



City of Berkeley Fire Department



Recruitment Information Booklet

Email Notification



Job Notification via Email ("Job Interest Cards")



If you are interested in a job title which is not currently open for application, you can request to be automatically notified by e-mail if/when the position opens up.

Here is how to do it:

- Go to our web-page (www.cityofberkeley.info/hr) and click on the Job Descriptions link
- Browse / search through the list of titles to find the one you're interested in
- Click on the title you're interested in to open up the job description
- Click on the link which says "E-mail me when...available" (near the upper right)

You can request to be notified for as many positions as you like. (City employees, please note that interest card notifications will not be e-mailed for promotional job openings.)

WELCOME
HR Home
About Us
Contact Us
FAQ's

EMPLOYMENT
How to Apply for a Job
Applicant Login
Job Opportunities
Promotional Opportunities
Transfer Opportunities
Job Notification Via Email
Other Employment Links

POPULAR TOPICS
Job Descriptions
Salaries
Human Resources
Policies
Union Agreements
Directions

HUMAN RESOURCES

Job Descriptions

Welcome to the City of Berkeley's job classification specifications. If you are interested in a job title which is not currently open for application, you can request to be automatically notified by e-mail if/when the position opens up.

Search for class title or class code:

14 records found
Page # 1 of 1

Class Title	Min Monthly Salary	Max Monthly Salary
Facilities Maintenance Superintendent	\$8,392.00	\$10,139.00
Field Representative	\$5,050.00	\$5,492.00
Fire and Life Safety Plans Examiner	\$7,596.00	\$9,014.00
Fire Apparatus Operator	\$8,232.00	\$9,075.00
Fire Captain I	\$9,896.00	\$10,377.00
Fire Captain II	\$9,038.00	\$9,962.00
Fire Chief	\$12,625.00	\$17,625.00
Fire Prevention Inspector	\$6,181.00	\$7,334.00
Fire Prevention Inspector (sworn)	\$8,646.00	\$9,531.00
Fire Station Attendant	\$6,702.00	\$8,443.00
Firefighter	\$5,559.00	\$5,914.00
Forestry Climber Supervisor	\$6,467.00	\$6,850.00
Forestry Supervisor	\$8,200.00	\$8,664.00

Click on the FIREFIGHTER job title to open up the job description...

EMPLOYMENT
How to Apply for a Job
Applicant Login
Job Opportunities
Promotional Opportunities
Transfer Opportunities
Job Notification Via Email
Other Employment Links

POPULAR TOPICS
Job Descriptions
Salaries
Human Resources
Policies
Union Agreements
Directions

Class Title: Firefighter
Bargaining Unit: Berkeley Fire Fighters Association, Local 1227
Class Code: 81510
Salary: \$27.62 - \$34.79 Hourly
\$3,093.23 - \$3,896.77 Biweekly
\$6,170.00 - \$8,443.00 Monthly
\$80,424.00 - \$101,316.00 Annually

Print Job Information
Email me when jobs like this become available

DESCRIPTION
DEFINITION
Under general supervision, responds to fires, medical emergencies and other emergency and non emergency situations and takes appropriate action; performs various assignments in addition to normal emergency response activities; performs related work as assigned.

...then click on "EMAIL ME" to be notified if/when the position opens for application

DISCLAIMER: this notification method is provided as a convenience for prospective applicants. The City makes every effort to ensure proper and timely notification of job openings. However, things such as SPAM filters, junk-mail blockers and network failures could prevent delivery of this notification to you. To help ensure that you don't miss any openings, you may wish to periodically check our [job opportunities page](#).

About This Information Booklet

This booklet was developed to inform candidates interested in the Berkeley Fire Department about the recruitment and hiring process. It explains what the job of Firefighter involves and how to prepare for the examination process.

The end result of the recruitment process is the creation of an eligibility list. This eligibility list is in effect for 1 year but may be extended for up to 3 years to fill vacancies as they occur.

Testing for a position in the fire service is extremely competitive, and in order to do well and place high on the eligibility list, candidates must prepare for the written and physical ability tests and the appearance before an interview panel. You will need to condition yourself physically, academically, and mentally.

Adequate preparation and familiarization with the various parts of the examination process will greatly improve your chances of being more successful throughout the testing process.

What is the Job of Firefighter Really Like?

A Career in the fire service is both challenging and rewarding. Firefighting involves extremely hard and skilled physical work, as well as handling emergency and life-or-death situations. The physical and mental demands of firefighting are sometimes underestimated; and therefore, many applicants are overwhelmed by the challenging examination process involved in the testing of new recruits. Demanding physical standards are absolutely necessary because firefighting requires a high level of physical fitness and mental alertness.

