

## LANCASHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE Retained Firefighter Recruitment Information



### 1.0 Introduction

Thank you for taking this opportunity to find out more about becoming a Retained Duty Firefighter with Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service. We hope this brief run through assists you in making a decision to join us. For further details see websites at the end of this leaflet.

In most circumstances a Retained Firefighter has another job / career, and provides on call cover for the Fire Service either from home, or in some circumstances from their place of work, whereas a Wholetime Firefighter works on a full time basis at a station.

Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service serves a population of approximately 1.5 million in an area of some 1.810 square miles covering the moorlands of West Pennines, the valleys of the Ribble, Wyre and Lune, together with the coastal plains of Fylde and West Lancashire.

There are a variety of fire risks associated with the industries we cover (traditional Lancashire cotton mills through to heavy engineering, chemical plants, oil refineries, shipping, offshore gas installations, dock areas, densely populated commercial or residential areas and the largest holiday resort in Europe.

***All applicants must have the ability to respond to the fire station within 5 minutes of a call being sent to their pager, which the fire fighter carries when providing cover. In most cases this will mean being within one mile from the station when you are providing cover.***

The vision of Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service is to make Lancashire a safer community and its key priorities are based around providing:

- Reduced Risk
- Enhanced Resilience
- Tailored services to meet local needs
- Promotion of equality and diversity
- Improved value for money

## 2.0 Staffing

Wholetime Operational Personnel	894
Retained Operational Personnel	375
Non-Uniformed Support Staff	223
Control Room Personnel	<u>49</u>
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>1541</b>

## 3.0 Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer

The Service is an equal opportunities employer; as such we take account of the individual differences and similarities in the workforce and community we serve. We are striving to ensure we have a truly diverse workforce to ensure we can really understand the community we serve and display courtesy and respect to everyone with whom we come into contact.

In recruiting or promoting staff, the Service is keen to provide the best possible advice and guidance to ensure everyone has the opportunity to secure employment and reach their potential. We constantly monitor our systems and processes to ensure applicants are respected and receive no less favourable treatment because of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief or disability. There are times when there is a justifiable reason for not employing or promoting someone, but in all cases this will be made known to the individual.

## 4.0 Retained Firefighter Role:

- To save life and preserve endangered life
- Protection of property from damage by fire and from firefighting measures
- To render humanitarian services
- To inform and educate your community to improve awareness of safety

### Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Contribute to local initiatives that may arise from the Station, Watch and local community in pursuit of organisation objectives, including Community Fire Safety work.
- To respond to the station within 5 minutes.
- Attend operational incidents as part of a team in accordance with Service Policy.
- Comply with all Service Policy, guiding frameworks and legal requirements.
- Contribute to the Health & Safety of self and others in the workplace.
- Monitor, test and record equipment and resources to maintain operational readiness.

- Create and maintain a good working relationship with colleagues and contribute to decision-making for the effectiveness of the team.
- Understand, demonstrate and support an awareness of Equality and Diversity, and others' behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.
- Take responsibility for personal performance and attend training events and meetings to support self-development as required to meet organisational objectives.
- Regularly attend practice drills, exercises, lectures and other forms of training

#### **A firefighter must be:**

- 18 years of age on appointment
- physically fit and agile with good stamina
- able to work in hazardous conditions for long periods, including at heights and in confined spaces
- mechanically adept with good dexterity and co-ordination
- trustworthy, honest, dependable and generally of good character (*see court convictions*)
- self-reliant and self-assured with a keen sense of discipline
- able to contribute to, and work within a team
- able to understand and memorise technical information
- able to communicate effectively verbally and in writing

### **5.0 Court Convictions**

The Service is in a position of trust with the public and has a duty to protect them. If you have a record of an offence, this will not necessarily disqualify you as all applications are considered strictly on their merit. However, you are required to declare any offence for which the conviction is not yet 'spent' within the meaning of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. You are advised to declare any charges that are pending; a subsequent conviction could lead to you being discharged from the Service.

If you fail to disclose information when required to do so, this will render your application void and if you have been employed result in termination of employment without notice.

Further guidance on the Act can be found in the Home Office booklet 'A Guide to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974' issued by HM Stationery Office. If you are in any doubt about your declaration, you can get legal advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or Legal Advice Centre in a Solicitor's Office.

Should you have a conviction or have incurred a fixed penalty between the date of the application or appointment you **must** notify the Service in writing, as this may affect your employment in the Service.

## 6.0 Selection

### Application form

You are required to complete an application form, it is essential you complete this fully, any part which you feel is not applicable to you, insert not applicable unless stated otherwise, so that we know you have considered the question. You must be honest in your answers and with the information you share, failure to do so could result in your application or employment being void or terminated without notice.

Please ensure the form is written legibly. If you have any specific requirements or disabilities (eg dyslexia) you should ensure that you have ticked the box on the application form so that we can contact you to discuss what support is required during the selection process.

### Assessment event

If your application is successful you will be asked to attend an assessment centre, which will consist of one evening and will last approximately two hours. This will include a series of physical assessments which are all timed. Initially, you will be asked to complete a 'progressive shuttle run assessment' or 'bleep test'. Further information about this test can be found at appendix A to this document. If you are successful at the 'bleep test', you will be asked to stay and take part in a number of other tests. They include a 'ladder climb', 'casualty evacuation', 'equipment assembly', 'ladder lift', 'enclosed space test', and 'equipment carry'. All these tests are performed wearing full fire kit, which will be provided. You are advised though to bring a pair of old tracksuit bottoms or similar, and a pair of both thin and thick socks.

