



## Owatonna Fire Department

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### Mike J. Johnson

Fire Chief, City of Owatonna

February 15, 2017

Re : Paid On-Call and Resident Firefighter Positions

The mission of the Owatonna Fire Department is to save lives and property in a safe and efficient manner. This requires dedicated people willing to risk their lives to serve our community. The Owatonna Fire Department has a proud heritage. Our goal is to continue to provide excellent service to our community by hiring good people to serve as our future firefighters. The job will challenge you in many ways. I appreciate and thank you for your desire to serve our community by applying for the position of firefighter. We traditionally have many applicants for our firefighter positions. I assure you that the selection process will be fair. All applicants will be treated equally.

We currently have Paid-On-Call positions available. The hiring process involves ranking applicants using criteria based on your ability to perform the duties of a firefighter. All applicants will be provided the same information packet and testing procedures at the same time. All applicants must attend all sessions as scheduled; there will not be make up sessions. We do this to make sure the process is the same for all applicants. A list will be created from the hiring process. This list may be used for the next two years for hiring Paid-On-Call or Resident Firefighters.

### Firefighter Applicant Timeline:

Date	Time	Item
Feb 15th	04:30 p.m.	Fire Civil Service Commission Approval of Process
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup>	08:00 a.m.	Application Period Opens
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup>		Place Now Hiring Banner
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup>		Newspaper Advertisement Start
March 13 <sup>th</sup>		Newspaper Advertisement End
March 17 <sup>th</sup>	04:30 p.m.	Application Period Deadline
March 18th	09:00 a.m.	Orientation and Questions
March 25th	09:00 a.m.	Written General Aptitude Test
March 25 <sup>th</sup>	11:00 a.m.	Physical Agility Testing ( <i>Comfortable shoes and clothing for test</i> )
March 27 <sup>th</sup>		Notification to Oral Interview Candidates
April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 – 10 pm	Oral Interviews
April 4 <sup>th</sup>		Offers of conditional employment
April 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>		Background checks
April 6 <sup>th</sup>	(Scheduled)	Health Physicals
April 12 <sup>th</sup>		Job offers
April 18 <sup>th</sup>		Firefighter Training Starts

### Firefighter Expectations:

The mission of the Owatonna Fire Department is to save lives and to save property. To accomplish our mission, we have to hire firefighters who are able to meet established standards for firefighters. All applicants will be provided with this informational packet to help you determine if you can meet the requirements of the firefighter position. We require a high level of commitment from our firefighters - physically, mentally, and emotionally. It is important that all applicants understand the challenges you will experience as a firefighter while serving on our department. I would encourage you to give me a call to discuss the position if you have any questions.

Prior to accepting a position with us, all applicants are expected to discuss the requirements of this position with your full time employer to get approval to respond to calls while at work.

- Firefighters are expected to respond to a minimum of 40% of the calls when paged.
- Firefighters are also expected to attend 80% of the training sessions. Training sessions occur on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Additional training sessions may be scheduled at any time when needed.

**Paid on Call Firefighters:**

There are times when we may hire paid on call firefighters as needed that will not be in the resident program. Typically, this occurs if the resident slots are full and we need additional Paid on Call firefighters for either the day or night shift. Job preference is usually given to candidates who are willing to join the resident program or fill other department needs. Paid on Call Firefighters are assigned to either the Day Shift (7 AM to 5 PM) or Night Shift (5 PM to 7 AM). You will be asked your availability status for both shifts during the selection process. You will be assigned a pager and in addition to your shift calls, you will be expected to respond to an “all call” page when needed. If your availability status changes from day shift to night shift, you may be asked to leave the department. Your availability to respond to a high percentage of calls is important to our community. All applicants should discuss your plans to become a firefighter with significant others and to develop an understanding of the commitment to the fire department. You should discuss this position with your employer so you can receive permission to leave work for emergency calls when needed. The City of Owatonna makes a considerable investment in time, training, and equipment if you are chosen to become a firefighter on our department. If you cannot make the required percentages, we will have to release you from the Fire Department. Be prepared to assure me that I will be making a good investment in you. This can be done by gaining a mutual understanding with your family (if applicable) and your employer before you start the hiring process so there are not any problems after you are hired. Everyone should be in agreement and understand your commitments if you are hired as a firefighter.

