



2024 HIRING PROCESS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



West Pierce Fire & Rescue

www.westpierce.org/employment

This guide contains Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) specific to the 2024 hiring process. We encourage you to save a copy as reference. There are important dates and detailed information on what to expect throughout this experience. If you have a question not addressed here, please email employment@westpierce.org.

Our primary form of communication is email. It is important to check messages frequently throughout this process. The timeline and tentative dates (where noted) are subject to change without notice. We will advise candidates of any changes as quickly as possible, generally via email.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Are there application and/or testing fees?

West Pierce Fire & Rescue (WPFR) does not charge any fees.

**Websites requiring fees to view job postings and/or submit applications are not affiliated with WPFR. Applications are only accepted via our [Employment webpage](#) with a free [Government Jobs](#) account.*

I can't access my GovernmentJobs account. Can you reset my password?

For GovernmentJobs technical assistance, please call 855-524-5627. WPFR personnel do not have the ability to reset account passwords.

Is Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification required to apply?

EMT certification is not required to apply. WPFR recruits attend The Forge fire academy, which includes an EMT course.

Do I need a Candidate Physical Abilities Test (CPAT) to apply?

CPAT is not required to apply. We anticipate job offers will be made by July 1. WPFR pays all costs for conditions of employment: background investigation, medical exam, drug screening, psychological assessment and CPAT. Candidates with CPAT completed after July 1, 2023, with documentation of passing will not need to test again.

The job posting notes a background investigation includes criminal history and driving record reviews. Are there automatic disqualifiers for employment?

We encourage candidates to review [RCW 43.43.830](#) for information on background checks. Findings from a civil adjudication proceeding and/or convictions of crimes listed within the RCW are possible disqualifications. Records are reviewed on an individual basis as a condition of employment. Employees must have the ability to legally operate a vehicle in Washington State and are required to provide proof of a valid driver's license prior to hire date. The driving record must be clear of restrictions or limitations; which negatively impact ability to be covered by WPFR's insurance.

The application period has a closing date and maximum volume that will be accepted. When should I apply?

We are unable to predict how quickly applications will be received and encourage candidates to apply early. The application period will automatically close if the maximum volume is received, which may occur before the closing date.

I've submitted application(s) in the past. Do I have to complete a new application?

Yes, each hiring process has its own application requirements.

What attachments are required with my online application?

There are three (3) categories for attachments.

Resume: Resume is required, cover letter is optional.

Other: Veterans please attach documentation identified below.

References: Letters of recommendation, to a maximum of three (3) are optional.

**Please do not attach any other documents (such as driver's license, CPR card and/or other training documents). If you do not have attachment(s) aside from the required resume, you may attach a blank page for remaining field(s).*

**To convert files to PDF and/or combine multiple files, ilovepdf.com is a free tool.*

What is required for veterans' preference?

Please review [Washington State Careers](#) for detailed information. Preference is added to the final, passing (minimum of 80%) score. You must attach documentation (DD214, NGB form 22 or equivalent) to your online application in the Other field.

Are the essay questions required? Will my answers be scored?

You are required to answer the essay questions. Responses will be evaluated throughout the hiring process; but will not be numerically scored.

Can I submit my essay responses via email or as an attachment?

Your responses must be typed directly into the online application and should be about a paragraph (200 words or less) for each question.

I want to revise my application but can't make changes from my GovernmentJobs account. Do I need to submit another application?

No, submitting another application creates a duplicate record. Changes to your contact information can be sent via email to employment@westpierce.org.

Can I revise my essay responses after submitting?

The online application is an official record and changes are not permitted. We do not accept essay responses (initial or revisions) via email.

What documentation is required for educational incentive?

If hired, we will advise of the process for requesting educational incentive. Please do not attach documentation (degree or transcript) to the online application.

If I'm eligible for lateral entry, do I receive extra points?

Entry-level and lateral candidates will be scored using the same methodology. There will be one hiring list established, ranking all candidates without designation of entry-level versus lateral.

Can I schedule a ride along?

Based on volume of candidates, we are unable to accommodate ride along requests during the hiring process.

ONLINE EXAM QUESTIONS

Exam dates are April 24 & 27; with accessibility from 12:00 AM to 11:59 PM.

What are the technical requirements and/or testing instructions?

- Laptop or desktop computer (Windows, Mac, or Linux).
- Turn *off* any scheduled device updates or scans on the test day.
- Be sure internet service provider is working for the entire test with at least **20 Mbps** upload/download speed. Check your speed here: <https://fiber.google.com/speedtest/>
- Do not use a mobile or cellular hotspot.
- Must use one of the following internet browsers with the most current version: Chrome, Safari, Edge or Fire Fox. *Google Chrome is preferred.*
- Candidates may not use Internet Explorer as their browser.
- Candidates may not use a cell phone, iPad, tablet or Chromebook.

I do not have access to a required device, internet browser and/or service for the online exam. Do you provide a written test?

The exam is not available in written form. Please email employment@westpierce.org for possible options to access a required device and/or internet service.

Do I need to buy a study guide?

WPFR provides the official orientation guide and a practice test at no cost after candidates submit an online application. There are no additional study materials to buy or review.

I'm having difficulty scheduling an exam date. Can I email my date choice instead?

After applying, instructions will be provided via email on how to schedule from your GovernmentJobs account. For technical assistance, please call 855-524-5627.

