



# Becoming a City of Waconia Firefighter



## WACONIA FIRE DEPARTMENT

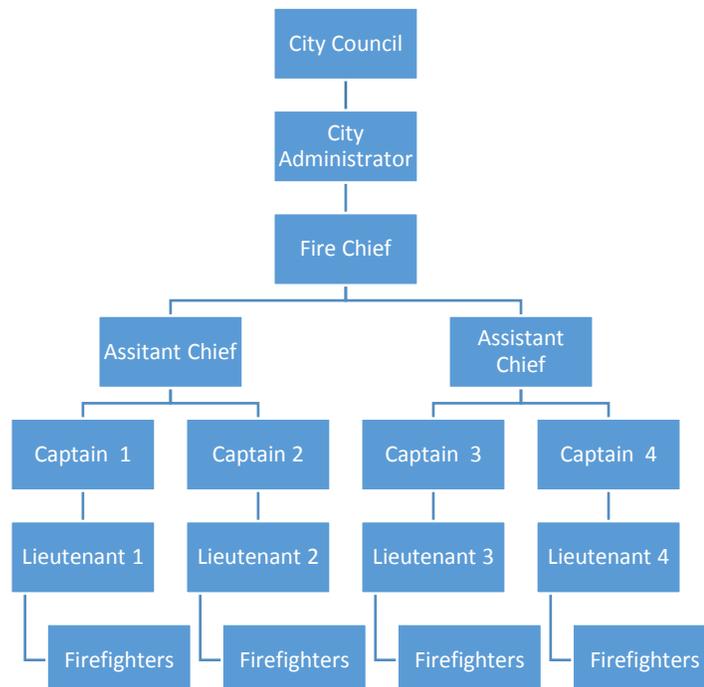
Thank you for your interest in the Waconia Fire Department! This guide is to be used as a resource to provide you with an overview of the Department and answer any questions you may have about what it takes to become a Waconia Firefighter.

The Waconia Fire Department was established in 1883, and is considered a paid-on-call or volunteer department with a full-time fire chief. The Department provides fire, first responder, rescue, fire prevention, and education services to Waconia, Laketown Township, Waconia Township, and our mutual aid partners. The population the Waconia Fire Department serves is estimated at about 15,000 residents residing in an area of 37 square miles. The services are provided from one main fire station, centrally located within the City of Waconia. The Department averages about 450 calls per year, and responds to fires, alarms, medical emergencies, personal injury accidents, carbon monoxide alarms, lake rescue, severe weather events/spotting, hazardous materials incidents, mutual aid calls, and for any event when summoned by the public.

While considered a professional volunteer fire department, Waconia firefighters train to similar standards as typical career firefighters, with the biggest difference being they receive fewer calls than career fire departments and respond when off-duty much of the time.

The composition of the Waconia Fire Department is very diverse and consists of volunteers from a wide variety of occupations. Currently, the Department is rostered for 39 members and relies heavily on its volunteers to manage almost all aspects emergency responses.

During emergencies, the Department operates in the incident command structure, following a specific chain of command similar to military style leadership. The structure of the Department can be found below.





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## WACONIA FIRE DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS AND TRAININGS

Joining the Waconia Fire Department involves a significant time commitment and dedication on your part. Although the department is made up of volunteers, there are minimum training and time commitments that must be met.

The following are the minimum requirements that must be met to be eligible to apply for membership with the Waconia Fire Department:

- 18 years of age or older
- Legal resident of the United States
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent
- Live within the City of Waconia or no more than eleven-minutes of the Waconia Fire Station
- Willingness to commit the required amount of time needed to maintain the certifications and meet the requirements of the department

### INTRODUCTORY MEMBER REQUIREMENTS:

During your first one to two years as an introductory member of the Waconia Fire Department, you will be required to obtain certification in both firefighting and medical care. This training is provided to you free of charge, as is in partnership with the Carver County Fire Academy. The Department will provide you with the tools and equipment required to attend. This training starts in August of each year and is usually conducted on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and some Saturday mornings. Training ends in late February.

REQUIRED CERTIFICATIONS	TIME COMMITMENT
<b>Firefighter I</b>	Four Months: 80 hours, two nights per week; occasional Saturdays
<b>Firefighter II</b>	Two Months: 40 hours, two nights per week; one Saturday
<b>Emergency First Responder</b>	Two Months: 40 hours, two nights per week

### ACTIVE MEMBER REQUIREMENTS:

Once you have completed Firefighter I, Firefighter II, and Emergency Medical Responder training, the Waconia City Council will pass a resolution making you an “active” member of the Waconia Fire Department. All active firefighters in the State of Minnesota are required to maintain their licensure in fire, EMS, and additional certifications and meet the training requirements necessary to do so.

Waconia Firefighters are required to respond to a **minimum of 25% of all calls or duty crews assignments that come in on a monthly basis**. Firefighter safety is the number one concern of the Department—and in order to maintain a high level of safety, there are minimum requirements that must be maintained in regards to training. Training is extremely critical to the fire service, and typically, active Waconia firefighters train between 18 and 24 nights per year, mostly on Monday evenings from 7-10 pm. Firefighters are encouraged to attend 100% of trainings, and **are required to attend at least of 50% of all trainings**.



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## WACONIA FIRE DEPARTMENT RELIEF ASSOCIATION:

The Waconia Fire Department is supported by the Waconia Fire Department Relief Association. The Relief Association is the entity that conducts fundraising, support, and awareness for the needs of the Waconia Fire Department and its members. The Relief Association also has a lawful, charitable gaming entity that raises money for the community through the sale of pull tabs. As a member of the fire department, you are automatically considered a member of the Waconia Fire Department Relief Association as well.

