



# Water Rescue

# Vehicle Extrication



## ROCKFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT RECRUITMENT BOOK

*An Equal Opportunity Employer*

## Table of Contents

Letter From Chief Bergsten	3
Tentative Testing Schedule	4
Minimum Qualifications	5
Disqualifying Offenses	6
Paramedic License Requirement	7
Application Deposit	7
Testing Process	7
The Written Examination	7
The Physical Ability Test	7
Scoring of the Physical Ability Test	8
Evolutions of the Physical Ability Test	8
Personality Assessment	10
Background Investigation	10
Oral Interview	10
Establishing The Final List	11
Preference Points	11
Eligibility List	12
Working Conditions and Benefits	13
If You Get Hired	15
Pre-Employment Physical Ability Test	15
Medical Exam	15
Recruit Academy Class	15
Career Advancement	16
Nature of the Firefighting Profession	16
Firehouse Camaraderie	16
Firefighter Duties	16
Summary / Who to Call For Questions	18
Salary Schedule	18



**Public  
Education**

**Hazardous  
Materials**

## Summary

Choosing the fire service as a career can be a very challenging and rewarding experience. This decision, however, should not come lightly. The job of a firefighter/paramedic can be very dangerous and requires putting your life on the line for others. The profession demands a high level of dedication and professionalism from those who choose it as their career. In return, the firefighter/paramedic is offered a life's work of exciting and challenging service to the community, job security, and excellent opportunities for advancement.

If you have any questions after reading the aforementioned material, please contact Cori Hilliard, Rockford Fire Department, 204 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St. at (815) 987-5660 between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.



Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Rockford Fire Department. This booklet will provide you with information about our department. It is our intent that any questions you may have will be answered. However, if you have any further inquiries, please feel free to contact Cori Hilliard at (815) 987-5660 or [cori.hilliard@rockfordil.gov](mailto:cori.hilliard@rockfordil.gov) (Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM).

If you should decide to apply for the Rockford Fire Department Fire Fighter/Paramedic, I wish you the very best throughout the testing process.

Sincerely,

*Derek A. Bergsten*

Derek A. Bergsten, Chief

## January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010 Rockford Fire Department Salary Schedule

MONTHS	ANNUAL	BI-WEEKLY		51 HOUR	40 HOUR
1-6	42,350.53	1,626.90	Step A	15.95	20.36
7-12	49,095.10	1,884.96	Step B	18.48	23.60
13-24	51,994.40	1,995.12	Step C	19.56	24.97
25-30	54,792.39	2,104.26	Step D	20.63	26.34
31-36	56,323.42	2,163.42	Step E	21.21	27.08
37-48	57,848.11	2,221.56	Step F	21.78	27.81
49-84	59,365.20	2,279.70	Step G	22.35	28.54
84+	63,580.86	2,441.88	Step H	23.94	30.57

### Additional Assigned:

<b>Paramedic</b>	3,179.04	122.08		1.1969	1.5284
<b>ALS Provider</b>	2,225.33	85.47		0.8379	1.0699

**Tentative Recruit Eligibility List  
Testing Schedule**  
**All Dates and Times are Subject to Change**

Phase	Dates	Location
Application Period	January 15, 2010 through February 19, 2010	Fire Department 204 S 1 <sup>st</sup> St.
Written Test Workshops	February 27, 2010 through March 10, 2010	Academy West 3329 W. State St.
Written Test	March 12, 2010 March 13, 2010	University of Illinois College of Medicine 1601 Parkview Ave.
Practice for Physical Ability Test	March 20 & 21, 2010 March 27 & 28, 2010 9am - 3pm	Academy West 3329 W. State St.
Physical Ability Test	April 5, 2010 through April 10, 2010	Academy West 3329 W. State St.
Personality Assessment	April 12, 2010 through May 24, 2010	New Hope Counseling Center 4875 Manhattan Dr.
Background Checks	May 25, 2010 through June 4, 2010	Fire Prevention Division 204 S 1 <sup>st</sup> St.
Review of Candidates	June 7, 2010 through June 18, 2010	Board of Police and Fire Commissioners 204 S 1 <sup>st</sup> St.
Oral Interviews	June 21, 2010 through July 16, 2010	Board of Police and Fire Commissioners 204 S 1 <sup>st</sup> St.
Eligibility List Posted	July 16, 2010	Fire Department Headquarters 204 S 1 <sup>st</sup> St.