A firefighter must fight fires while wearing work clothes and equipment weighing approximately 50 pounds. In full gear, the firefighter may be required to carry 50 pounds of hose or rescue a citizen from inside a burning building. Firefighting is only one of a wide variety of duties performed by firefighters. Approximately 70% of all fire department responses are to emergency medical calls. Other assignments may include fire prevention education, commercial and residential fire inspection, community outreach, salvage and clean up after fires, and equipment maintenance. A firefighter must be a team player and must be able to get along with a variety of people. A firefighter must have good judgment, good communication skills, demonstrated mechanical aptitude, the ability to perform mathematical computations, and the ability to comprehend and learn firefighting material. A firefighter must be able to work in a paramilitary organization; that is, a firefighter must be able to follow orders. In addition, a firefighter must be able to live in close quarters and work non-traditional hours. A firefighter works ten 24-hour shifts per month.

About the Berkeley Fire Department

The Berkeley Fire Department was established in 1904 and is said to have been the first motorized fire department in the western United States. The department currently has 139 dedicated men and women and a budget of approximately \$35 million

Seven engines and two trucks cover the very densely populated eleven square miles that encompass the City of Berkeley. The Berkeley Fire Department also has operated its own transport ambulances since the early 1970s. There are currently three advanced life support ambulances covering the City and parts of Tilden Park. The Department's services of Suppression, EMS, Prevention, and Public Education are in increasing demand - having responded to over 14,000 emergencies yearly. We foresee great promotional opportunities for newly hired Firefighter-Paramedics. This trend should continue for the next several years.

What Are the Minimum Qualifications?

- Must be at least 18 years of age
- High School Diploma or G.E.D. Certificate
- Minimal uncorrected vision of 20/100 in each eye—both corrected to 20/30 normal color vision
- Valid CA Class C Driver's License as well as satisfactory driving record, and obtain Firefighter Endorsement prior to the completion of the Fire Academy
- Valid California Paramedic License, National Registry Paramedic Certification Card, or be actively participating in a Paramedic Field Internship Program*
- Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) card of completion issued no earlier than one year from the last date of the application filing deadline

*NOTE: Proof of internship status on school letterhead must be submitted with the application.

NOTE: Candidates must possess a valid California Paramedic License; complete the Alameda County Accreditation core courses, and reside within forty (40) air miles from Berkeley City limits, by the date of appointment.

The Firefighter Employment Process

- Application, Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) and Supplemental Questionnaire
- Written Examination
- Successful Candidates Placed on Eligibility List*
- First-round of Interviews—Department Panel
- Second-round of Interviews—Chief’s Panel, including Paramedic Skills Assessment
- Third-round of Interviews—Command Staff
- Conditional Job Offer—Background Investigation, Psychology Exam, Pre-Employment Medical and Drug Screening Exams
- Formal Offer of Employment
- Fire Academy (up to 16 weeks); graduation with successful completion of all written and manipulative exams
- Successful completion of 24-month Probationary Period

*The City of Berkeley Fire Department uses the eligibility list to schedule all candidates for the first-round of interviews with the department.

What Types of Tests Do You Have to Take?

Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT): The physical ability test is designed to evaluate your endurance and ability to perform basic strenuous tasks that professional firefighters must perform, and CPAT certification must be submitted by the application filing deadline.

Written Exam: The written exam will be administered by the Firefighter Candidate Testing Center (FCTC). The process consists of a 90-minute pre-test session designed to give you information that is necessary to be successful on the written exam. Candidates will then have 90 minutes to complete 100 multiple choice questions. The exam will consist of the following four sections: Recall and Comprehend Verbal and Visual Informa-

tion, which requires candidates to watch two short videos and answer questions based on the scenarios presented; Recall and Comprehend Technical Information from Written Materials; Solve Mathematical Problems; and Apply Mechanical Reasoning.

NOTE: If you have taken the written test through the FCTCT, your results can be accepted and you do not need to participate in the written test.

Interview Panel: Those candidates who successfully pass the written exam will be invited to the first-round of interviews with the department. This is your opportunity to “sell yourself” and demonstrate to the panel that you have the ability and desire to become a firefighter with the Berkeley Fire Department.

Preparing for the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT)

It must be emphasized that regardless of an individual’s level of fitness, a person should be in good health before beginning any physical training program. Preparation for the physical ability test can be accomplished by a physical training program that emphasizes cardiorespiratory (heart/lung) fitness, muscular strength, and endurance. It is especially important that small-framed individuals and individuals whose current jobs do not require physical exertion prepare more conscientiously for the test. Most people can improve their level of physical fitness through an intensive training program that includes running for cardiorespiratory fitness and weight lifting to develop muscular strength.

