

Wappingers Falls Fire Department

Probationary Firefighter Program

Wappingers Falls Fire Department Probationary Firefighter Program

The probationary firefighter program was instituted by the Wappingers Falls Fire Department as a training program for young men and woman, aged 16-18 years, interested in serving their community and preparing to become senior firefighters. At age 18, the firefighter is eligible to become an unrestricted member of the Wappingers Falls fire Department.

As a Probationary firefighter, members serve in a support role for the senior firefighters at actual emergencies as a supplement to a formal training program. The firefighters attend monthly training drills with the full Department. An active member serves as the Probationary firefighters training officer, and he/she is the primary contact person for the probationary firefighter. Those selected are expected to act in a mature manner and commit to a demanding, long-term program.

In both training sessions and actual emergencies, the safety of the probationary firefighter is of paramount concern to the Department. As such, the activities of the Probationary firefighters are limited in scope and the fire officers closely supervise them. The probationary firefighters quickly become an integral part of the firefighting team during emergencies, serving in such important capacities as establishing a water supply, supplying equipment for interior firefighters, changing air packs, manning exterior hose lines and assisting with interior overhaul once a fire has been extinguished. It should be understood, however, that despite the training and supervision provided, **firefighting is a dangerous activity and serious injury and death is a possibility**. The fire officers will make every effort to minimize the probationary firefighter's exposure to danger, it is also the responsibility of the probationary firefighter to avoid known hazardous situations.

Due to the inherent dangers of firefighting, strict rules of conduct and tight procedural standards have been established. In an actual emergency, it is essential that all firefighters, including probationary firefighters, act in calm and efficient manner. The probationary Firefighters are expected to attend training drills to be prepared for the many challenges presented in an emergency situation. Each member is expected to read and understand these requirements and to adhere to the standards.

Eligibility

1. Any Resident of the Village of Wappingers Falls or any Neighboring Jurisdiction, between the ages of 16-18, may apply for membership the Village of Wappingers Falls Fire Department Probationary Firefighter program.
2. The Applicant must be in good academic standing at his/her school at the time of application and during the period of membership as a probationary firefighter. The probationary firefighter is requested to show his/her academic grades twice during the school year to an officer.
3. The applicant must complete an application, including a medical authorization and police background check. Included with the application is a parental consent that must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. A parent or legal guardian must also be present during the application investigation meeting. The application must be approved by the Membership and the Probationary Firefighter training officer.

General Rules

1. Probationary firefighters represent the Wappingers Falls fire Department and are expected to be professional, courteous and respectful to fellow firefighters, emergency service personnel and all citizens served. The Wappingers Falls fire Department will not tolerate vulgar, offensive, discriminatory or threatening language or gestures at any time. Probationary firefighters may not wear any article of clothing that, in the opinion of a fire officer, would be offensive to the public served. Violations will result in disciplinary action, and may include suspension.

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2. The Wappingers Falls Fire Department maintains "Zero Tolerance" policy with respect to drug and alcohol use and violation of public laws. Any possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, on any Wappingers Falls Fire Department premises and or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function, or while in Wappingers Falls Fire Department uniform will result in immediate dismissal for the Wappingers Falls Fire Department. Firefighters may not smoke on premises or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function or while in uniform. Any arrest or conviction for a crime will result in a review of the circumstance by the Wappingers Falls fire Department members and may result in disciplinary action up to and including permanent suspension.
3. Firefighters may not use or display emergency identification on their personal vehicles (e.g. blue lights, and fire department plates.)
4. Probationary Firefighters may not enter any Wappingers Falls Fire Department building unless a senior members of the Department is present, and is approved by such member. Probationary Firefighters may not bring friends in a fire station or permit them to be aboard fire apparatus.
5. Probationary firefighters are not permitted to attend overnight stand-by details (will be released from a stand-by no later than 10:00pm)
6. Probationary firefighters may not borrow WFFD equipment for any personal use.
7. Probationary firefighters may not operates any WFFD vehicle.
8. Power tools, hydraulic and pressurized air operated, and cutting devices such as chain saws/roof saws, air bags, and extrication tools are to be operated only under the direct supervision of a fire officer or his/her designee. Power tool use is for training purposes only. A probationary firefighter may not operate any of these tools at an emergency scene. Full protective gear, including gloves, and eye protection must be worn at all times when operating any of these tools.
9. Probationary firefighters may climb WFFD ground ladders or aerial devices for training purposes only. Any ladder use must be under the direct supervision of a fire officer or his/her designee. A ladder belt or safety harness and full protective gear must be worn at all times. Ladder or aerial devices of another department may not be used by any probationary firefighter without the consent of a fore officer from the other department and the Wappingers Falls fire Department.
10. Probationary firefighters are not to participate in any activity, including emergencies, during schools hours. Probationary firefighters are not to leave school, or a school sponsored activity, for an emergency response. Probationary firefighters are not to respond to any alarm dispatched after 9:3-pm on a school night (Sunday-Thursday).
11. Probationary firefighters must attend a minimum of 50% of training drill or meetings conducted each year. Probationary Firefighters are not required to respond to emergency calls.
12. Probationary firefighters are responsible for the care of all WFFD issued equipment, and are financially responsible for loss or damage from other than official use as a probationary firefighter.
13. Probationary firefighters may not fill SCBA air bottles, and are to remain clear of the filling area when air bottles are being filled.