Firefighters and paramedics must go through regular drills. This ensures that methods and procedures for all operations are standardized, so firefighters and paramedics can transfer to other companies without impairing efficiency. They study for promotional and certification tests, do preplan inspections of buildings, hydrant inspections, and public relations for the department.

- **During an emergency incident, firefighters and paramedics are required to perform a wide variety of tasks, some of which are listed below:**



- A. Locate and rescue victims from burning buildings
- B. Calm distraught victims and relatives at emergency scenes
- C. Extricate the trapped and injured in auto accidents
- D. Administer first aid and emergency medical assistance to victims
- E. Operate extinguishing equipment
- F. Ventilate buildings
- G. Work with tools and hose lines off ladders
- H. Contain hazardous material spills
- I. Extinguish various size fires
- J. Respond to natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes, and electrical hazards

After the incident, firefighters perform salvage and overhaul, remove wet fire hose and replace it with dry, and replenish all supplies used at the scene.

## Advancement:

As a Firefighter/Paramedic moves through his or her career with the department, there is a potential for advancement to positions such as Driver/Engineer and Inspector or ranking positions such as Lieutenant, Captain and District Chief.

## Nature of the Firefighting Profession

You probably have some ideas about what a firefighter/paramedic does. Firefighters are usually raising and climbing ladders, dragging hose lines into burning buildings, rescuing people, operating different types of fire extinguishing equipment. While such acts are extremely important for the firefighter/paramedic to perform, there are many other duties done by them that go unnoticed or unseen by the general public. These duties are carried on before, during and after fires and emergency incidents.

## Firehouse Camaraderie:

One of the most important characteristics that a person wishing to become a firefighter/paramedic should have is the ability to work as a team member. ***Teamwork is essential to the job of Firefighter/Paramedic.*** Working as a team reduces the potential for injuries and loss of life, as well as increases the effectiveness in handling of emergency situations. Since the nature of the job demands that firefighters serve a 24-hour continuous shift, it is important that they are able to get along with their peers. Performing routine duties around the station house such as washing dishes, cooking, scrubbing floors, making beds, and straightening up, gives firefighters the opportunities to interact informally with other members of the department and to build friendly relationships.

## Duties of Firefighters:

Before an emergency incident, firefighters check and maintain their vehicles and equipment because it is important that the apparatus and equipment always function correctly.

## Minimum Qualifications

There are certain minimum qualifications that an applicant must meet in order to become a Rockford firefighter/paramedic. The qualifications set forth are established by the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners' Rules and Regulations, the City of Rockford Ordinances and all applicable state statutes.

### Minimum Age:

No individual may be appointed as a sworn member of the Fire Department until he or she has passed his or her twenty-first (21<sup>st</sup>) birthday. Accordingly, for this application period, applicants **must have attained the age of twenty-one (21) on or before July 16, 2010.** Proof of an applicant's birth date will be required before appointment.

### Maximum Age:

An applicant **must not have attained the age of 35 years before February 19, 2010.**

### Driver's License:

An applicant shall possess a valid driver's license at the time of hiring. At the conclusion of recruit training (approximately 11 weeks), the recruit must possess a valid **Illinois** driver's license with a Class B, Non-CDL Permit. At the conclusion of one-year probation, the recruit must possess a valid Illinois Class B, Non-CDL driver's license.

### Vision:

An applicant upon time of hiring shall have correctable vision to 20/20 in each eye.

### Education:

An applicant shall have a high school diploma or a GED equivalent.

### Arrest Record:

An applicant must not have any felony convictions nor have been convicted of certain misdemeanors. A list of disqualifying convictions can be found on page 6 in this booklet.

### Citizenship:

Applicants for examination must be U.S. Citizens. Non-Citizens must meet the criteria set forth in 8 U.S.C. Section 1324b prior to the closing date of the application period.

### Residency:

Winnebago County, or within fifteen mile radius of the Public Safety Building upon completion of probation..

