



# City of Conroe Fire Department



## PROBATIONARY FIREFIGHTER HIRING PROCESS

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The City of Conroe hires probationary firefighters from an eligibility list, which consists of candidates who have successfully passed a written examination. The list remains valid for up to one (1) year, unless exhausted sooner. After passing the written exam, the candidate must undergo a physical ability assessment, a thorough background investigation, an oral interview, a psychological examination, a medical examination, and a drug and alcohol screen.

Communication with candidates will be conducted via e-mail throughout the hiring process. Candidates should add [firerecruiting@cityofconroe.org](mailto:firerecruiting@cityofconroe.org) to his/her e-mail safe sender list to avoid missing any communication provided by the Conroe Fire Department.

## CITY AND DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

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The City of Conroe encompasses an area of approximately 72 square miles with a population estimate of 82,919. The United States Census Bureau has named Conroe the #1 fastest-growing large city in the United States.

One hundred thirty-one professional firefighters and four civilian employees staff the Conroe Fire Department (CFD). The CFD offers service from seven strategically located fire stations and the administrative offices at City Hall. The department heavily emphasizes fire prevention through educational programs, facility inspections, plan review for new construction, and fire/arson origin and cause investigation. When fires do occur, however, the CFD is prepared to respond with modern equipment and a highly trained and dedicated group of professional firefighters.

Fires are only one of the emergencies for which the CFD is prepared. Water rescues, aerial rescues, confined space rescues, hazardous materials incidents, and natural disasters are a few examples of the types of incidents the department handles. In addition, a fire truck is often the first to arrive on the scene of a medical emergency. The CFD's firefighters are trained to stabilize patients until paramedics arrive with an ambulance.

Thank you for your interest in joining our team. What follows is a detailed description of qualifications, the hiring process, and benefits.

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## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

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- A. **AGE** – A qualified candidate must be between 18 and 35 years of age (cannot have reached 36<sup>th</sup> birthday at the time of official appointment).
- B. **CITIZENSHIP** – A qualified candidate:
1. Must be a citizen of the United States; and
  2. Must be able to read, understand, and write the English language.
- C. **CRIMINAL RECORD** – A qualified candidate shall not:
1. Be on probation for a criminal offense; and/or
  2. Have been convicted for a misdemeanor offense above the grade of a Class C misdemeanor within the last 5 years in the State of Texas, or equivalent grade in another state or any Class C misdemeanor for assault or family violence.
  3. Have been convicted of any felony.
- D. **DRIVING RECORD** – A qualified candidate must:
1. Possess a valid Texas driver's license at the time of official appointment;
  2. Not have had their driver's license suspended in any state within the last 24 months prior to application;
  3. Not have been convicted of Driving While Intoxicated or Driving Under the Influence of Drugs in the 5 year period immediately prior to application;
  4. Reflect a mature responsibility toward his/her driving privilege; and
  5. Conform to the department's standard for driving history.
- E. **EDUCATION** – A qualified candidate must:
1. Have graduated from an accredited senior high school. In lieu of a high school diploma, the applicant must have obtained a G.E.D.; and
  2. Possess the ability to read, learn, and understand the laws, policies, and procedures governing the firefighter position.
- F. **MORAL CHARACTER** – A qualified candidate must:
1. Be of good moral character; and
  2. His/her reputation must be of the highest order as will be determined by a complete background investigation.
- G. **VISION** – A qualified candidate must possess corrected visual acuity of 20/40, with uncorrected acuity in each eye not worse than 20/200.
- H. **HEARING** – A qualified candidate must possess normal hearing without the aid of listening devices.
- I. **DRUG DEPENDENCY** – A qualified candidate must not be currently engaged in the illegal use of drugs and must submit to and pass an examination for drug dependency or illegal drug usage.

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS (CONTINUED)

