

## ***Becoming a Firefighter for the East Hartford Fire Department***



Firefighting is a challenging and rewarding profession that impacts the lives of those we serve every day. We are tasked with saving lives, managing emergencies, and preparing the community for disaster. With this great responsibility comes a high moral and ethical standard that is embodied by all members of the East Hartford Fire Department. This organization serves the Town of East Hartford from five geographically dispersed stations with a staff of 126 firefighters and six civilians. A fully career department, we protect 18 square miles and 50,000 residents with five advanced life support engine companies, two ladder companies, a medium duty rescue and shift commander. Department services include fire suppression, prevention and investigation, public fire and life safety education, technical rescue, hazardous materials incident response and both basic and advanced emergency medical care. In 2012 we responded to 10,240 emergency calls.

Joining the ranks of the East Hartford Fire Department begins with entry level testing. This testing is currently limited to applicants possessing a Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) card issued within one year of the exam and a current State of Connecticut Paramedic license. We will open the test to students currently enrolled in a paramedic training program; however, they would not be eligible for hire until they have completed the program and received their license. The initial hiring process involves a written exam and oral interview. Once ranked by score and driven by the number of openings, background investigations and interviews with the Fire Chief will produce conditional offers of employment. Conditional offers are contingent on successful completion of drug screening and physical exam. If hired, probationary firefighters attend a 14 week resident training program at the CT Fire Academy in Windsor Locks, Connecticut.

If a career in the fire service is something you are truly interested in pursuing, the following are recommendations which will likely improve your chances for success:

- Become certified as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) followed by licensure as a Paramedic. This is important as departments continue to move toward providing advanced emergency medical care
- Volunteer for a local Emergency Medical Service (EMS) or Fire Department to gain training and experience (Option not available in East Hartford)
- Acquire EMS and Fire certifications (Firefighter I/II, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), etc.)
- Obtain a "Q" driver's license endorsement from the CT DMV for operation of fire apparatus. Maintain a clean driving history without infractions.
- Do not get arrested and stay away from drugs and tobacco products
- Establish and maintain top physical conditioning
- Successfully pass CPAT and keep current (within 1 year)
- Purchase and study commercially available test preparation materials for written tests and oral interviews
- Seek coaching for the oral interview process
- Take any entry level test for which you are eligible
- Sign up for the CT Fire Academy listserv (daily informational email where career opportunities are announced)
- Check the "Career Opportunities" page from the CT Fire Academy
- Learn about the Town and Fire Department for which you are testing
- Community involvement and volunteering help separate you as a candidate. Pitch in and get involved in your community
- Network and build relationships within the field
- Prepare an up-to-date professional resume
- Maintain a current Connecticut drivers license

Overall, prepare yourself for a career in the fire service by going to school, gaining medical and fire training, staying out of trouble, and staying healthy. Take every test you are eligible for, study preparatory materials, and commit to the process.

Here are some important links:

<http://www.ct.gov/cfpc/cwp/view.asp?a=831&q=253822> - job announcements

<http://www.ct.gov/cfpc/cwp/view.asp?a=826&Q=246722&cfpcNav=1> - CPAT

<http://www.ct.gov/cfpc/site/default.asp> - CT Fire Academy

[http://www.easthartfordct.gov/Public\\_Documents/EastHartfordCT\\_HR/index](http://www.easthartfordct.gov/Public_Documents/EastHartfordCT_HR/index) - East

Hartford Human Resources

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