## Disqualification for Appointment To The Rockford Fire Department

By action of the Rockford Board of Fire and Police Commissioners, and pursuant to the Illinois Board of Fire & Police Commissioners Act (65 ILCS 5/10-2.1-6), the following list of specific offenses **automatically disqualify** anyone from being appointed to the position of a firefighter/paramedic with the City of Rockford. If you have been convicted of any of the offenses listed on this page, you cannot be a firefighter/paramedic in Rockford. For purposes of this requirement, “convicted” includes a plea of “guilty” or being placed on Court Supervision.

### Disqualifying Offenses:

- ANY Felony
- Indecent solicitation of a child (5/11-6)
- Adultery (5/11-7)
- Public Indecency (5/11-9)
- Prostitution (5/11-14)
- Soliciting for a prostitute (5/11-15)
- Keeping a place of prostitution (5/11-17)
- Patronizing a prostitute (5/11-18)
- Pimping (5/11-19)
- Aggravated Assault (5/12-2)
- Intimidation (5/12-6)
- Criminal Sexual Abuse (5/12-15)
- Theft (5/16-1)
- Residential Picketing (5/21.1-3)
- Unlawful Use of Weapons, Subsections (1), (3) and (8) (5/24/1)
- Unlawful Possession of Firearms & Firearm Ammunition (5/24-3.1)
- Defacing Identification Marks of Firearms (5/24-5)
- Mob Action (5/24-5)
- Keeping a Gambling Place (5/28-3)
- Resisting or Obstructing a Peace Officer or Correctional Institution Employee (5/31-1)
- Obstructing Justice (5/31-4)
- Escape/Failure to report... (5/31-6)
- Aiding Escape (5/31-7)
- Compounding a Crime (5/32-1)
- Perjury (5/32-2)
- Subordination of Perjury (32-3)
- Communicating with Jurors and Witnesses (5/32-4)
- Tampering with Public Records (5/32.8)

## What to Expect if You Are Hired

When the Fire Department begins preparation for a new recruit class, they will notify the appropriate candidates that they are next to being hired.

### Pre-Employment Physical Ability Test:

Once department openings have been determined, the candidate will be required to pass the same physical ability test taken earlier in the testing process. **It is recommended that the candidate stay in good physical condition after being placed on the eligibility list. Failure to pass the physical ability test will exclude the candidate from the eligibility list. It is strongly recommended that anyone preparing for this test obtain clearance from a competent medical authority before engaging in any physical activity.**

### Medical Examination:

When the candidate has passed the physical ability test, they will be required to take an extensive medical exam. The City of Rockford and the State of Illinois require this exam. The exam shall include, but is not limited to the following: a drug screening test, HIV test, audio and visual tests. The medical exam is a pass/fail exam.

### The Recruit Academy Class:

Each new recruit firefighter/paramedic will attend a 11-week recruit class. This training will consist of basic fire-fighting fundamentals and related tasks. The day will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m., although these hours can and will fluctuate. It is the responsibility of each recruit to stay highly motivated and focused during this period of intense training. The promotion of **teamwork** is a **must**. Anything else will not be tolerated. Each recruit will be continuously evaluated on job performance, academic skills and attitude. The department’s training staff will perform a final evaluation. With the successful completion of the academy class, the recruit will graduate during the academy graduation ceremony.

### Sick Leave:

All Rockford Fire Department employees are provided with a sick leave policy per Union Contract described below..

### Pension:

An individual who has completed 20 years of service and attained 50 years of age is eligible for retirement at 50% of salary. The pension increases (to a maximum of 75%) with additional years of service. (Both the employee and the City of Rockford contribute to the pension plan).

**Note:** Many of the listed benefits are provided for in a contract between the City of Rockford and the Firefighters' bargaining unit (Firefighters Local #413). As such, they are subject to change when a new contract is negotiated.



### Paramedic License

All new employees shall agree at the time of employment, to attain a paramedic license. This training will occur some time after the probationary period is complete. An employee who is unable to attain this license will be terminated.

### Application Deposit

Applications for the position of Firefighter/Paramedic with the Rockford Fire Department require a **non-refundable** deposit of **\$25.00** in the form of cash, a certified check or money order payable to "Rockford Fire Department" at the time of application. A credit card can be used for on-line applications at [www.rockfordil.gov](http://www.rockfordil.gov) or [www.signmeup.com/68016](http://www.signmeup.com/68016). Applications submitted without an application deposit will not be processed.

