

## Responsibilities of Braham Fire Department Members

Each member of the Braham Fire Department, whether that person be a nozzleman, tanker operator, or pumper operator, is an integral part of a team. As members of this team, the fire fighters serve in their specialty to protect local residents, their property, and fellow fire fighters.

To achieve these ends, the Braham Fire Department member will:

1. Know and understand standard operational procedures.
2. Work to become competent in fire fighter tasks as per training chart.
3. Make a concerted effort to attend drills, meetings, and fires.
4. Use drill time to maximize experience, skill, and expertise.
5. Meet all medical requirements of the department. To enter the department he must have an EKG and pass a medical physical by a doctor familiar with the duties of a fire fighter.
6. Follow all safety procedures.
7. Follow directions of officers in charge of a fire.
8. Be willing to take on some of the extra tasks of the fire department.
9. Understand that fire department safety and effectiveness are most important.
10. Miss no more than four drills per calendar year.
11. All members on probation must complete Fire Fighting #1 within one year. If circumstances warrant, an extension of up to 6 months may be granted by the officers committee.
12. All members are required to respond to a minimum of all fire calls (20% throughout the calendar year).

FIREFIGHTER APPLICANT HANDBOOK

PREPARED BY  
BRAHAM VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
CHIEF JEFF JONES  
BRAHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT

IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE CITY OF BRAHAM

How do you apply for Firefighter Recruit?

Applications for Firefighter Recruit are only accepted between dates published in the official city newspaper. Applications will be held on file for a period of not less than one year.

What type of tests do you have to take?

The exam consists of two parts. The first part is a 100 question multiple choice test and the second part is a physical agility test.

1. The 100 question multiple choice test consists of questions from a wide range of subjects. Your general knowledge will be tested and also your basic math is also tested because it is required to make computations during the training period and in the performance of everyday tasks. Three to four weeks after the written test, all applicants are notified whether they passed or failed the test. Those who are invited for the physical agility test are sent a written notice indicating their score.

2. **PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST:** The physical agility test is designed to test a person's endurance and ability to perform basic strenuous tasks that professional firefighters must perform. The test is a series of five tasks which are simulations of actual tasks performed on the job. Applicants will perform the tasks wearing a firefighter's helmet, turnout coat, gloves and self-contained breathing apparatus. The total weight of the protective gear is approximately 45 pounds.

What happens after the exam?

#### NOTICE OF EXAM RESULTS

The names of those applicants who receive a passing score on both written and physical agility exams will be placed on the "Eligible List" for Firefighter Recruit by the Braham Volunteer Fire Department. The Fire Department uses the eligibility list to call applicants for job interviews.

How can I become a Firefighter Recruit?

First, file an application with the City Of Braham. Those individuals that meet the established qualifications must then take a written test. Applicants who pass this test must then take and successfully pass a physical agility test before being placed on the eligible list. The Fire Department will then use this eligible list to invite applicants for job interviews. Applicants that are selected for hire by the Fire Department must then pass a very thorough medical examination and a background investigation.

All applicants that are selected for hire will be trained during their probation period. The firefighter probation period will last for one year.

What are the qualifications and special requirements?

1. Must be 18 years of age.
2. Must have a valid Class "C" Driver's License.
3. Ability to learn to prevent, fight, and control fire according to established safety procedures.
4. Must pass established physical strength and agility test.
5. Must pass extensive medical examination.
6. Must possess natural or corrective vision of at least 20/20 in one eye and 20/30 in other.
7. Must possess acute hearing.
8. Ability to climb, run, crawl, bend, jump and balance while performing VERY DEMANDING WORK inside, outside, and on top of buildings and structures under varied circumstances and weather conditions.
9. Driving the speed limit, the applicant must be able to drive from his/her residence to the Fire Hall in a maximum of 7 minutes.
10. F.F.1 completed in 18 months.

What are the best kinds of activities to help develop cardiorespiratory fitness and muscular strength?

#### RUNNING AND WEIGHT TRAINING

There are several ways to approach physical fitness training. One way is to join a gym or spa where a fitness specialist will help you design a training routine to fit your needs. Another method is a lot less expensive and you can accomplish the same thing by designing your own program.

The public library has books available which will help you design an effective training program. There are several books that can be used to develop a training routine that can be done at home in your spare time.

Remember, both methods work, but only if you train conscientiously, aggressively, and diligently.

How to evaluate your level of physical fitness:

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 agility test. It must be emphasized that following the guidelines is no guarantee for passing the test. However, your chances for passing will be greatly increased if adequate preparatory physical training has taken place.

## How to prepare 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 Recruit test. You should find out as much as you possibly can about the Braham Volunteer Fire Department and the job of firefighter. The best way to obtain this information is to visit your local fire station. 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 the training program, what their duties are, how they perform them, how working affects their lives. In short, ask any questions that will help you understand what being a volunteer firefighter is really like. In addition, ask the officers questions regarding what the department expects from its firefighters; the Fire Department organizational structure, wages different assignments, etc. You will need this information in order to convince the interview panel that you have the ability and a real interest in being a firefighter with the Braham Fire Department. This might seem like a lot of work just so you can become a firefighter. However, this is a service that offers much for the firefighter, to our community, and a great deal of job satisfaction. You don't have to take our word for it; just ask any Braham Firefighter.

