



## **Wholetime Duty System (WDS)**

# **Firefighter Recruitment Campaign 2021**

**Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service**

**Information Pack**



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**For more  
information visit:**

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

[www.northantsfire.gov.uk](http://www.northantsfire.gov.uk)

All of the information required to apply to become a firefighter is contained within this Information Pack.



NFRS is pleased to invite applications for wholetime firefighters to join us in this challenging and highly rewarding career.

The communities in Northamptonshire value the services that we offer and need to feel confident in the highly skilled teams that we have reducing risk as well as dealing with emergency situations. We are continually evolving and improving how we operate whilst maintaining the highest standards. Appointing the right people is essential in helping us to achieve our ambitions for the future.

If you feel that you have what it takes, we invite you to join our 2021 recruitment process.

A list of all fire stations within NFRS is provided in the table below:

The Mounts, Northampton	Corby
Towcester	Rothwell
Woodford Halse	Oundle
Daventry	Thrapston
Long Buckby	Raunds
Guilsborough	Burton Latimer
Brixworth	Desborough
Brackley	Earls Barton
Moulton	Wellingborough
Mereway, Northampton	Irthlingborough
Kettering	Rushden

This document has been written to provide you with details of each stage of the recruitment process involved with the role of wholetime firefighter.

It is important that you are aware of how you will be assessed and what you can expect at each stage. All details that you need to apply are provided in this document.

**Please do not contact us for more details. If you have any queries prior to entering into the campaign, you are invited to email:**

[enquiries@northantsfire.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northantsfire.gov.uk)



## **Job description**

### **Role**

Firefighter

### **Location**

As directed by the Chief Fire Officer

### **Principal Aim**

To protect and save people and property from fire and other hazards in the most competent and effective manner to the highest possible standard of care and quality.

## **Duties and responsibilities**

### **Emergencies**

- Respond immediately and safely to all emergency calls and requests for assistance
- Deal with emergencies as directed and work effectively and efficiently as a member of a disciplined team
- Minimise distress and suffering, including giving first aid care.

### **Dealing with people**

- Establish and maintain the confidence of members of the public
- Maintain links within the community
- Be sensitive to the needs of others with regard to fairness and dignity issues

### **Community safety**

- Give safety and wellbeing advice and guidance to people when requested
- Work to help educate members of the community in the risks and hazards of fire and other emergencies
- Assist in Service initiatives, programmes and strategies to reduce emergency calls

### **Health and safety**

- Recognise health and safety issues at work and deal with them to minimise or eliminate the degree of hazard or risk
- Ensure personal safety and that of others at all time

### **Personal fitness and hygiene**

- Maintain level of physical and medical fitness necessary to carry out the duties of a firefighter
- Maintain personal appearance, hygiene and cleanliness of uniform in keeping with a disciplined service

### **Equipment**

- Maintain all firefighting and emergency equipment in a state of readiness, including cleaning, repairing and testing as required to approved standards and procedures.

### **Local geography**

- Know the local streets, roads and buildings situated within the fire station response area
- Be aware of the risks, possible hazards and water supplies to be found within the fire station area



**Administration**

- Complete basic paperwork and routine administration, including recording of information
- Use information technology as required and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Keep personal records up to date

**Training**

- Take part in a continuous training programme by attending lectures, exercises, practice drill sessions and other forms of training to maintain competence levels
- Attend training courses as directed

**Fire Authority**

- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the level of responsibility and expertise as may be required by the Chief Fire Officer
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Service

**Our commitment to you**

We are fully committed to meeting our duties to matters of equality as set out in current legislation. These requirements and standards have been set to ensure that individuals are safe at work, for their own protection and that of others.

If you have a disability and feel that you are able to meet the essential requirements of an operational firefighter, but the assessment process prevents you from fully demonstrating your abilities, reasonable adjustments to the process will be considered. You will be required to provide evidence to support any adjustment request.

**Rates of pay**

Rates of pay for operational WDS firefighters from 01 July 2021:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Firefighter</b>	
Trainee	£24,191
Development	£25,198
Competent	£32,244

**Hours of work**

NFRS operates a variety of duty systems, each involve the requirement to work evening hours, weekends and public holidays.

Do you really want to be a firefighter?

The following list of questions has been designed to help you decide whether being a firefighter is really for you.