### Testing Process

Each applicant is required to successfully pass each step of the examination process.

#### Written Examination:

**NOTE:** The written test is divided into four parts: Emotional Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Practical Skills and Basic Education Skills. **To achieve a passing score, each applicant must receive a minimum of 70% overall on the written test.** The written exam will account for **40%** of each applicant's final overall score.

#### Physical Ability Test:

Each applicant who passes the written examination must challenge the physical ability test. This physical ability test consists of several job-related physical tasks that must be performed within a predetermined amount of time. **This is a pass/fail test.**

The physical ability test is designed to ensure that individuals possess the strength, endurance and ability required for performing fire-fighting tasks. Once the clock starts, it will not stop until the applicant has completed the entire course. The applicant must complete each evolution in sequence before moving on to the next evolution. No running is permitted between evolutions.

There are nine components to the physical ability test. To pass the physical ability test, each candidate must perform **all** of the components within a time of less than **10 minutes 18 seconds (10:18)**.

Information concerning each event is listed below and on the following pages. Applicants unsure of their ability to do such tasks in rapid sequence within a specified time frame are strongly encouraged to begin an intensive training program immediately.

**It is strongly recommended that anyone preparing for this test obtain clearance from a competent medical authority before engaging in any physical activity.**

### Scoring Test:

The physical ability test is a **pass/fail** test. Failure to complete any evolution will constitute failure of the test. Failure to complete the test within the required time limit, **10 minutes 18 seconds (10:18)** will also constitute failure of the test.

### Physical Ability Test Evolutions:

#### (1) Aerial Ladder Climb

The applicant will climb to the top of an aerial ladder, touch the top rung of the ladder and climb back down. The aerial ladder will be extended to 70 ft. The applicant will wear a turnout coat, a self-contained breathing apparatus tank, a safety belt, gloves and kneepads. The applicant will be attached to a safety rope at all times when he/she is on the ladder.

### Hours:

Firefighter/Paramedics with the Rockford Fire Department work a continuous twenty-four (24) hour shift followed by forty-eight (48) hours off duty. The workday begins at 0800 the morning of your shift and ends at 0800 the following morning.

### Probationary Period:

Each employee is required to serve a 12-month probationary period. Each probationary firefighter is required to successfully obtain his or her State Firefighter Level II certification and basic Emergency Medical Technician certification by the end of the 12-month probationary period. Those who are unable to attain both required certifications within the probationary period shall be terminated.

### Salary:

See schedule in back of booklet.

### Uniforms and Turnout Gear:

The Rockford Fire Department purchases all station uniforms and turnout gear (*i.e.*, station shirts, trousers and all necessary fire fighting turnout gear). Each newly hired firefighter/paramedic is subject to the terms of a twelve- (12-) month no-interest loan in the amount of **\$2,500.00**. The Rockford Fire Department will forgive in full the loans of each firefighter/paramedic that completes twelve (12) months of active service with the Rockford Fire Department. Any firefighter/paramedic who voluntarily resigns from the Rockford Fire Department within twelve (12) months of his or her hire date will be required to repay the loan.

### Vacation:

The Fire Department offers a liberal vacation and holiday schedule.

### Health Insurance:

The City of Rockford offers an excellent health and dental plan to all employees.

## Eligibility List:

After all examinations are complete, an eligibility list is established, ranking each applicant in numerical order. All original appointments will be made from this list or from any pre-existing list established in accordance with the State of Illinois Laws. The eligibility list is in effect for 2 years after it has been established.

If the department should retest before this list expires, an individual on a current list has two options open to them:

- 1) First option allows that individual to keep his/her original score. If you choose to keep your original score, you will be positioned on the new list according to your numerical score. Your original expiration date will still apply.
- 2) Second option allows you to participate in the new testing process. If you successfully complete all the tests, you can choose either score, old or new. If the new score is chosen, you will then be placed on a new list for its two-year duration. If you do not successfully pass the new testing process, you can choose your old score and your original expiration date would apply.
- 3) Any individual refusing the position when offered (without due cause) shall be dropped from the Eligibility List.