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- J. **PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE** – A qualified candidate must pass a physical ability test and a medical examination. An offer of employment to any candidate shall be withdrawn if it is determined upon the basis of medical examination that the employment of such candidate poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the candidate or others in the workplace and that the threat may not be eliminated or satisfactorily reduced through reasonable accommodation.
- K. **CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS** – A qualified candidate must:
1. Be certified by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection as a basic firefighter; and
  2. Possess a minimum Basic EMT certification through the Texas Department of State Health Services.
    - i. Although not required to apply, these certifications must be obtained prior to receiving a conditional job offer.
- L. **PSYCHOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS** – A qualified candidate must submit to a psychological examination and receive recommendation for employment by the CFD’s psychologist or psychiatrist.
- M. **WORK HISTORY** – A qualified candidate must:
1. Be able to show through his/her work history that he/she is an honest, competent, and cooperative employee;
  2. Be able to fully account for any periods of unemployment; and
  3. May not have been dismissed for “just cause” from employment by any unit of federal, state, or local government within the 5 year period immediately prior to the entrance examination.
- N. **MILITARY SERVICE** – A qualified candidate must not have received a dishonorable discharge, if a former member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces. A candidate possessing a general or unspecified discharge or other form of discharge less than an honorable discharge may be disqualified from appointment upon the basis of a background investigation which reveals that the discharge was the result of misconduct.
- O. **DISQUALIFIERS** – A qualified candidate must not meet the criteria of any disqualifier detailed in the [LOCAL CIVIL SERVICE RULES](#) of the Fire Fighters’ and Police Officers’ Civil Service Commission, City of Conroe, Texas. Interpretation of these disqualifiers is at the sole discretion of the Conroe Fire Department.
- P. **FALSE STATEMENT** - A candidate who makes any false statement, either oral, written, or by omission, relating to the candidate’s qualifications or other required application information shall be subject to rejection at any time during the application process and shall be permanently barred from reapplication.

## PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST

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The following tasks will be performed as a physical ability test to meet the requirements for employment with the Conroe Fire Department:

- **Task 1:** Don self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) for 5 minutes.
- **Task 2:** Ascend and descend an aerial ladder 100 feet set at a 70-degree angle within 5 minutes.
- **Task 3:** 7 minute time limit:
  1. Run ½ mile;
  2. Don SCBA, excluding face piece. Remaining steps will be performed while wearing SCBA:
  3. Carry a 50 foot section of 2 ½ inch hose for 180 feet;
  4. Drag a 90 pound dummy 100 feet;
  5. Drive a Kaiser Sled 5 feet with a sledgehammer;
  6. Advance a charged 2 ½ inch hose line and nozzle 50 feet;
  7. Using a rope and pulley system, hoist one section of 2 ½ inch hose from ground level up 70 feet. Timer will stop upon completion of this step; and
  8. Lower the hose, which was raised in Step 7, back to ground level. This must be done in a controlled manner and without dropping the hose.

\*Task 1 and 2 may be assigned in any order. Task 3 will be the final component of the overall test.

## STARTING SALARY AND PAY SCALE

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Probationary Firefighter: **\$58,710** plus incentives and built-in overtime.

### FIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMPENSATION RANGES

FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Firefighter</b>	\$58,710	\$60,765	\$62,892	\$65,093	\$67,371	\$69,729	\$72,170	\$74,696
<b>Engine Operator</b>	\$76,936	\$79,629	\$82,416					
<b>Lieutenant</b>	\$90,658	\$93,378	\$96,179					
<b>Battalion Chief</b>	\$101,950	\$105,518	\$109,211					
<b>Deputy Chief</b>	\$115,764	\$119,237	\$122,814					
<b>Assistant Fire Chief</b>	\$128,945	\$139,271	\$150,412					

#### MONTHLY INCENTIVE PAY:

- Associate's Degree: **\$70**
- Bachelor's Degree **\$125**
- Intermediate FF Certificate: **\$105**
- Advanced FF Certificate: **\$150**
- Master FF Certificate: **\$263**
- Administrative Assignment: **\$300**