## Hiring Process:

The Fire Department uses the "Eligible List" to schedule eligible applicants for pre-employment interviews. Those individuals selected for employment by the Fire Department will then undergo a background investigation and physical examination. Applicants who meet all requirements and background standards are eligible for hire as Firefighter Recruits and are scheduled for training on the Braham Fire Department Probation Training program.

## How can you prepare for the exam?

### 1. THE WRITTEN EXAM

The written test can be broken down into three general areas: basic math; reading ability and comprehension; and judgment and decision making. The following bibliography contains sources of information that can be used to sharpen your skills in the areas covered in the written test. These books may be obtained in Public Libraries.

#### A. Basic Math

Mathematics made simple – Abraham Sperling  
Mathematics Simplified and Self-taught ARCO

#### B. Reading Ability and Comprehension

Learning to Read – Jeanne Chall  
Reading Games and Activities – Mary E. Dorsey

The Self-Teaching Edition of the Writing Road  
To Reading – Romaldo Bishop Spalding

C. Judgment and Decision Making

Make Up Your Mind! The 7 Building Blocks to Better Decisions – John D. Arnold

Judgment and Decisions – PACE – ARCO

Fire Department Captain – ARCO

Administrative Assistant-Officer – ARCO

(Chapter on Principals of Supervision)

Preparation for the written test for Firefighter Recruit also should include sharpening your skills in taking multiple choice type examinations. There are several books that give you pointers in test-taking and practice questions you can use in preparing for this exam.

Fireman, Fire Department – ARCO Series

Firefighter Entrance Examinations – Davis Publishing

All of these books listed are available at your Public Library. You will find them very helpful with many other sources of information. We recommend you visit them.

2. THE PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST

Do not take this physical agility test lightly. It is more difficult than it appears. Your chances for passing the test will be greatly increased if adequate preparatory training has been undertaken. Physical training should emphasize cardiorespiratory (heart-lung) fitness, strength and muscular endurance. Running and weight training are two of the best approaches.

Here is a description of the five tasks that must be completed in a set time (time established by present firefighters). Keep in mind that these tasks are performed while wearing 45 pounds of protective firefighting clothes and gear.

**SIMULATED ROOF VENTILATION**

**REQUIREMENT:** Complete 50 acceptable impacts with a six pound sledge hammer.

**PROCEDURE:** While standing on a ground level pitched roof, the applicant must strike a target 50 times in a demonstrated manner as quickly as possible, with enough force to simulate the penetration of standard roofing materials.

**JOB RELATEDNESS:** In order to effectively ventilate the roof of a small (40' x 60') building, the firefighter would be required to strike the roof a minimum of 50 times, penetrating the roofing materials with each blow. This normally is accomplished using a

six pound pickhead axe. However, we are using a sledge hammer for safety to the applicant and to lessen wear on the props and equipment.

#### HOSE PULL

**REQUIREMENT:** Extend 200 feet of 2 ½ inch fire hose.

**PROCEDURE:** The applicant will approach 200 feet of dry 2 ½ inch fire hose and nozzle, which is in an extended accordion fold. The hose is placed on the applicant by Fire Department personnel. The applicant then moves forward until the entire 200 feet of hose is stretched out. This is completed as quickly as possible, and without stopping.

**JOB RELATEDNESS:** 2 ½ inch hose is carried on engine companies in varying lengths. A firefighter occupying the nozzle position on an engine company is responsible for extending the line to the point of attack.

#### VICTIM EXTRICATION

**REQUIREMENT:** Drag a 175 pound weight 100 feet.

**PROCEDURE:** The applicant will use 2 straps to pull a 175 pound weight over a smooth level surface to a distance of 100 feet.

**JOB RELATEDNESS:** To remove the victim to a safe location, it is not unusual to travel a distance of 100 feet or more. This task is commonly completed by one firefighter.

#### HIGH-RISE

**REQUIREMENT:** Carrying high-rise equipment for a distance of approximately 200 feet; ascend and descend two flights of stairs.

**PROCEDURE:** High-rise packs of fire hose with nozzles and reducers are placed on the applicant's shoulders by Fire Department personnel. The applicant then carries them for approximately 70 feet as quickly as possible. Within this 70 feet, the applicant must ascend and descend two flights of stairs.

Can you rest during the physical agility test?

Yes... but only in a "rehabilitation" area and only under certain circumstances, located at designated places on the course. No area can be entered until after the completion of the second event. An applicant may enter any area but can remain there for a maximum of two minutes. Any time spent in a rehabilitation area increases the over-all time of the applicant. Any applicant who stops to rest for even a short time without entering a rehabilitation area will be disqualified. Also, if applicants are unable to leave the area after two minutes, they will be disqualified.