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14. No firefighter is to ride on a truck step. All firefighters are to be seated in the truck cab with seatbelt on when the apparatus is in motion. Probationary firefighters may not repack hose from the hose bed if the apparatus is in motion.
15. Probationary firefighters should report to the fire house or as directed by the Wappingers Falls Fire Department Chief or company Captain via a standing assignment order.
16. Report any and all injuries to the Wappingers Falls Fire Department Chief or Line Officer.

Emergency Response

1. Probationary firefighters may respond to emergency alarms, except as outlined in (2) and (3) below.
Probationary firefighters should respond to the firehouse or as directed by the Wappingers Falls Fire Chief or Company Captain via a standing assignment order. Probationary firefighters may respond on apparatus if seats are available. (Probationary firefighter will relinquish seats to senior firefighters as needed). Probationary Fire fighters are under the command of the Wappingers Falls Fire Department Company officers from the time of their arrival the station or emergency scene until released from duty by a Chief or line officer. If no officer is aboard the apparatus, the probationary firefighter will be under the command of the driver until reassigned to a line officer. Firefighters are not to leave an emergency scene without the knowledge and consent of the Chief or line officer (each probationary firefighter is speak directly with the Chief or line officer, not van a third party).
2. Probationary firefighters may not respond to an emergency alarm relating to hazardous materials, biological or nuclear hazard, explosive device, terrorist incident, police jurisdiction/crime scene assistance, or mass casualty (defined as one likely to involve four or more individuals seriously injured or killed-such as an incident involving train, aircraft, or bus accident). Probationary firefighters are not to respond to mutual aid alarms outside the Village of Wappingers Falls Fire Department jurisdiction.
3. Prior to responding to alarms, The Probationary firefighter must be trained, and demonstrate proficiency in the use of SCBA equipment. Junior firefighters use of SCBA equipment at an emergency scene is reserved for defensive, escape purposes only. A probationary firefighter is to remain clear of an area of operation requiring use of supplemental breathing air.
4. Probationary firefighters must wear all protective gear while riding on the apparatus and at an emergency scene.
5. Under no circumstance is a probationary firefighter to enter a burning structure, confined space, or underground area, or area subject to a collapse hazard. Once a fire has been brought under control, and the building determined to be structurally sound and free of hazardous materials and toxic gasses, the probationary firefighter may enter the building if accompanied at all times by a Company Line officer or his/her designee. This must be with the consent of the Fire Chief. Probationary firefighters may operate exterior ladders under the direction of a company line officer or his/her designee. At an emergency scene, a probationary firefighter may not climb a ladder or operate from the roof or other elevated position. At an emergency scene, a probationary firefighter may not operate any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment, or cutting device.
6. Upon arrival at an emergency scene, a Probationary firefighter is not to enter a private dwelling or other structure with the interior firefighters for investigation or emergency action of any type. Probationary firefighters are to remain with the apparatus or in close proximity to the incident commander, and await specific orders from the Chief or Company line officer. If the probationary firefighter receives orders from an officer (or request from a firefighter) of another Department, it is incumbent upon the probationary firefighter to advise that officer or firefighter of his/her status as a Probationary firefighter and the limitations placed upon him/her.