These tests are designed to identify your potential to become a firefighter. You must pass all the tests to move on to the next stage of the process.

Once you have undergone the assessments you will be notified in writing of the outcome, and if you are successful will be asked to attend for the next stage of the process.

### Psychometric Tests

You will be invited to attend to sit two 'multiple choice' tests which are designed to identify your ability to work with numbers and your ability to understand information. Each test takes between 30 and 40 minutes and is timed.

### Formal Interview

The interview is your opportunity to give evidence of your knowledge, skills and experience, and the Fire Service's opportunity to assess your suitability for the role of firefighter. See [www.fireservice.co.uk](http://www.fireservice.co.uk) for hints and tips for attending interviews.

## Medical Assessment

Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service has a responsibility to protect the Health & Safety of its staff, and the communities it serves. Firefighters must be fit enough to perform tasks that are both physically and mentally demanding. If you would like to discuss this matter please do not hesitate to contact Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service Occupational Health Unit, telephone 01772 652840.

If you are successful in the assessment centres and interview you will be given a health questionnaire to complete and return. You must ensure it is taken to your General Practitioner to sign and endorse the information you have detailed. Then you should return it in the sealed envelope marked 'Occupational Health Unit'.

Please note that your GP may charge you for this service. **Lancashire Fire & Rescue cannot refund any charges that your GP makes.**

You will then be invited to attend for a medical assessment at the Occupational Health Unit

**Please ensure that you indicate on the form if you wear glasses or contact lenses for distance or reading to ensure that arrangements can be made to provide safety prescription eyewear if required prior to any training.**

If you are successful at interview you will be asked to attend for a medical with the occupational health doctor and nurse.

## 7.0 Training

The Retained Firefighters are required to attend a two week initial training course at the Lancashire Fire & Rescue Training Centre, Washington Hall, Euxton, Chorley. The main purpose is to teach practical Firefighting skills incorporating search and rescue, and the safe use of equipment such as ladders, pumps and hose. This is followed by two weeks Breathing Apparatus training at a later stage.

## 8.0 Conditions of Service

Retained Firefighters have an obligation to:

- Attend a drill night at the fire station for training and maintenance duties for a minimum of two hours per week.
- Arrive promptly at the fire station in response to a call at any time during their rostered contracted hours of availability.
- Attend any incident or provide standby duties in accordance with the contracted hours of availability.

You will be paid a salary based on the activity of the station and the number of hours cover you agree to provide. This will be discussed more fully at the induction evening or at interview.

Annual leave is 4 weeks per annum rising to 5 weeks after 5 years service.

## **9.0 Membership of a Trade Union**

Lancashire Fire & Rescue is supportive of staff joining a union and take part in its activities. Information will be provided during the two week training programme.

## **10.0 Prospects**

There is every opportunity to progress though the following roles:

- Firefighter
- Crew Manager
- Watch Manager

## Physical Assessment - General

You have been invited to attend the assessment in your own time and of course you may leave at any time. If you are not performing to an acceptable standard you may be asked to leave by one of the assessors.

## Progressive Shuttle Run Assessment

The assessment is maximal and progressive; in other words, easy at the start but harder towards the end. For the results to be valid participants must give their maximum effort when performing the assessment and therefore attempt to reach as high a level as possible before stopping.

The CD will start with a brief explanation of the assessment, leading into a five-second countdown to the start of the assessment itself. Thereafter the CD emits a single bleep at regular intervals. Participants should aim to be at the opposite end to the start by the time the first bleep sounds. They should then continue running at this speed, being at one end or the other each time there is a bleep.

After each minute, the time interval between beeps will decrease, so that the running speed will need to be increased. The first running speed is referred to as 'Level 1', the second speed as 'Level 2', and so on. Each level lasts approximately one minute, and the CD continues up to 'Level 21'. The end of each shuttle is denoted by a single bleep; the end of each level is denoted by a triple bleep and by the commentator on the CD.

In order to pass the assessment participants must reach level 9.6

It is important to note that the running speeds at the start of the assessment are very slow. On 'level 1', participants have 9 seconds in which to run each 20 metre shuttle.

Participants should always place one foot either on or behind the 20 metre mark at the end of each shuttle. If participants arrive at the end of a shuttle before the bleep sounds, they should turn around and wait for the bleep, then resume running and adjust their speed.

Each participant must run until such time as the pass mark is achieved or he/she can no longer keep up with the speed set by the CD, at which point he/she should voluntarily withdraw from the assessment. In some cases the assessor conducting the assessment may need to withdraw a participant when it becomes apparent that he/she is dropping behind the required pace. If participants fail to reach the end of a shuttle before the bleep, they will be allowed two further shuttles to attempt to regain the required pace before being withdrawn.

Observers will make a note of the level and the number of shuttles into the level, at which each participant withdraws or is withdrawn, from the assessment.

**We hope this brief resume has helped you to come to a decision about pursuing a career with Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service. Further information about becoming a Firefighter or about Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service in general, can be obtained by viewing:**

[www.fireservice.co.uk](http://www.fireservice.co.uk)  
[www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk](http://www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk)

**Thank you for your interest in Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service**