CARDIORESPIRATORY FITNESS

Cardiorespiratory fitness is the ability of the heart to deliver oxygen to the muscles and other tissues. This is called aerobic power. Simply stated, the ability to perform exercise and/or physical work is directly dependent upon how well the body delivers oxygen to the working muscles. A physically fit person will be able to deliver large amounts of oxygen to the muscles and therefore be capable of prolonged muscular exercise (e.g., fighting fires). In comparison, an out-of-shape individual will not be capable of delivering adequate amounts of oxygen to the muscles, and therefore will fatigue quickly and be forced to stop working much sooner.

MUSCULAR STRENGTH

Strength can be defined as the ability to apply force. Since nearly all movements are performed against some resistance, a certain degree of muscular strength is needed to perform any activity. Firefighters perform activities against much greater resistance than the average individual. Therefore, the firefighter must have good muscular strength and endurance to effectively and safely handle the firefighting equipment and perform the duties required.

BODY CONDITIONING

An excess accumulation of body fat is undesirable for a variety of reasons. From a medical standpoint, obesity or “overfatness” is considered a risk factor for certain health problems for which a reduction in excess fat is desirable. From a physical performance standpoint, excess fat is like carrying dead weight and can only hinder physical performance. Since firefighting requires a near maximum effort from the heart and other related muscles, additional fat weight adds an extra burden to the cardiovascular system. Thus, overweight firefighters puts themselves in a potentially dangerous situation when fighting fires.

ACTIVITIES TO HELP DEVELOP YOUR FITNESS

Running and weight training are two activities that can be used in a physical fitness training program to help develop cardiorespiratory fitness and muscular strength. There are several ways to devise a physical fitness training program. One way is to join a gym or spa where a fitness specialist can help design a training routine to fit your needs. Another less expensive method is to design your own program. Remember, both methods work, but only if you train conscientiously, aggressively, and consistently.

From a training standpoint, you should gradually work up to the point where you can run 1.5 miles in 12 minutes or less to establish your cardiorespiratory fitness. Your strength should be gradually developed to where you can do 6 chin-ups, 20 push-ups, and 40 sit-ups with comparative ease. This is about the minimum fitness level for an applicant to safely complete the physical ability test. It must be emphasized that following these guidelines is no guarantee that you will pass the test. However, your chances for passing will be increased if adequate preparatory physical training has taken place.

A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE CANDIDATE PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST (CPAT)

Following is a list of tasks which must be performed to pass the physical ability test. The tasks are completed consecutively; each task must be properly completed before the next may be attempted. There is no time limit for each individual task, but all events must be completed within 10 minutes and 20 seconds.

1. **Stair Climb** - For this event, you must wear two 12.5-pound (5.67-kg) weights on your shoulders to simulate the weight of a high-rise pack. Prior to the initiation of the timed CPAT, there is a 20-second warm-up on the StepMill at a set stepping rate of 50 steps per minute. During this warm-up period, you are permitted to dismount, grasp the rail or hold the wall to establish balance and cadence. If you fall or dismount the StepMill during the 20-second warm-up period, you must remount the StepMill and restart the entire 20-second warm-up period. You are allowed to restart the warm-up period twice. The timing of the test begins at the end of this warm-up period when the proctor calls the word "START." There is no break in time between the warm-up period and the actual timing of the test. For the test, you must walk on the StepMill at a set stepping rate of 60 steps per minute for 3 minutes. This concludes the event. The two 12.5-pound (5.67-kg) weights are removed from your shoulders. Walk 85 feet (25.91 m) within the established walkway to the next event.

2. **Hose Drag** - For this event, you must grasp a hoseline nozzle attached to 200 feet (60 m) of 1¾-inch (44-mm) hose. Place the hoseline over your shoulder or across your chest, not exceeding the 8-foot (2.24-m) mark. You are permitted to run during the hose drag. Drag the hose 75 feet (22.86 m) to a pre-positioned drum, make a 90° turn around the drum, and continue an additional 25 feet (7.62 m). Stop within the marked 5 foot × 7 foot (1.52 m × 2.13 m) box, drop to at least one knee and pull the hoseline until the hoseline's 50-foot (15.24-m) mark crosses the finish line. During the hose pull, you must keep at least one knee in contact with the ground and knee(s) must remain within the marked boundary lines. This concludes the event. Walk 85 feet (25.91 m) within the established walkway to the next event.