**Resident Program:**

The resident program is for Paid on Call firefighters who choose to live at the fire station. This enables the fire department to have a quick response to emergencies. Resident firefighters are provided a room to live in at no charge. The purpose of this program is to have resident firefighters available for quick response for calls when needed. Applicants who desire to be in the resident program are asked to make a minimum two-year commitment to the resident program. Residents can live at the fire station longer than two years if desired. Residents usually have jobs and or go to school and their place of residence is the fire station. All resident firefighters are required to be available a minimum of 20 standby shifts per month at the fire station. The standby shift shall be at least 8 hours in length and be between the hours of 9 PM and 7 AM. Contained within the 20 shifts per month, 4 shifts shall be on weekend (Friday, Saturday) nights. You are not compensated for the standby shifts. You will be paid only if you are used for a call. Firefighters who complete the resident program usually move out of the fire station, become paid on call firefighters, and can live elsewhere.

**Evaluation Criteria:** 100 point testing process.

Firefighter applicants are evaluated using the following criteria. All firefighter candidates will be screened using a competitive process to determine the best applicants to fill our positions.

20%	Application
20%	Written Test
30%	Oral Interview
15%	Fire Chief Strategic Fit
15%	Veterans Preference

Pass / Fail      Physical Ability Test  
Pass / Fail      Back Ground Check

All applicants go through the same hiring procedures at each step in the process. It is important that you can make all testing dates because there will not be make up sessions. Points are assigned to each applicant in each testing area. Applicants are ranked by how they score on the test and placed on a hiring list. The hiring list usually lasts for approximately two years unless the list becomes depleted. The fire chief will make a selection from the hiring list to fill positions by strategic needs within the fire department. Strategic needs may include filling slots for the resident program, Day shift, Night Shift or Availability.

As a member of the fire profession, we make a commitment to you to operate in a safe and professional manner as a fire department. You will be expected to perform in a safe and professional manner as a firefighter. This means making a commitment to excellence in your training and response for the duration of your career. Firefighting has inherent risks and is a dangerous job that requires ongoing dedication to maintain proficiency throughout your career.

As a member of the paid on call programs, you will receive the following benefits:

- You receive valuable training and will be required to pass certification testing as a firefighter.
- The experience you receive will enable you to become a full-time firefighter candidate.
- The pay for resident firefighters is \$17.28 per hour for emergency response, meetings and training.
- The pay as a Paid on Call (non-resident) firefighters will be \$14.63 per hour for emergency response, meetings and training.
- All Paid on Call firefighters must maintain a percentage of 40% response to emergency calls.
- All Paid on Call firefighters must maintain a percentage of 80% attendance for training sessions.
- Paid on Call firefighters who are not in the Resident program are required to live within 12 minutes of the fire station.
- You will be eligible to become a member of the fire department relief association's pension plan.
- For uniforms, you will be provided a set of firefighter turnout gear, 1 T-shirt, 1 sweatshirt, and 1 cap. At various times other items may be provided as needed.
- You will be required to pass medical evaluations provided by the city for free as determined by the fire department medical director.
- The probation period will be six months from completion of training.
- All firefighters must pass the Firefighter I certification upon completion of fire training.
- All firefighters must complete first responder training.
- You will be covered under workers compensation if you are injured while on duty.

The City of Owatonna is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Should you have any questions regarding the enclosed information or the contents of this letter, please contact me at (507) 444-2454.

I wish you success in your endeavor to become a firefighter with the Owatonna Fire Department.

Sincerely,

*Mike Johnson*

Michael Johnson,  
Fire Chief  
City of Owatonna