What kind of questions can I expect?

The exam assesses reading ability and comprehension, mathematical reasoning, map reading, writing ability, human relations, and reasoning skills. There is no material to study and memorize, the exam will provide all content relative to the questions.

I missed my exam date, is it an option to reschedule?

The test link is unique to your email address and date selected. We are unable to accommodate rescheduling and/or alternative test dates.

How do I request testing accommodation due to a disability?

Please email employment@westpierce.org with the accommodation needed.

****Do not email health and/or medical information.***

How soon after the exam will I have my score?

Candidates will receive an email by May 13 with pass (minimum 80%) or fail status.

****Numerical scores will not be provided.***

Am I able to review my exam to see which questions were missed?

WPFR contracts with a third party for exam administration and reviews are not possible.

BLIND INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEWS

We anticipate notifying candidates selected for this phase by 5:00 PDT, May 13. Candidates self-schedule via GovernmentJobs. May 21, 22 and/or 23 are tentative; finalized dates will be included in the May 13 notices.

What is a blind introductory interview (BII)?

This is a remote (Zoom) interview with a maximum duration of 10 minutes. Candidates display photo identification at check-in; then turn video off and remain “blind” during the interview. Video will be on for candidates to see the BII evaluators.

How is this interview structured?

Candidates have 3 minutes to provide an introductory statement. BII evaluators will ask two questions, with responses limited to 3 minutes each.

When will I know results?

There is no numerical scoring for this phase. BII evaluators will vote for candidates to proceed for oral board interviews. Based on the fast-paced nature of BII, feedback will not be provided. Candidates will receive an email by 5:00 PDT May 24, with status on if proceeding to oral board interviews or not.

ORAL BOARD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Candidates self-schedule via GovernmentJobs. Oral boards will be on select days June 3-14; with finalized dates included in the May 24 notices.

I live out of state. What options are there if I’m selected for an interview?

Video (Zoom) or phone interviews may be considered.

I am unavailable during the oral board dates. Are there alternatives?

We are unable to accommodate alternative dates. Possible options may include video or phone interviews.

What can I expect during the interview process?

There will be a panel of 4-6 WPFR employees. You will be asked general interview questions. The panel will have your application packet, including any attachments you submitted. You do not need to bring anything to your interview and the panel will not accept any documents in-person.

Do you provide the interview questions ahead of time?

We do not.

How soon after my interview will I know results?

We anticipate advising candidates by 5:00 PDT, July 1 of their rank on the hiring list.

Am I able to meet with panel member(s) to get feedback?

No, but upon request we will provide a general overview of feedback via email.

EMPLOYMENT OFFER QUESTIONS

We anticipate conditional offers of employment will be made by July 1.

If I receive an employment offer, how are conditions scheduled?

All costs associated with conditions are paid by WPFR. The background investigation is completed first via an online process managed by human resources. Candidates are generally notified of results within five (5) business days after authorizing WPFR to obtain records. Candidates provide preferred dates/times for the medical exam/drug screening and psychological assessment (remote/online).

I have not completed CPAT since July 1, 2023. How is that scheduled?

WPFR pays for one practice and one test (orientation is included). Candidates requiring CPAT will be provided information on self-scheduling.

When do I need to complete conditions by?

Candidates must successfully complete all conditions of employment by August 30, 2024, for The Forge fall academy hiring.

Is COVID vaccination required for employment?

Vaccination is not required and/or a condition of employment.

What is the hire date? How many recruits is WPFR hiring?

Hire date is September 20. Volume will be finalized prior to offers; we anticipate 7-10.

ENTRY-LEVEL TRAINING QUESTIONS

What type of training is provided for entry-level Firefighter?

All recruits (entry-level and lateral) will complete The Forge Fire Academy.

- September 20 is orientation for payroll, benefits, and IAFF Local 1488.
- The week of September 23-27 is utilized for academy preparation.
- Recruits start The Forge Fire Academy September 30. The 22-week academy has a Monday-Friday schedule.
- The Forge is a comprehensive, fire training program where recruits obtain ProBoard certifications in Firefighter I and II, HazMat Awareness, and HazMat Operations. EMT certification also occurs during academy.
- Probationary Firefighters complete a 5-week mini-academy for training in Rescue Systems I, pump operations, and other WPFR specific operational training prior to being assigned to shift.
- Upon successful completion of all the above, Probationary Firefighters are assigned to a 24-hour shift schedule and a primary Field Training Officer (FTO). At this phase, they are expected to function as a Firefighter/EMT and will begin completion of the probationary task book. Probationary time on shift consists of nearly all major fire suppression and emergency medical services functions.
- Probationary Firefighters are evaluated by FTOs during this time, complete a mid-term exam (after about 35 shifts) and final exam (after 60-70 shifts). Upon completion of the final exam, Probationary Firefighters will officially have completed probation.

What is the 24-hour shift work schedule?

WPFR personnel have a “Modified Detroit 56” schedule, which is three 24-hour shifts (0800 to 0800) every nine days. Below is an example of the rotations. For the nine-day period of April 1-9, employees on B Shift (blue) work April 1, 3 and 5.

April						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Employees assigned to 24-hour shift schedule receive 18 Kelly Days (K-Days) per full year of employment. K-Days are 24-hour blocks of paid time off, to reduce the average workweek to 47.72 hours/week annualized.