## BENEFIT SUMMARY

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- A. **MEDICAL** - Administered by Cigna Health Care. Upon meeting the deductible, benefits are paid at 80/20 for in-network services. Plan includes a prescription benefit. Choose between Kelsey Care and HSA.
- B. **DENTAL** - Administered by Cigna Health Care, the plan is PPO. Preventative care is covered at 100%; basic care is covered at 80%; and major care is covered at 50%. There is also coverage for orthodontia.
- C. **VISION** - Provides vision and eye health evaluation including, but not limited to, eye examination, dilation, refraction, and prescription for glasses, contacts in lieu of glasses, etc.
- D. **LIFE** - The City provides a policy of 1 times an employee's base salary. Supplemental insurance (based on age) is available for purchase. Coverage can be purchased on the employee's dependents if the supplemental insurance is purchased.
- E. **LONG-TERM DISABILITY** - The City provides a standard long-term disability policy for all full-time employees. Eligibility is the first of the month following 30 days of employment and has a 60% benefit after a 90 day elimination period.
- F. **PENSION** - Employee contributes 13.25%, City 15%. Vesting at 20 years. 67 ½% benefit after 20 years and 50 years of age. Increase of \$110/month for each year of service beyond 20. 7 year DROP option.
- G. **ROTH IRA** - Allows you to build savings for retirement. Withdrawals are tax-free at retirement. Contributions are not tax-sheltered so withdrawals are available at any time.
- H. **457** - Deferred compensation plan available to supplement retirement income or to reduce taxable income. The employee chooses the investments. Contributions are not available until termination of employment.
- I. **FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT** - Tax-sheltered deduction which provides reimbursement of allowed unreimbursed medical expenses, including deductibles, copays, glasses, etc. Also provides the same tax-sheltered benefit for a dependent care account.
- J. **VOLUNTARY INSURANCE PRODUCTS** - Products include accident, cancer, universal life, medical bridge, and short-term disability, most of which can be purchased under the 125 program as tax-sheltered.
- K. **VACATION LEAVE** -
- 0-2 Years – 12 days
  - After 2 years – 15 days
  - After 10 years – 20 days.
- L. **SICK LEAVE** - Accrued at the rate of 10 hours per month with the first month of employment. Supervisors may require a doctor's excuse for absences longer than 3 days or in the case of excessive absences.
- M. **HOLIDAYS** - Twelve days per year to include: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas, and a floating holiday designated for September 11.

# HIRING PROCESS OVERVIEW

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- A. **INITIAL APPLICATION** - Complete a Letter of Intent to take the written entrance examination and submit it to the Conroe Human Resources Department by the date stated on the job announcement.
- B. **WRITTEN ENTRANCE EXAMINATION** - Candidate will be required to present a valid form of U.S. Government and/or state issued identification and sign a copy of the "Release of Liability" form at exam day registration. Candidates with prior military service will be required to bring the original and one copy of their DD-214.

*The written examination schedule of events will be as follows:*

- Candidate registration;
- Introduction, welcome, and explanation of testing;
- Examination instructions;
- Written examination;
- Scoring of examinations;
- Information and instructions hiring process;
- Assignment of physical ability test date and time; and
- Question and answer.

- C. **PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST** - Candidate must successfully complete the physical ability test, typically conducted within 2 weeks after the written entrance examination.
- D. **COMPLETION OF PHS AND CCH** - Candidates will complete and submit the CFD Personal History Statement (PHS), required documents, and apply for his/her computerized criminal history (CCH) by the date specified.
- E. **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION** – An exhaustive background investigation will be performed by the CFD to verify information provided in the PHS and to determine candidate suitability for employment as a Conroe probationary firefighter.

*The background investigation will consist of the following steps:*

- Preliminary review of PHS and required documents by the Hiring Process Coordinator and initial determination of candidate eligibility for employment;
- Assignment of candidate to a background investigator;
- Candidate interview with assigned background investigator to review information submitted in the PHS;
- Polygraph examination to verify information provided in the PHS;
- Discrepancy interview (\*if made necessary by inconsistencies between PHS and polygraph exam report);
- Background investigator verification of information contained in the PHS. Verification steps include, but are not limited to, contacting former employers, landlords, family members, and references; and
- Background investigator recommendation.

## HIRING PROCESS OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

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- F. **ORAL INTERVIEW** - Candidate will undergo an oral interview conducted by a board made up of members of all levels of the CFD to determine suitability for employment as a Conroe probationary firefighter.
- G. **FIRE CHIEF/ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF INTERVIEW** – (\*if necessary) Candidate will be interviewed by the Fire Chief and/or Assistant Fire Chief to determine suitability for employment as a Conroe probationary firefighter.
- H. **CONDITIONAL JOB OFFER** - Candidate will be made a conditional job offer of employment dependent on passing of the psychological and medical examinations and drug/alcohol screen.
- I. **PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION** - Candidate will submit to a psychological examination to determine suitability for employment as a Conroe probationary firefighter.
- J. **MEDICAL EXAMINATION/DRUG AND ALCOHOL SCREEN** - Candidate will submit to a medical examination to determine suitability for employment as a Conroe probationary firefighter.

*Candidates must successfully complete each step in order to move on to the next step. Certain steps may be taken out of order at the discretion of the CFD. Candidates who successfully complete and pass all phases of the process will be hired based on the current eligibility list. Applicants not meeting employment requirements will receive a formal letter detailing deficiencies.*

***The City of Conroe is an Equal Opportunity Employer***

**[WWW.CITYOFCONROE.ORG](http://WWW.CITYOFCONROE.ORG)**

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