City of Bellingham
Classification Specification

CLASS TITLE	**Firefighter**
DEPARTMENT	**Fire**
UNION:	**106**
SG:	**29**
CS:	**Y**
FLSA:	**Y**
EE04CODE:	**PS**

NATURE OF WORK:

Firefighters provide emergency assistance and protective services to citizens. They are trained and equipped to protect life and property threatened by disaster, fire, explosion, hazardous materials, illness, accidents and other hazards. Activities include emergency prevention, emergency and non-emergency response, fire code enforcement, building inspections, training and drill and maintenance of apparatus, equipment, fire station and grounds. They perform a wide range of emergency work under adverse environmental and strenuous physical conditions. There is frequent potential for exposure to toxic chemicals, extreme heat, and infectious disease which require the use of protective equipment such as heat resistant clothing, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), and medical masks, gloves and gowns.

Firefighters may be required to drive fire apparatus or medical units and perform special firefighting, pre-hospital medical care, rescue work or other skills acquired by work experience and specialized training programs.

Firefighters are subject to shift work and off-duty recall for major emergencies.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

Firefighters may be assigned as Driver/Engineers or Paramedics.

Drivers/Engineers: Firefighters assigned this responsibility drive fire trucks and ambulances, operate fire apparatus, and perform maintenance and inspection of equipment. They are required to pass special Department training and maintain driver certification.

Paramedics: Firefighters certified as paramedics continue to perform all duties of a Firefighter or Driver/Engineer but in addition are trained to administer specialized medical care. They must maintain Washington State Paramedic Certification.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to assigned Captain. Receives supervised training and performs work according to verbal and/ or written instructions of the Captain or Battalion Chief. Firefighters exercise considerable independent judgment in emergency situations.

May be assigned to act as a Captain.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Responds to fires and other emergencies. Places equipment; lays and connects hose; operates high capacity pumps and directs water streams; raises and climbs ladders; uses chemical extinguishers, safety belts, lines and hooks; uses self-contained breathing apparatus; performs ventilation tasks above ground; and performs salvage and overhaul operations. Uses ropes, harnesses, carabiners, and anchors for special rescue situations. Identifies, isolates and mitigates hazardous material incidents.

2. Provides basic and/or advanced life support medical assistance to citizens in non-emergency and emergency situations where life may be endangered. Sets up and operates equipment such as resuscitator, inhalator, oxygen, and cardiac monitor, defibrillation equipment, intravenous solution and medications.

3. Maintains contact with communications center and Department to report initial observations, progress on handling incidents, and receive orders and instruction on handling event(s). Utilizes the incident command system.

4. As qualified and appropriate to the incident, drives fire apparatus, drives medical or aid vehicles or pilots fire boat. Determines appropriate response routes to the emergency. Transports patients to hospitals or other destinations.

5. Conducts inspection of residential, commercial and industrial buildings for possible hazards and violations of fire code requirements. May issue correction notices as directed by the Captain. Participates in the development of pre-incident plans on how to handle fire and medical emergencies at various businesses and facilities.

6. Participates in the development and delivery of emergency prevention programs.

7. Responds to various service calls providing assistance to citizens in situations that are not life threatening, such as requests for physical assistance, flooded basements, and complaints about unsafe or illegal burning.

8. Participates in company and battalion training program and drill exercises. Instructs job skills to others. Researches, compiles, organizes and presents information at training and drill sessions.

9. Periodically tests facility, equipment, apparatus and fire protection systems and maintains records of test information.

10. Performs general and preventative maintenance on apparatus, equipment and facilities to ensure proper function and reliability.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Performs administrative and technical support activities for Fire Administration on a regular or special project basis.

