



West Pierce Fire & Rescue LATERAL-LEVEL Firefighter & Firefighter/Paramedic FAQs

WPFR FAQs

This guide contains Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) by topic specific to the 2026 ENTRY-LEVEL Firefighter & Firefighter/Paramedic hiring process. There are important dates and information on what to expect. We encourage you to save a copy as a reference.

**There is a separate ENTRY-LEVEL Firefighter & Firefighter/Paramedic hiring process, with FAQs available on our [Career Resources](#) webpage.*

The minimum requirements for lateral entry at time of application are (clarification provided June 25):

- Currently employed as a Firefighter or Firefighter/Paramedic with a minimum of 12 consecutive months of full-time paid service with a municipal fire department, fire district, fire authority, or comparable public fire agency. ***Employment with an industrial fire department, within the military and/or private corporations are not considered municipalities and do not qualify for lateral status.**
- Successful completion of probation with current employer.
- Current National Registry or Washington State EMT or Paramedic certification. ***This is required at the time of application. Previous National Registry and/or Washington State certification does not qualify for lateral status.**
- IFSAC or Pro Board Firefighter I and Firefighter II certifications.
- HazMat Awareness and Operations certifications.
- Ability to obtain Washington State reciprocity/certifications prior to completion of probation.

If you have questions not addressed, 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 dates are subject to change without notice. We will advise candidates of changes as quickly as possible via email.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- **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 Opportunities](#) webpage with a free [GovernmentJobs.com](#) 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 passwords and/or provide account support.
- **What is required as application?**
 - o **GovernmentJobs online application in its entirety**
 - *There are three attachment fields within the online application:*
 - **Cover Letter is required** (maximum one page)
 - **Resume is required** (maximum of two pages)
 - **Other is required for:** EMT or Paramedic certification, FF1, FF2, HazMat Ops and HazMat Awareness certifications, Veteran documentation (if applicable), and letters of recommendation (**optional**, to a maximum of three)
 - o If you need to combine multiple files, we suggest using [ilovepdf.com](#).
- **Employment conditions include a criminal history background investigation and driving abstract review. Are there automatic disqualifiers for employment?** We encourage candidates to review [RCW 43.43.830](#) for further information. 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 would negatively impact ability to be covered by WPFR's insurance.
- **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.
- **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.
- **With a separate entry-level hiring process, how many positions will be lateral?** We have not determined how many positions will be entry-level or lateral. There will be two separate hiring lists, and we anticipate offers will be made to both groups.

- **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.

LATERAL INFORMATIONAL SESSION

Wednesday, July 15. *Registration is required by 1700 (PDT) July 9.

This session is not a required phase of testing. It's a great opportunity to meet employees and learn about the organization. Attendance options are in-person or remote.

****To register, please email employment@westpierce.org and note if you'd like to attend in-person or remote. Email confirmation will be provided with full details.***

REMOTE INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEWS

The week of August 10; with scheduling and remote instructions included in the email invites August 3.

- **What is an introductory interview?** This first phase of testing will be for candidates to engage with WPFRR personnel, in a less formal setting than Oral Boards. Details will be included via the email invites.
- **When will I know results?** There is no numerical scoring; evaluators vote for candidates to proceed for oral board interviews. Based on the fast-paced nature, feedback will not be provided. Candidates will receive an email by August 17, if proceeding to oral board interviews or not.

ORAL BOARD INTERVIEWS & MEDICAL ASSESSMENTS (PARAMEDICS)

The week of August 24; with dates and times defined in the August 17 email.

- **What is the Medical Assessment?** This phase of testing is specific to Firefighter/Paramedic candidates only and will focus on questions/scenarios related to patient care.
- **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 this timeframe. Are there alternative dates?** We are unable to accommodate alternative dates.

- **What can I expect during Oral Board 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 questions ahead of time?** We do not.
- **How soon after my interview will I know results?** We anticipate certification of a hiring list and notification of results will occur by no later than September 14.
- **Can I meet with panel member(s) for feedback? Can I get email/verbal feedback?** Based on volume of candidates, we are unable to schedule meetings with the panel or provide individual feedback via email/verbally.

EMPLOYMENT OFFER

We anticipate conditional offers of employment will occur by September 14.

- **What are the conditions of employment?** Criminal history background investigation, driving abstract review, medical exam with drug screening and psychological/suitability assessment. Employment references and verification of employment to confirm aggregate service is required.
- **How are conditions scheduled?**
 - o All costs associated with conditions are paid by WPFR.
 - o The background investigation is generally completed first via an online process. Results are usually available within 10 business days.
 - o The psychological/suitability assessment is two parts; both remote. HR will coordinate scheduling, generally morning, afternoon and evening appointments are available.
 - o HR will coordinate the medical exam and drug screening; the provider usually conducts all pre-hire services in the mornings. There are locations in Renton and Gig Harbor. HR will coordinate alternatives for those living outside of Washington.
- **When do I need to complete conditions by?** Candidates must successfully complete all conditions of employment by **December 4**.
- **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?** The hire date is January 4, 2027, and volume will be finalized prior to offers.
- **What training is provided to lateral recruits?** There will be a mini-academy for 8 weeks.

- **What is the 24-hour shift work schedule?** WPFR has a 4-platoon schedule: 24 hours ON duty, 24 hours OFF duty, 24 hours ON duty, and 120 hours (five-day) OFF duty. To achieve an approximate 46.15 average hours per week, employees are assigned a twenty-four (24) hour debit shift every 40 days, on the second or fourth day of their “five-day” off.
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January

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| | | | | 1 A1 | 2 C2 | 3 A2 |
| 4 B1 | 5 D1 | 6 B2 | 7 D2 | 8 C3 | 9 A3 | 10 C4 |
| 11 A4 | 12 B3 | 13 D3 | 14 B4 | 15 D4 | 16 C5 | 17 A5 |
| 18 C6 | 19 A6 | 20 B5 | 21 D5 | 22 B6 | 23 D6 | 24 C7 |
| 25 A7 | 26 C8 | 27 A8 | 28 B7 | 29 D7 | 30 B8 | 31 D8 |