Simply tick YES or NO to each of the following questions:



	Yes	No
Are you genuinely interested in people?		
Can you get on with people from different backgrounds and cultures?		
Do you want to work as part of a close-knit team?		
Can you work under pressure?		
Can you think on your feet and solve problems when you know a lot depends on the suggestion you come up with?		
Do you have the sensitivity to deal with members of the public when they are distressed, confused or being obstructive?		
Can you take responsibility for representing the Service when you are at work and when you are not?		
Are you committed to always maintaining and developing your skills?		
Are you prepared to study to develop and expand your skills?		
Are you prepared for the demands of working in a disciplined uniformed service in which you will have to take orders from other people?		
Can you accept the need to keep to rules that tell you what you can and cannot wear?		
Are you committed to maintaining your health and physical fitness?		
Is regular exercise part of your everyday life?		
Are you a practical person who likes to work with your hands/equipment?		
Do you enjoy making things or finding out how things work?		
Are you someone who can always be relied on to be somewhere on time?		
Are you someone that others see as dependable?		
Are you prepared to work outside in all types of weather, when it is wet and cold?		

If you answered 'Yes' to ALL of the above, and you think that you have what it takes to serve and protect the community you live and work in, read the information provided and join our recruitment campaign.

**The recruitment process**

The following notes are designed to give you an indication of the recruitment process, what to expect and what will be required of you.

There are 3 stages:

- Online registration and assessment - sift
- Online testing - Ability tests
- An Assessment Day at NFRS
- Final interview



## Stage 1 – Sift

The start of the recruitment process involves completing an Online Assessment (the sift). This assessment is divided into three elements.

The first element requires you to give some personal details and register with us. You will then be presented with details of the firefighting role and asked to consider how the role meets your expectations in terms of working environment and future career. You will also be asked some basic questions to ensure that you are eligible to apply. As part of your eligibility assessment, we will identify:

- Whether you are over the age of 18 years
- Whether you live in Northamptonshire
- Whether you have the right to work in the UK
- Whether you have any unspent criminal convictions
- Whether you have any court judgements outstanding against you

At the end of this element, you will be advised as to whether you are eligible to continue with your application or not.

The timeframes for the first element of the sift can be seen below:

	What is involved?	How long will it take?	When will I need to do it?
<b>Element 1</b> Online Registration	Registration Realistic Job Preview Eligibility Check	You should allow approximately 30 minutes to complete all three parts	15 November 2021 – 05 December 2021

It is important to note that you can complete this or any of the online stages at any time during the timescales highlighted (i.e., day or night). You will need to have your National Insurance (NI) number available to be able to register as well as your email address. It is important that you check that you know your correct email address.

The system will communicate with you using the email address that you provide during the registration. If you provide an incorrect email address, the system will be unable to provide you with relevant information regarding your application. If you do not complete the online registration, you will not be able to access the subsequent elements and progress within the campaign. You will only be able to register with us once during this recruitment campaign so please ensure the details you give are correct as you will be unable to amend them after they have been submitted.

Once you have completed the online registration and eligibility screen, you will receive an email from the online system advising you of how and when you can access the second and third elements of the sift. Please check your inbox and junk mailbox for emails from **Apollo Online Assessment**.

The second element of the sift is a Behavioural Styles Questionnaire, which explores your preferred behaviours in a working environment. No revision or additional study is required for this element.



The third element of the sift is a Situational Judgement Test which measures your judgement and decision-making skills in situations that are typical in the Fire and Rescue Service. No knowledge or experience as a firefighter is required to complete this test and no prior revision is needed.

	<b>What is involved?</b>	<b>How long will it take?</b>	<b>When will I need to do it?</b>
<b>Element 2</b> BSQ	Behavioural Styles Questionnaire (BSQ)	This assessment is not timed. You should allow approximately 15-20 minutes to complete in a quiet location	06 December 2021 – 09 December 2021
<b>Element 3</b> SJT	Situational Judgement Test (SJT)	This assessment is not timed. You should allow approximately 30 minutes to complete in a quiet location	10 December 2021 – 14 December 2021

You can access and complete Element 2 and Element 3 in any order that you choose and this must be done within the deadline given or you will not be considered further.

**Online registration opens – 17:00 on Monday 15 November 2021**

**Online registration for the sift closes – 23:59 on 05 December 2021**

Access to the online registration system (Element 1) is given by clicking on the link that will appear on [www.northantsfire.gov.uk](http://www.northantsfire.gov.uk)

Please note that CVs or any other form of application will not be required or accepted.

