter with the Iqaluit Fire Department. The position of firefighter is one of tremendous responsibility and individual dedication. Being a firefighter demands a great deal from each individual, however becoming a firefighter is one of the most rewarding things you can do.

We have prepared this packet of material for you to review in anticipation of possible questions you may have and to provide our expectations of you as a volunteer.

Our department is held in the highest esteem by our community. We are a progressive organization that maintains a high level of professionalism and expertise. Becoming a part of our firefighting team carries with it not only great responsibility, but it also carries personal pride. This department is very proud of the men and women who are part of the organization who are highly motivated and committed to improving and protecting our community. We constantly strive to enhance, upgrade, and improve the level of fire protection and emergency services we provide.

We hope the information contained in this guide is helpful to you and your family. Should you have further questions please do not hesitate to contact us, or if the lights are on at the fire station, feel free to stop by. We again would like to thank you for applying for membership, we are pleased that you will be joining us and become a Professional Volunteer Firefighter.

Respectfully,

Members of the Iqaluit Fire Department

## Why Volunteer?

Ask any professional volunteer firefighter why they accept the challenges they do and they will tell you in their own words that they feel a need to help others and give back to their community. As firefighters work to fulfill their need to help others, they also meet the ever growing needs of their community. When you join the fire service you are joining a profession steeped in tradition, a brotherhood dating back to the beginning of Canadian History. Today you can walk into any firehouse in the Country, tell them you are a firefighter and you instantly have this connection and shared sense of commitment to something greater than yourself.

Firefighting is very demanding of an individual. Many hours of training are involved, requirements must be met and regulations and standards are to be upheld. Our volunteer firefighters are not compensated in the traditional way for their efforts. Compensation is only received for response to an incident. There is no monetary bonus, or financial incentive to work harder. However, there is a reward! It comes from the pride the volunteer receives both individually and as part of a team. It comes in the form of a friendly handshake from a grateful citizen or a smile of gratitude. The child's awe as they see the inside of a fire truck, getting to blow the horn, operate the siren or seeing the flashing red lights while talking to one of the firefighters. The smile from a neighbor, friend, or family member in your community who thanks you for being a part of a thriving, valuable and irreplaceable community organization.

Many like the feeling they get when they help people in their time of need and some feel it's their obligation to serve the community. Yet others just want to belong to the team. Whatever motivates you to volunteer – everyone gains the self-satisfaction of being at their best when others are dealing with what is often the worst that life has to offer.

Imagine having to prepare yourself to cope with situations that range from structure fires, hazardous material spills, motor vehicle crashes, technical rescues and almost any other conceivable emergency. This diversity is coupled with the fact that these skills may be needed at any time of the day or night, seven days a week, in any kind of weather, and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances. Yet these same factors contribute to our profession being so personally rewarding.

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from what we do are often beyond description. There is the sense of accomplishment when you control a structure fire or extend compassion for automobile crash victims, and there is fulfillment from teaching fire safety to children. The bottom line in our business is measured by the loss of life, pain and suffering, and the property damage we have successfully prevented or reduced. Protecting Life, Property and the Environment are always our priority.

Volunteering in emergency services is one of the most important decisions you may make. We hope that you gave this decision the time and serious consideration it deserves, and decided to join our ranks, with understanding and commitment. Our human resources are our greatest assets and we want you to be a part of our team.

## About Us

Your neighbors, your friends and maybe even your relatives make up our Iqaluit Fire Department team. We are teachers, students, farmers, businessman, nurses, carpenters, electricians, office workers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters.

We are people just like you – with families, jobs and active lifestyles who still find time to give back to our community. The Iqaluit Fire Department offers a friendly environment for you to discover your capabilities and make the most of your investment in volunteering.

The Iqaluit Fire Department is a Composite Fire Department with 18 fulltime, 25 volunteers and 5 Dispatchers. Members of the department are notified of emergencies through a dispatch center and receive notifications by a pager. Each member is issued a pager and is expected to wear it at all times when available to respond.

We provide comprehensive emergency medical services, firefighting, vehicle extrication, specialized rescue, fire prevention education, and various annual community events.

The Iqaluit Fire Department is seeking volunteers to bolster its ranks in a diverse range of services to help us serve our community. You have chosen to be part of this wonderful organization and to assist the department to meet the demanding needs of the community.

Unlike a paid career firemedic, volunteers have no scheduled duty shifts. Our Department is on-call at all times – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To accommodate your busy and varying lifestyle, volunteers respond when they are available in the area of our protection.

The Iqaluit Fire Department is dispatched through the Iqaluit Emergency Communications Center (ICC). The ICC is the only Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) serving our area. Utilizing the priority dispatch system, dispatchers alert volunteers via pagers, radios and cell phones.

Once dispatched, firefighters respond to the fire station, put on their protective clothing, staff the appropriate apparatus and respond to the incident. If you are unable to respond to the fire station as a result of another commitment such as work, kids, don't worry we understand. You can respond when you are able, during that incident, once you are freed up, there is always something to help with.

We respond to structure fires in commercial and residential buildings providing valuable life saving techniques and property conservation. We respond to motor vehicle crashes providing disentanglement and patient extrication. We respond to hazardous materials spills, leaks and releases under a Hazardous Material Operations level of training. We also respond to other classifications of incidents including service calls for downed power lines, commercial and residential automatic fire alarms, assistance during severe weather conditions, police assistance, evacuations, and numerous other types of situations that require trained emergency responders. The list is endless and constantly evolving!