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7. All orders received from a line officer are to be obeyed and executed completely, if, dare to safety concerns or for any other reason, the probationary firefighter is unable to complete an assigned task, the officer issuing the order, or another officer in his/her absence, should be notified immediately by the probationary firefighter who received the task.
8. At an emergency alarm involving downed power lines or a gas leak, the probationary firefighter must remain on board the apparatus until the area of operation for the probationary firefighter is determined to be safe by the Chief or a company line officer.
9. Probationary firefighters may not direct traffic
10. Probationary firefighters are not to make any public comment or statements to the media or via social media at the time of an emergency incident, or following the incident, concerning conditions relating to the emergency scene. Examples of comments to avoid are the cause and origin of the fire, condition of fire victims, conditions of the home interior or firefighting technique. All public inquiries are to be referred to the incident commander of the Wappingers Falls Fire Department Chief. It should be understood by the probationary firefighter that fire inspectors or arson investigators and other government officials are required to inspect certain types of damage-their presence may in no way indicate suspicion of wrongdoing on the part of the property owner. Firefighters must also understand that individuals whose property has been damaged or destroyed and/or family members injured or killed are extremely sensitive to the statements and actions of emergency personnel. Probationary firefighters are expected to demonstrate the utmost of respect and compassion for these individuals in both their words and actions.
11. Valuables found at an emergency scene are to be immediately turned over to a company line officer or police officer. Theft by a probationary firefighter will result in immediate dismissal from the probationary firefighter program and the appropriate police agency will be notified.
12. Probationary Firefighters are not to have any direct contact with an injured person or dead body unless properly certified (First Responder, EMT or Paramedic), and the only at the direction of a line officer or EMS crew. Report any accidental contact with blood or other bodily fluid to a fire officer or safety officer immediately, so that medical treatment can be initiated promptly.

Objective

The Probationary Firefighter program is for teens from the ages of 16 to 18. As these members reach 18 years old, they become eligible for active membership. Our goal is to give them a sense of belonging and fulfillment. It gives them chance to see what firefighters do and to learn the basics. We are looking for individuals that are willing to do work as part of a team, be able to take commands from Officers, be able to serve in a professional manner, and be able to attend regular trainings and meetings.

Applicant/Parents or Guardians:

I/We hereby certify that we have read and understand the rules and regulations for Probationary Firefighter and agree to permit our child to participate as a Probationary Firefighter for the Wappingers Falls Fire Department.

Applicant Signature:

X _____

Parents or Guardians Signature:

X _____

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Application

1. Name: _____ Date of birth: _____

Address: _____ Phone number: _____

_____ Email address: _____

2. Do you have you parent or guardian's permission to apply to be a probationary firefighter? YES NO

3. Parent/Guardian name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

4. Emergency Contacts

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

5. Medical Information

Doctor: _____ Phone #: _____

Hospital: _____ Phone #: _____

Medical Conditions: _____

Allergies: _____

Do you take any medication? YES NO

If yes please list the medication and what condition it is for: _____

Background Information (use another sheet of paper if more space is needed)

(a background check will be done as well, a felony will prevent anyone from becoming a member of Wappingers Falls Fire Department)

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6. Have you ever been arrested? YES NO

If yes please list the date(s) and what charge(s) were/was:

Additional information (use another sheet of paper if more space is needed)

7. What interests you the most about becoming involved with the Fire Department?

8. Please list other activities, in detail, that you are involved in (sports, Volunteer work, Churches, etc.):

Applicant signature and date

Parent signature and date

Wappingers Falls Fire Department Probationary firefighter training officer approval.

Officer Signature and title

Date

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Parental Consent

My son/daughter _____, has my permission to be a probationary firefighter with the Wappingers Falls Fire Department.

I give my consent to allow _____ to be a probationary firefighter and do not hold the Wappingers Falls Fire Department or the Village of Wappingers Falls responsible for any actions cause by my son/daughter that is not under the direction of an officer.

Probationary Firefighter Sign and date

Parent/guardian Sign and date

Contract of understanding

I and my son/daughter have read ALL of the probationary guidelines and understand the guidelines set up to outline the purpose of the probationary firefighter. I and my son/daughter that probationary firefighter serve as supporters of Wappingers Falls Fire Department to learn the basics of firefighting and to prepare to become a full member at the age of 18. i and my son/daughter understand that Probationary firefighters are to follow all instruction given to them by the officers of Wappingers Falls Fire Department and that the general standard for conduct is to act in a manner of a professional. I and my son/daughter understand that he/she is expected to be courteous and respectful of other members (probationary or regular) and to all citizens as they are representing the Wappingers Falls Fire Department. I and my son/daughter understand that there is a "Zero Tolerance" policy regarding drug and alcohol use. I and my son/daughter understand by signing this contract of understanding we are declaring that any violation of the guidelines is ground for immediate dismissal. I and my son/daughter understand that any acts that violate the guidelines and are illegal by state law will be referred to the Dutchess County Sheriff's office.

Probationary Firefighter sign and date

Parent/Guardian sign and date

Acknowledge Receipt of Guidelines

I acknowledge that I and my son/daughter have received a copy of the Wappingers Falls Fire Department Probationary Firefighter Program guidelines and have reviewed them prior to signing these documents

Probationary Firefighter sign and date

Parent/Guardian sign and date

I acknowledge that the above received a copy of the Wappingers Falls Fire Department probationary firefighter program guidelines.

Wappingers Falls Fire Department Member sign and date