3. **Equipment Carry** - For this event, you must remove the two saws from the tool cabinet, one at a time, and place them on the ground. Pick up

both saws, one in each hand, and carry them while walking 75 feet (22.86 m) around the drum, then back to the starting point. You are permitted to place the saw(s) on the ground and adjust your grip. Upon return to the tool cabinet, place the saws on the ground, pick up each saw one at a time, and replace the saw in the designated space in the cabinet. This concludes the event. Walk 85 feet (25.91 m) within the established walkway to the next event.

4. **Ladder Raise and Extension** - For this event, you must walk to the top rung of the 24-foot (7.32-m) aluminum extension ladder, lift the un-hinged end from the ground, and walk it up until it is stationary against the wall. This must be done in a hand-over-hand fashion, using each rung until the ladder is stationary against the wall. You must not use the ladder rails to raise the ladder. Immediately proceed to the pre-positioned and secured 24-foot (7.32-m) aluminum extension ladder, stand with both feet within the marked box of 36 inches × 36 inches (91.44 cm × 91.44 cm), and extend the fly section hand-over-hand until it hits the stop. Then, lower the fly section hand-over-hand in a controlled fashion to the starting position. This concludes the event. Walk 85 feet (25.91 m) within the established walkway to the next event.
5. **Forcible Entry** - For this event, you must use a 10-pound (4.54-kg) sledgehammer to strike the measuring device in the target area until the buzzer is activated. During this event, you must keep your feet outside the toe-box at all times. After the buzzer is activated, place the sledgehammer on the ground. This concludes the event. Walk 85 feet (25.91 m) within the established walkway to the next event.
6. **Search** - For this event, you must crawl through a tunnel maze that is approximately 3 feet (91.44 cm) high, 4 feet (121.92 cm) wide and 64 feet (19.51 m) in length with two 90° turns. At a number of locations in the tunnel, you must navigate around, over and under obstacles. In addition, at two locations, you must crawl through a narrowed space where the dimensions of the tunnel are reduced. Your movement is monitored through the maze. If for any reason, you choose to end the event, call out or rap sharply on the wall or ceiling and you will be assisted out of the maze. Upon exit from the maze, the event is concluded. Walk 85 feet (25.91 m) within the established walkway to the next event.
7. **Rescue** - For this event, you must grasp a 165-pound (74.84-kg) man-

nequin by the handle(s) on the shoulder(s) of the harness (either one or both handles are permitted), drag it 35 feet (10.67 m) to a pre-positioned drum, make a 180° turn around the drum, and continue an additional 35 feet (10.67 m) to the finish line. You are not permitted to grasp or rest on the drum. It is permissible for the mannequin to touch the drum. You are permitted to drop and release the mannequin and adjust your grip. The entire mannequin must be dragged until it crosses the marked finish line. This concludes the event. Walk 85 feet (25.91 m) within the established walkway to the next event.

- 8. Ceiling Breach and Pull** - For this event, you must remove the pike pole from the bracket, stand within the boundary established by the equipment frame, and place the tip of the pole on the painted area of the hinged door in the ceiling. Fully push up the 60-pound hinged door in the ceiling with the pike pole three times. Then, hook the pike pole to the 80-pound ceiling device and pull the pole down five times. Each set consists of three pushes and five pulls. Repeat the set four times. You are permitted to stop and, if needed, adjust your grip. Releasing your grip or allowing the pike pole handle to slip, without the pike pole falling to the ground, does not result in a warning or constitute a failure. You are permitted to re-establish your grip and resume the event. If you do not successfully complete a repetition, the proctor calls out "MISS" and you must push or pull the apparatus again to complete the repetition. This event and the total test time ends when you complete the final pull stroke repetition as indicated by a proctor who calls out "TIME."

For further information on the CPAT, you can visit the following web-sites:

- http://www.iaff.org/hs/CPAT/cpat_index.html
- <http://www.cffjac.org/go/jac/cpat/>

Preparing for the Written Exam

Firefighter Candidate Testing Center (FCTC) will be administering the entry-level Firefighter written exam on behalf of the City of Berkeley Fire Department.

The testing process consists of a 90-minute pre-test session designed to

give you information that is necessary to be successful on the written exam. Candidates will then have 90 minutes to complete the test, which consists of 100 multiple choice questions. The exam will consist of four sections as follows:

Section 1 - Recall and Comprehend Verbal and Visual Information. This section requires candidates to watch two short videos and answer questions based on the scenarios presented.