2. Prepares and maintains reports and records within assigned area of responsibility.

3. Performs other related duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- Ability to learn and apply concepts of fire suppression, rescue, hazardous material, basic and/or advanced life support methods and techniques.
- Ability to work within a para-military organization and respond readily to command instructions.
- Ability to react quickly, remain calm and make good decisions in a stressful and/or hazardous situation.
- Ability to understand and carry out verbal and written instructions.
- Ability to work at varying heights and on ladders to perform firefighting, rescue work and training exercises.
- Ability to work effectively as a team member.
- Ability and willingness to establish and maintain effective, amicable relations co--workers and the public.
- Ability to acquire and maintain State, Federal and local certification as required.
- Ability to learn the geography of the City and County, the location of important buildings and the street system.
- Ability to perform strenuous and prolonged work under adverse conditions.
- Ability to maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical ability to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
    - Carry hose bundle of approximately 50 pounds and don personal protection and firefighting equipment weighing approximately 70 pounds to the scene of an emergency (sometimes to upper floors of businesses, apartments and hotels).
    - Lay and operate hose lines (160 pounds per 50 feet of hose with 100 pounds of nozzle pressure).
    - Stabilize and lift patients with backboard and cot.
    - Carry, place and extend ladders in training and in emergencies.
    - Operate power equipment such as a chain saw, portable generator, hydraulic jaws, smoke ejector, etc.
    - Set up and operate master streams and aerial ladder pipes.
    - While wearing protective clothing, performs heavy labor such as chopping, shoveling, moving furniture, equipment and merchandise.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment includes 24-hour shift work including weekends and holidays. Work is performed at fire stations, on various apparatus, on the drill ground and at different emergency scenes. Performance of hazardous tasks under emergency conditions may require strenuous exertion in environments with limited visibility, exposure to hazardous or toxic chemicals and gases, extremes in temperature, cramped surroundings, exposed heights and in and around water. Firefighters also work with citizens experiencing a wide range of emotions (rage, grief,

confusion, etc.) as a result of an emergency. There is frequent potential for exposure to toxic chemicals, extreme heat, and infectious disease which require the use of protective equipment.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

Entry:
- Must have received a high school diploma or G. E. D.
- Candidates must not have smoked tobacco products for a minimum of 24 months prior to application to be considered for employment as a firefighter.

Experienced:
- Must meet all entry-level requirements.
- Two years of full-time, paid experience as a structural firefighter with an agency responsible for residential and commercial fire responses, at least one year of which must have been within the last three years.
- Graduate of a recruit academy and/or National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Firefighter I certification. Documentation of completion or certification required.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Entry:
- Must be 21 years of age.
- Must be a U. S. citizen, deferred action for childhood arrivals recipient, or a registered permanent resident able to work in the United States.
- Successful completion of Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT).
- Employment contingent upon the following:
    - Passing a pre-employment drug test.
    - Passing a medical evaluation.
    - Passing a swim test, demonstrating ability to swim at a distance, tread water and retrieve a submerged weight.
    - Passing a criminal convictions check, child and adult abuse records check and local background check with no felony convictions within last seven years.
- Misdemeanor convictions will also be reviewed. A misdemeanor conviction will not necessarily disqualify an applicant but offenses within the last seven years may, by their nature and recentness, reveal a lack of specific qualifications for the position.
- Valid Washington State driver's license and good driving record. Candidates must submit a three-year driving abstract prior to hire.
- No record of driver's license suspension or revocation in any state within the last three years.
- Must possess or obtain a Washington State Emergency Vehicle Accident Prevention (EVAP) certification within 90 days of initial hire.
- Must possess Washington State EMT certification or acquire within one year of employment and maintain for the duration of employment.
- Willingness and ability to work at considerable heights (up to 100 feet) on a ladder.

Experienced:
- Must meet all entry-level requirements in addition to the following:

- Must possess Washington State EMT certification or have ability to obtain within 90 days of hire.

Driver/Engineer assignment:
- Completion of departmental training and certification as Driver/Engineer.

Advanced Life Support:
- Certification as a paramedic in Washington State with Whatcom County MPD approval is required to provide advanced life support services.

PREPARED BY: Mike Leigh
Steve Mahaffey
6/94

REVISED BY: Bill Boyd
Michelle Barrett
2/04

Bill Boyd
Michelle Barrett
3/06
Andy Day
Michelle Barrett
5/06
R. Christensen
M. Barrett
A. Beatty
3/07
R. Christensen
L. Klemanski
6/09
B. Hewett
1/17
A.Sullivan
7/21
E. Weinberg
3/23
E. Weinberg
8/24

REVIEWED BY:
B. Hewett
Fire Chief

COMMISSION ADOPTION: 8/14/2024