As a member of the Waconia Fire Department Relief Association, there are several time commitments and responsibilities outside of regular department training and call response. These fall under the categories of fundraising activities and community service events.

RELIEF ASSOCIATION DUTIES	TIME COMMITMENT
<b>Spring Pancake Breakfast</b>	One Saturday and Sunday morning
<b>Fall Pancake Breakfast</b>	One Saturday and Sunday morning
<b>Community Service Events (block parties, school events, fire prevention activities, polar plunges, parades, etc.)</b>	Firefighters must participate in a minimum of two events per year, and are encouraged to participate in more

To thank you for your time commitment, the Waconia Fire Department Relief Association sponsors a few annual events just for the Fire Department members and their families. These events have included a summer picnic, banquet, and miscellaneous activities that occur throughout the year.



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## WACONIA FIRE DEPARTMENT PAY AND BENEFITS

### HOURLY PAY

Waconia Firefighters receive hourly pay for emergency mitigation or call response. Call pay is set up for direct deposit monthly to an account of your choosing. Active firefighters are also paid a flat rate for each training session attended.

### PENSION BENEFIT

The Waconia Fire Department Relief Association offers pension benefits to you. Members who are in good standing are partially vested after five years on the department and fully vested after 20 years. Firefighters must be 50 years of age or older to collect pension benefits.

### SAFARI ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTER MEMBERSHIP

All members receive a single membership to Safari Island, the City of Waconia’s community center. This membership can be upgraded to a family membership, with members paying the cost difference between single and family.

EVENT	PAY RATE (2017)
Call Pay	\$12.05 per hour
Training Pay	\$15.00 per training
Pension after five years	\$1400 per year (40% vested)
Pension after 10 years	\$2100 per year (60% vested)
Pension after 20 years	\$3500 per year (100% vested)
Safari Island Single Membership	\$363.00 (annual value of membership)

### EQUIPMENT

The Department will provide you with gear, training, and the tools and equipment required to be an effective firefighter.

### BENEFITS

Waconia Firefighters are covered under Worker’s Compensation through the City while they are on the job.

The Minnesota Volunteer Firefighter Benefits Association has an on the job supplement amount with limited benefits that you will be provided.

There are additional state and federal death benefits for your family should you lose your life or become disabled in the line of duty.

### VACATION

Active members are good standing are also allowed up to two seven-day vacations throughout the year. This allows each member the opportunity to focus on other aspect of their life without falling short on maintaining the monthly 25% call percentage requirement.



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## LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Firefighter are also entitled to a leave of absence for up to one year. This leave is for members who are in good standing who may fall upon family hardships, work related changes, etc. While on leave, members will turn in their keys and page to allow them to concentrate on what is going on in their life.

Firefighters on a leave of absence may need to attend outside training in order to reactivate their membership.



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## HOW TO BECOME A WACONIA FIREFIGHTER

After reviewing the information provided in this handout, if you are still interested in becoming a member of the Waconia Fire Department, there are several steps you must take.

If you are interested in learning more about the Waconia Fire Department, you are encouraged to set up an informational meeting. This meeting is a review of the material provided and allows the Department a chance to update you on any changes that may have occurred. Additionally, it allows you to see how the Department operates, get to know its members, and ask any questions you may have.

You also need to fill out a City of Waconia application. The application can be accessed on the City website at <http://www.waconia.org/150/Human-Resources>. Once the application is filled out and submitted, please contact the Waconia Fire Department at 952-442-2185. A meeting between you and the Fire Chief will be arranged to advise you of the hiring process and discuss certain requirements you will have to complete to become an introductory member and later an active member of the Fire Department.

You will also be invited to attend one of the Waconia Fire Department's training nights. This will give you the opportunity to meet other Waconia firefighters, ask questions, and see what a department training looks like.

If you are accepted for the position, you will be required to successfully pass the following before you are appointed by the City Council as an introductory member and allowed to respond to emergency calls or attend department functions.

- Written general knowledge test
- Interview with the Fire Department Screening Board
- City Council approval for our appointment
- Pre-placement screening
- Psychological Screening
- Physical demands screening
- Background check to verify your eligibility

It is the goal of the Waconia Fire Department to provide you with all the resources necessary to make the decision to become a Waconia Firefighter. While the Waconia Fire Department is considered a volunteer organization, it does require a significant time commitment from its members in regards to responding to calls and attending department training, as well as attending community engagement events. It is important to understand this time commitment prior to accepting a position as a firefighter, especially due to the costs associated with training a new firefighter.

Thank you for your interest in the Waconia Fire Department! Should you choose to move forward in this process, the Department will do their best to ensure you have a great experience and help you become a successful member!



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## 2018 WACONIA FIRE DEPARTMENT RECRUITMENT AND HIRING SCHEDULE

DATE	EVENT
<b>March 5, 2018 – May 28, 2018</b>	Applications Available to the Public
<b>June 11, 2018</b>	Training Nights, Station Tour & Question/Answer
<b>June 18, 2018</b>	Pre-employment Agility Test
<b>June 19, 2018,</b>	Formal Interview Night
<b>June 26, 2018</b>	Written Test
<b>June 20 – July 16, 2018</b>	Pre-employment Steps (medical, psychological, background, etc.)
<b>July 16, 2018</b>	Council Approval
<b>July 30, 2018</b>	Start Date & Beginning of Training
<b>August 14, 2018</b>	Carver County Fire Academy Training Begins
*Interested applicants who already have Firefighter I, Firefighter II, and EMR or individuals who possess the availability to respond to day calls are able to submit an application at any time.	