**Stage 2 – Ability tests**

If you meet the requirements at Stage 1, the sift, you will be invited to complete the Ability Tests. **These tests will open on 16 December and close on 20 December 2021.**

This stage involves completing a series of tests which are detailed below:

**Numerical reasoning**

This test measures your ability to understand, interpret and logically evaluate numerical information. You will be presented with graphs, charts and numerical details and required to make calculations on the information presented.

**Mechanical reasoning**

This test measures your ability to apply general mechanical principles that supports practical problem solving. You will be presented with a series of diagrams and asked to answer questions to demonstrate your understanding of the mechanical principles applicable.

**Verbal reasoning**

This test measures your ability to understand and interpret written information. You will be presented with a passage of text and asked to answer questions to demonstrate your ability to interpret and analyse verbal information.





**Stage 3 – Assessment day**

If successful following the online assessment stages as detailed above, you will be invited to attend an Assessment day week commencing **03 January 2022**, which will consist of half day of practical testing and half day Assessment centre.

National firefighter selection practical tests include:

- Equipment carry
- Confined space exercise
- Casualty evacuation exercise
- Ladder climb
- Ladder lift (simulated)
- Equipment assembly

The tests on this day are designed to assess your level of physical fitness in line with requirements of the role. Details of the physical fitness and healthy weight requirements, along with the physical and practical tests are given below.

**Physical fitness**

Firefighting can be a physically demanding and hazardous activity with potential for exposure to high physiological and environmental thermal loads. To ensure effective and safe operational performance an appropriate level of physical fitness is essential.

Your level of physical fitness will be determined by measuring your performance during a number of physical and practical firefighting tasks. In addition you will be required to perform an ‘aerobic’ fitness test to predict your aerobic capacity (in mlsO<sub>2</sub>/kg/min). This allows us to assess your ability to perform exercise for longer periods which is important for safe firefighting. The minimum requirement for candidates to pass at recruitment is **42.3** mls/O<sub>2</sub>/kg/min (equivalent to level 8 shuttle 8 on a bleep test). If you progress to medical you will undertake a fitness test, which will include the Chester Step Test.

**Healthy weight**

A healthy weight is important because underweight, overweight and obesity, can have an adverse effect on firefighting performance, safety and on general health. Height and weight measurements and the calculation of Body Mass Index (BMI) are in the majority of cases a suitable means of confirming the weight category of individuals. The following table identifies the relevant BMI ranges and the associated weight categories.

<b>Classification</b>	<b>BMI (kg/m<sup>2</sup>)</b>
Underweight	<18.5
Healthy Weight	18.5 – 25
Overweight	25–30
Obese	>30.0

The recommended BMI for candidates is within the healthy weight range i.e. 18.5-25. A small minority of individuals within a BMI in the overweight range may be reclassified as a healthy weight if an assessment of their body composition (by body fat measurement) indicates that the higher BMI is predominantly due to muscle development.



Your BMI may be measured as part of the medical or both of these stages of the recruitment process.

## The components of the Physical and Practical Assessment

### Enclosed Space Test



You will need to combine confidence, agility and flexibility while negotiating a crawl-way to pass the test successfully. There is only one way through the crawl-way, forward, right, left, up or down and there are no doors to open.

You will start the test wearing a face mask which allows clear vision. However, on completion of the test, your mask will be obscured and you will be required to return along the same route. You should be able to complete these tests without jeopardising your safety and well-being within a specified timeframe.

### Equipment Assembly Test

This test is designed to assess manual dexterity. You will need to assemble and then disassemble a piece of equipment. Before you commence the test, an Instructor will demonstrate the correct assembly of the equipment. You will also have a diagram illustrating correct assembly. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.