Section 2 - Recall and Comprehend Technical Information from Written Materials

Section 3 - Solve Mathematical Problems

Section 4 - Apply Mechanical Reasoning

You should select the best, or most correct answer for each question. There is only one correct answer per question. This is a timed test, so budget your time accordingly. Carefully read each question, and all possible answers before selecting your response. You will only receive credit for each question you respond correctly to, so do not leave any questions unanswered.

FCTC currently does not offer a study guide. However, reading comprehension, mathematical ability, and mechanical reasoning are essential to successfully completing the test.

Preparing for the Interview

This step is often overlooked by many applicants and, in reality, is the first thing you should do in preparation for the firefighter recruitment testing. You should find out as much as you possibly can about the Berkeley Fire Department and the job of a firefighter. The best way to obtain this information is to attend one of the scheduled "Recruitment Open House" at Station 2 located at 2029 Berkeley Way (please see recruitment brochure for scheduled dates), or schedule a visit at any one of the local fire stations during normal working hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The Fire Department encourages everyone to spend some time talking to firefighters,

because they know and are willing to explain what the job is about. Ask them questions about their training, their duties, how they perform them, and how working 48-hour shifts affect their lives. In short, ask them any questions that will help you understand what being a firefighter is really like.

In addition, ask the company officer on duty questions regarding what the department expects from its firefighters, the Fire Department's organizational structure, wages, different assignments, etc. You will need this information to convince the interview panel that you have the ability and a real interest in a career as a City of Berkeley Firefighter.

This interview is your opportunity to "sell yourself" and demonstrate to the panel that you have the ability and desire to become a firefighter.

The interview usually measures interpersonal relations, oral communication skills, judgment and analytical ability, and motivation to be a firefighter. The panel will be impressed if you are well groomed and wear business attire. Casual clothes are fine for the physical ability test, but are not appropriate for the oral interview. For the interview, it is important to be on time, honest, poised, confident, and polite. Remember, the interview panel will be evaluating communication skills; therefore, it is important to listen carefully and respond clearly and precisely. It is important to use good grammar and to avoid slang during the interview.

The panel will usually ask open-ended questions. For example, to evaluate the candidate's motivation to be a firefighter, you may be asked, "Why do you want to be a firefighter?" Examine your own personal reasons for wanting to be a firefighter and present them sincerely. If the response does not sound sincere, it will not be well received.

Other questions which may be asked are:

1. Give an example that shows how you work as part of a team.
2. Give an example of your being a responsible person.
3. What would you do if you arrived at a fire and the residents in the building were yelling obscenities at you?

The third question is designed to see if you will handle the situation in a mature way, by simply doing your job, or if you will escalate the situation.

On the Day of the Test

- Realize that feeling nervous is normal. You have prepared yourself for this day; have confidence in what you have done.
- Arrive early so you don't have to worry about locating the test site and finding parking.
- Eat something light an hour or so before the test. This should help your concentration, give you some energy, and hold off any pangs of hunger.
- When you arrive early, find a place to relax. Read a newspaper or a book. You have prepared yourself all that you can.

Other Things You Can Do to Prepare

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

- Fire Science Courses or Associate of Arts Degree
- California State Fire Science Certification Courses (contact State Fire Marshal's Office)
- Fire Service Related Courses
 - Basic English Grammar and Reading Comprehension
 - Basic Math
 - Public Speaking
 - Fire Code and Prevention

EMERGENCY MEDICAL COURSES

- Advanced First-Aid Certificate
- Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certificate
- EMT I Certification
- EMT-Paramedic License
- Please visit our web site at www.berkeleyfire.com OR www.emsa.ca.gov for a list of approved Paramedic programs

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Volunteer Fire Service Work
 - Office of Emergency Services (OES)
 - California Conservation Corps
 - California Department of Forestry (CDF)
 - Volunteer Fire Departments
- Volunteer Community Services
 - Church
 - Scout Troops
 - Community Organizations
 - Hospitals
 - Schools

MISCELLANEOUS

- Visit Fire Stations – talk to personnel – discuss profession pros and cons
- When preparing for the Oral Interviews: know the City and the Department, and how it operates

**DON'T GIVE UP!!! START YOUR EDUCATION
AND PHYSICAL FITNESS TRAINING NOW!!!**

This might seem like a lot of work to become a Firefighter. However, this is a career opportunity that offers promotions, a competitive salary, security, and a great deal of job satisfaction. You don't have to take our word for it; just ask any City of Berkeley Firefighter!

PLEASE NOTE: The provisions of this booklet do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, and any provisions contained in this bulletin may be modified without notice. The City may, without notice, change or eliminate any particular assessment component or combination of components as the needs of the City dictate.

REVISED:
2015 Feb