## **Benefits of Membership – What’s in it for you?**

**Quality Fire Training** – You provide the commitment and dedication, and we provide all of the training at no cost. We offer local and in-house training; Fire Academy IFSAC certified courses.

**Recognition & Awards Program** – This program recognizes and awards our volunteers for their service and accomplishments.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** – We protect our firefighters with PPE that meets or exceeds National Standards.

**Uniforms** – Look professional and show your Iqaluit Fire Department pride in your Class B uniform with department insignias.

**Social Event** – Members and their guest enjoy our annual staff BBQ and Christmas dinner. This special evening is also our opportunity to say thank you to loved ones who support us throughout the year.

**Peace of Mind** – We recognize that firefighting and providing emergency services is an inherently dangerous business. That’s why we take extra measures to protect our volunteers. The City of Iqaluit provides workman’s compensation coverage and insurance to cover members if they are injured on the job, training or other scheduled department events. We care about your health, safety and well-being. Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD) and counseling is even available to help our volunteers deal with the emotional impact of the tragedies we’re unfortunately exposed to in our line of work. This service is provided free-of-charge.

## **Expectations**

Although no previous experience or training is required, you need more than just a desire to help people. You also need courage and dedication, assertiveness, and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. You must also commit to continuing education.

Our service is one that calls on its members to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments. Our volunteers need to be team players, respecting each other’s role and contributions. You need to be willing to work on-call and to deal with occasional interruptions to your lifestyle, dropping what you’re doing at the ‘sound of the alarm’ to respond to the emergency needs of your fellow citizen.

## **Application Process**

You have taken the first step by expressing interest in becoming a professional volunteer firefighter and reviewing this information. The following steps will help guide you through the process needed to become a member of the Iqaluit Fire Department (IFD).

### **Minimum Requirements for Membership Application:**

- Have attained the age of eighteen (18)
- Have a minimum of grade 10 or GED equivalent
- Legal resident of Canada
- Be physically fit to perform the duties of a firefighter.
- Be a City of Iqaluit Resident
- Be subject to a background check, to include criminal and employment.
- Valid Driver's License
- Attend 150 hours of training, annually
- Uphold the good image of the IFD
- Follow all operating guidelines, rules and policies.
- Remove facial hair for SCBA use and safety

Practice nights are scheduled for every Tuesday at 7:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. All members shall not miss 2 consecutive calls or practices without informing the Deputy Fire Chief.

We would like to maintain 25 volunteers, everyone is welcome to join, if the department has a full complement of members, the person's application will be filed and the person's name placed on a waiting list as long as they continue to be an Iqaluit resident. The Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chiefs have the right to reprimand and or dismiss any member at any time.

Everyone starts on a 6 month probationary membership, regardless of the level and skill. You will be assigned the following:

- Locker space, name and number must be placed on the locker
- Issued the code to the fire station door
- Assigned a Firefighter Identification Number
- Assigned to your Fire Department Company and introduced to your Company Officer.
- Be fit tested annually for SCBA
- You will be required to complete the contact page and set up the I'm Responding app.
- Participate in a Probationary Firefighter Orientation
- Issued set of Firefighter Turnout Gear.
- Issued a Fire Pager
- Issued Accountability tags.
- Review a copy of the IFD Bylaws, this information is available on the IFD Fire Rescue training website, an electronic signature is required.

- Review a copy of the City of Iqaluit Health and safety Policy, this information is available on the IFD Fire Rescue training website, an electronic signature is required.
- Review IFD policy manual. This manual is available on the IFD Fire Rescue training website, an electronic signature is required.
- Review IFD Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) manual. This manual is available on the IFD Fire Rescue training website, an electronic signature is required.

### **Fire Department Training Requirements:**

Probationary Firefighters are required to have a high visibility vest and must wear it at all incident calls. Training and practice are two different process in our training category. Training is when an instructor provides instruction for you to gain knowledge and skill to perform at a level consistent to a standard based on a formal lesson plan. Practice is to provide all levels of skill an opportunity to utilize those skills to achieve a goal, this is also an opportunity for members to mentor and peer teach the skills to members that lack proficiency in that skill.

To become certified or to take the training for becoming a firefighter level 1 the course begins in September of each year and ends in May the following year. The Firefighter-I Program is approximately 200 hours in length.

Following completion of the Firefighter-I Program, all firefighters must meet annual training requirements to maintain FF certification and to remain in compliance with the department training policy, this is why there is practice.

Once you have finished the FF-1 program you can start on the Firefighter II program. Once the level II course is complete, including the 472 hazmat awareness and operations course you can choses to complete the IFSAC certification and become a certified NFPA firefighter.

### **Iqaluit Firefighter Association**

All firefighters (volunteer and career) are members of the IFA (Iqaluit Firefighters Association). The IFA is for the firefighters to plan social, community, fundraising events and to show the community how we can work as a team and support the community by becoming involved. It is important that everyone attend these meetings when possible, the more support and involvement the better the activities and planning. All Iqaluit Fire Department members are expected to be involved with fundraising.

Thank you again for your interest in becoming a member of the Iqaluit Fire Department. If you have any questions please stop by and talk with us.

Regards,

IFD

Iqaluit Fire Department