### Equipment Carry Test



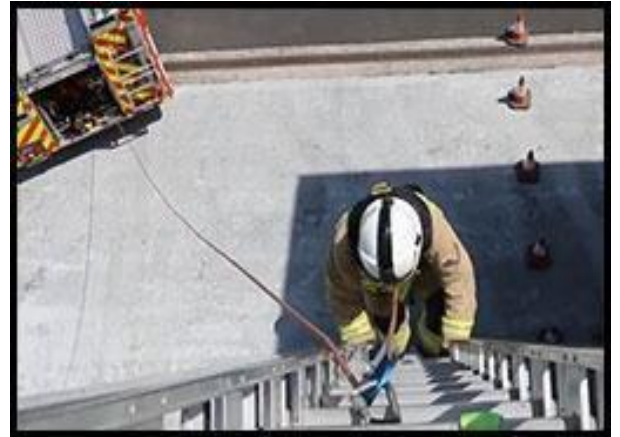
You will be required to carry standard firefighting equipment over a set 25 metre course for a total distance of 550 metres. You will need to combine aerobic endurance, upper and lower body strength and muscular endurance. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.



## Ladder Climb

You will be shown how to climb the ladder and how to apply a 'leg lock'. You will then be allowed to practice the leg lock. You will climb the ladder to the specified height. At that point, you will use the leg lock to secure yourself to the ladder, remove your hands from the ladder and lean back, looking over your shoulder to identify an object which is being held by the instructor at ground level.

When you have identified the object, you will be told to put your hands back on the ladder and release the leg lock. You will then be instructed to descend the ladder. You will need to show confidence and apply the correct technique to climb the ladder.



## Casualty Evacuation Test

You will be required to drag a 55kg mannequin/dummy simulating a casualty evacuation for a distance of 30 metres. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.

## Ladder Lift Simulator Test

You will need to combine upper and lower body strength and co-ordination to lift a ladder over your head to the required height and lower it safely and under control. The approximate weight of the ladder is 26-30kg.





### Ladder Extension Fitness Test

You will carry out a test that simulates extending a standard 13.5 metre Fire and Rescue Service ladder from the first to the second floor of a building. This will be performed by pulling down on a rope. To complete this test successfully, you will need to combine upper body strength, grip strength and co-ordination. This test is to be completed within a specified timeframe.

#### **Fitness test**

A fitness assessment will be carried out to determine aerobic fitness. The minimum requirement for candidates to pass at recruitment is **42.3** mls/O<sub>2</sub>/kg/min (equivalent to level 8 shuttle 8 on a bleep test).

#### **Assessment Centre**

The Assessment Centre consists of two activities; a role play and written exercise.

The details of these assessments are provided on the day and there is no particular preparation required before attending.

#### **Final interviews**

These will take place week commencing **17 January 2022** and will comprise of a panel interview and will include a 5 minute briefing exercise which will be prepared prior to attending

#### **Stage 4 - The medical/fitness test**

Firefighters may be exposed to extreme physical and psychological demands in hostile and dangerous environments. In order to comply with relevant statutory provisions, the medical screening for firefighters is rigorous. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Fire and Rescue Service must reduce risk so far as is reasonably practicable. This means a medical condition giving rise to reasonably foreseeable occupational risk would not be acceptable.

Medical suitability is determined by an individual assessment. For practical reasons, this cannot be undertaken until the later stages of the recruitment process. The nature and effect of medical conditions may vary.

It is therefore not possible to confirm medical conditions that would be unacceptable prior to an individual medical assessment. However, if you have a medical condition or a history of a medical condition which might present problems, the following general guidance should help you consider your medical suitability before applying.



A medical condition or functional limitation which, despite any reasonable adjustments, gives rise to significantly increased occupational risk of the following is unacceptable:

- Sudden collapse or sudden incapacitation
- Impaired judgement
- Altered awareness
- Substantial physical or psychological injury/ill health
- Any other effect which would pose a substantial health and safety risk to yourself and others

The individual assessment will involve due consideration of any opinions or medical reports you may wish to submit. However, the decision on the significance of any risks identified will rest with the Fire and Rescue Service.

Please note that the medical involves both drug and alcohol tests.

### **Appointment**

If you are successful at all stages of the recruitment process, you will be contacted by NFRS regarding offer of employment.

Offers of employment will be made on the number of current vacancies and future vacancies as they arise. Any offer of employment is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and vetting checks. Should an unsatisfactory reference or vetting check be received, the offer of employment will be withdrawn.

It is anticipated that the NFRS list will remain current for 12 months from completion of the selection process. If you have not secured a position within the timescales set by NFRS, you will be required to apply through a subsequent recruitment process.

**We would like to take the opportunity to wish you every success throughout the recruitment process.**

If you have any queries, you are invited to email:  
[enquiries@northantsfire.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northantsfire.gov.uk)