**All testing is done within the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners of the City of Rockford and all applicable Illinois State Statutes.**



## (2) Forcible Entry and Ventilation

The applicant will straddle the beam of a Keiser Force Machine, using the foot walks provided. Using a 9-lb. dead-blow sledgehammer, the applicant will then strike a beam, driving it the full length of the track which is approximately five (5) feet.

## (3) Maze

While crawling, the applicant will follow a rope through tight spaces, reversing directions twice. The applicant will wear a blacked-out mask, helmet, turnout coat, gloves, and kneepads.

## (4) Smoke Ejector Hang

The applicant will pick up a smoke ejector from a shelf. The applicant will then hang the smoke ejector on a Z-bar. When it hangs freely by both hooks, take it down and return it to its original position.

## (5) Stair Climb with Load

The applicant will pick up and carry a 100-ft. pack of 1-1/2-inch hose up the training tower, ring a bell, and carry the hose pack back down and return it to its original position.

## (6) Hoisting

The applicant will grasp the halyard of a 35-ft. extension ladder. The applicant will fully extend and retract the fly section of the ladder. This is to be done without losing control of the ladder.

**NOTE: Hoisting is done hand over hand.**

## (7) Hose Drag (First Half)

The applicant will drag one 50-ft. section of a 3-inch hose, filled with water a total of 40 feet.

## (8) Ability Course

The applicant will pick up and carry a hose peel (a peel = one 50-ft. section of 3 inch hose folded), through an obstacle course. The applicant will walk through six (6) tires over four (4) hurdles, walk up and down a set of stairs on either side of a 4-ft. 10-inch brick wall and crawl or climb through a window and return the hose peel to its original position.

## (9) Hose Drag (Second Half)

The applicant will drag one 50-ft. section of 3-inch hose, filled with water, a total of 40 feet.

## Personality Assessment:

The Board will identify applicants to be referred for a Personality Assessment based on a pre-interview review of each applicant's written test scores and physical ability test results. The Personality Assessment is advisory to the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners and will be used to determine which applicants will be invited to participate in an oral examination with the Board. The Board reserves the right to remove an applicant from the testing process before an oral interview if the Board concludes that the applicant's character or employment history is unsatisfactory or if the applicant does not otherwise appear to be well qualified to discharge the duties of the position of a firefighter/paramedic with the Rockford Fire Department.

## Background Investigation:

An in-depth background investigation is conducted by the Fire Department. **All applicants selected for a background investigation will be subject to fingerprinting per 65ILCS 5/10-2.1-6.1.** This investigation is advisory to the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners.

## Oral Interview:

The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners conducts oral interviews. The Board will limit the number of candidates who will proceed to the oral interview step of the testing process after conducting a pre-interview review of each applicant's background, application materials, written and physical ability test scores, written personality test and personality assessment. The Board may also limit the number of candidates on the final eligibility list to cover anticipated hiring needs. Passing the written examination and physical ability test **does not** guarantee that the candidate will proceed to an oral interview or guarantee that the candidate will be placed on the eligibility list. The **oral score** accounts for **60%** of each applicant's final score.

## Establishing The Final List

### Preference Points:

Preference points will be applied as allowed by the Illinois Compiled Statutes and the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners to those individuals who qualify. Under the statute, five (5) points must be added to the final scores of:

- Persons who have successfully obtained an associate's degree in the field of law enforcement, criminal justice, fire service, or emergency medical services;
- Persons who have successfully obtained a bachelor's degree in any field from an accredited college or university;
- Persons who have successfully obtained or received a certificate attesting to the successful completion of the Minimum Standards Basic Law Enforcement Training Course as provided in the Illinois Police Training Act and are currently serving as a law enforcement officer on a part-time or full-time basis within the State of Illinois; or;
- Persons who were engaged in the military or naval service of the United States for a period of at least one year and who were honorably discharged there from, or who are now or hereafter be on inactive or reserve duty in such military or naval service (not including, however, in the case of offices, positions and places of employment in the police department, persons who were convicted by court-martial of disobedience of orders, where such disobedience consisted in the refusal to perform military service on the ground of religious or conscientious objections against war).