### Preparing for the physical agility test:

It must be emphasized that regardless of a person's level of fitness, a person should be in good health before beginning any physical training program. Preparation for the physical agility test can be accomplished by a physical training program that emphasizes cardiorespiratory (heart/lung) fitness, strength and muscular endurance. It is especially important that small-framed individuals whose jobs do not require physical exertion prepare more conscientiously for the test. Generally these individuals are not in as high a level of physical fitness and have less strength than more physically active people. However, do not despair; most people can improve their level of physical fitness through an intensive program that includes running, for cardiorespiratory fitness, and weight lifting, to develop muscular strength.

### What is cardiorespiratory fitness:

Cardiorespiratory fitness is the ability of the heart to deliver oxygen to the muscles and other tissues. This is called the aerobic power. Simply stated, the ability to perform exercise and/or physical work is directly dependant upon how well the body delivers oxygen to the working muscles. A highly fit person will be able to deliver large amounts of oxygen to the muscles and therefore, be capable of prolonged muscular exercise (for example, fighting fires). On the other hand, the 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.

### What about 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 necessarily have above average muscular strength, endurance and power in order to effectively and safely handle firefighting equipment and perform duties of a firefighter.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF BRAHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

Each member of the Braham Fire Department, whether that person be a nozzleman, tanker operator, or pumper operator, is an integral part of the team. As members of this team, the firefighters serve in their specialty to protect local residents, their property and fellow firefighters. To achieve these ends, the Braham Fire Department member will:

1. Know and understand standard operational procedures.
2. Work to become competent in firefighter tasks as per training chart.
3. Make a concerted effort to attend drills, meetings, and fires.

4. Use drill time to maximize your experience, skill, and expertise.
5. Meet all medical requirements of the department. To enter the department he must have an EKG and pass a medical physical by a doctor familiar with the duties of a firefighter.
6. Follow all safety procedures.
7. Follow directions of officers in charge of a fire.
8. Be willing to take on some of the extra tasks of the fire department.
9. Understand that fire department safety and effectiveness are most important.
10. Miss no more than four drills per calendar year.
11. All probationary members must complete Firefighting #1 within one year. If circumstances warrant, an extension of up to 6 months may be granted by the officers committee.

To ensure the safety of each firefighter through proper training, all members of the Braham Fire Department must attend a minimum of 8 drills per year, allowing for a maximum of 4 drills missed in any one calendar year. If you know you will be absent from a drill, please call a Line Officer/Training Officer and let them know. Each member's drill attendance will be reviewed at each drill to help keep everyone up to speed and handle any discrepancy. If a firefighter misses 4 drills in one calendar year, he/she will be put on probation and must make the next 2 drills in a row. This will carry over into the year, if needed,

If a firefighter knows that he/she will miss a 5<sup>th</sup> drill, it is recommended that he/she meet with the Line Officers to discuss attendance and their reasons BEFORE their 5<sup>th</sup> miss. If they are excused from that 5<sup>th</sup> drill, they must attend one make up one drill in that year to receive credit.

If the firefighter does not meet with the Line Officers, he/she may be automatically dismissed from the department.

Make-up drills will be run two (2) times per year. The times will vary, depending on how many firefighters need one. Drill credit MAY also be given for training outside the department, such as mutual aid, live burns, state fire school, etc. This is not to be assumed, so you are required to ask.

Leave of Absence requests will be considered for major life situations, such as medical issues, job transfers, etc. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Firefighters returning from a LOA will be put on limited activity roster. Each will be brought back to full status as they are deemed ready by the Steering Committee.

All firefighters will be judged on their overall attitude, fire ground performance, fire percentage and drill attendance.

To allow for extremely extraordinary circumstances, a unanimous vote of the Steering Committee may override automatic dismissal.

#### CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

As of Aug. 1, 2013, the requirement to conduct criminal background checks on firefighters was codified into law. The applicant will need to sign a consent form before the background check is run. Applicants who do not consent to the criminal history background check cannot be considered for a position on the Braham Volunteer Fire Department.

Informed Consent  
Braham Volunteer Fire Department  
201 S. Broadway, PO Box 200  
Braham, MN 55006  
320-396-3800

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The following named individual has made application with this agency for (employment, volunteering, etc.).

**Last Name of Applicant** (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

**First Name** (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

**Middle** (full)(please print): \_\_\_\_\_

**Maiden, Alias or Former** (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex (M or F):** \_\_\_\_\_  
Month/Day/Year

**Social Security Number** (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize the Braham Police Department and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to disclose all criminal history record information to the Braham Volunteer Fire Department for the purpose of \_\_\_\_\_ with this agency.  
(employment, volunteering, etc.)

The expiration of this authorization shall be one year from the date of my signature.

**Signature of Applicant** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notary**

State of: \_\_\_\_\_

County of: \_\_\_\_\_

This instrument was acknowledged before me on \_\_\_\_\_ by  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Notary Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

(Seal)