

# LAKEWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

SOG NUMBER: 500.01	RULE & REGULATION
DATE IMPLEMENTED: OCTOBER 26, 2017 DATE REVISED: JANUARY 1, 2024	TITLE: APPLICATION PROCESS

## **PURPOSE:**

To establish guidelines for ensuring consistency regarding the application process to become a volunteer firefighter or member of the support services unit in the Lakewood Fire Department.

## **SCOPE:**

This SOG shall apply to the recruitment and application of individuals seeking to become volunteer firefighters or members of the support services unit.

## **GENERAL:**

1. To be considered for membership, an applicant must be 18 years of age or older and reside within the Township of Lakewood, or in one of its contiguous municipalities, and reside within ten (10) road miles of a volunteer firehouse. The contiguous municipalities include Brick, Howell, Jackson, and Toms River.
2. The one exception to residing within Lakewood or one of its contiguous municipalities, is an applicant who is an active volunteer firefighter in another fire department in New Jersey, and who resides in another municipality, but works in the Township of Lakewood. Membership may be considered with written permission from the applicant's employer stating the applicant will be able to respond to emergencies during his working hours in the Township. The applicant must also acknowledge he will be able to satisfy all the requirements of being a volunteer firefighter in Lakewood. This includes training, emergency responses, meetings, attendance, etc.
3. All individuals making membership inquiries will be directed to the Fire Department website, [www.lakewoodfd.org](http://www.lakewoodfd.org) and/or referred to Fire Headquarters. Upon receipt of a membership inquiry, Fire Headquarters or Volunteer designee will initiate telephone contact with the prospective applicant as soon as possible, but no later than seven (7) calendar days after receiving the prospective applicant's information. The purpose of this initial contact is to ascertain if the prospective applicant is 18 years of age or older, if they meet the residency requirements, if they are familiar with the requirements for becoming a volunteer firefighter or member of support services, etc.
4. After the initial telephone contact has been made by Fire Headquarters, or Volunteer designee, a Member Contact Form will be filled out and the Volunteer Chief, or his/her designee, will be notified of the contact via email and to schedule an interview with the applicant. Fire Headquarters will then mail to the prospective applicant an LFD Application, and a Letter of Introduction, to provide an overview of the Application Process. Should a determination be made that the applicant is not able to proceed in the application process, the reasons the applicant is not able to proceed shall be included on the Member Contact Form and the file will be closed.

5. The applicant shall return the completed application to Fire Headquarters within thirty (30) days of receipt, or Fire Headquarters will assume the applicant is no longer interested in becoming a volunteer member, and the file will be closed.
6. Every effort shall be made to formally interview the prospective applicant as soon as possible thereafter; however, the interview shall be conducted no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after initial contact from Fire Headquarters. The interview shall be conducted by the Volunteer Chief, his/her designee, or the Company Officer(s) or Unit Leader of the Station to which the prospective applicant may be assigned.
7. Upon the conclusion of the interview, the interviewer(s) will immediately inform the Volunteer Chief, or designee, to continue the formal application process; or, if this is not the case, the interviewer(s) shall clearly inform the Volunteer Chief, or designee, in writing, as to why the prospective applicant should not continue with the application process. The Volunteer Chief, or designee, will inform Fire Headquarters as to the disposition of the prospective applicant and to which station the member will be assigned.
8. Upon receiving a recommendation from the Volunteer Chief, or designee, to continue in the application process, and once the completed application is received by Fire Headquarters, the background investigation will commence. As soon as the satisfactory background reports are received by Fire Headquarters, a medical evaluation will be scheduled. At the time of the medical evaluation, the New Jersey State Firemen's Relief Association Medical form will be completed, unless the applicant is over the age of 57, in which case a signed waiver of ineligibility must be completed. Applicants shall allow sixty (60) days for these parts of the process to be completed.
9. Support Service Members are not eligible for membership in the New Jersey State Firemen's Relief Association and will not be enrolled.
10. Once it is determined the applicant meets the required criteria to become a volunteer firefighter, or support service member, the applicant, as well as the Chief of the Volunteer division, along with the respective Company Officer(s)/Unit Leader to which the applicant is assigned, will be notified.
11. The applicant will then be presented to the Board of Fire Commissioners for their approval.
12. Upon approval from the Board of Fire Commissioners, the New Jersey Firemen's Relief Association application will be submitted, if applicable.
13. The New Member will then make an appointment with the Deputy Fire Administrator, or designee, to fill out all the pertinent personnel documents, receive gear, and to set up all other incidentals.
14. Upon receipt of a Line Number from the New Jersey Firemen's Relief Association, or a signed waiver of ineligibility, the information will be forwarded to the Chief of the Volunteer division and respective Fire Company Officer(s)/Unit Leader, who will then enroll the member in the Fire Academy if applicable.
15. Under no circumstances shall any member participate in fire related training, or emergency responses of the Lakewood Fire Department, and/or Lakewood Fire District No. 1, until a New Jersey Firemen's Relief Association Line Number has been issued or a signed waiver of ineligibility has been received.

LAKEWOOD FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1  
CRITERIA FOR REMOVAL OF ELIGIBILITY

NO APPLICANT SHALL BE CONSIDERED FOR MEMBERSHIP AND SHALL BE REMOVED FROM THE ELIGIBILITY LIST, IF DURING THE MEMBERSHIP PROCESS IT IS DISCOVERED THAT THE APPLICANT:

A. DRIVING RECORD – five (5) year history basis

- 1) Has one (1) or more DWI convictions
- 2) Has one (1) or more DUI convictions
- 3) Has a combination of one (1) or more DWI and DUI convictions
- 4) Has one (1) or more negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle (gross negligence) convictions.
- 5) Has one (1) or more using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony convictions.
- 6) Has one (1) or more Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle conviction.
- 7) Has one (1) or more Operating a motor vehicle without the owner's authority.
- 8) Has one (1) or more Permitting an unlicensed person to drive.
- 9) Has one (1) or more Hit and run driving.
- 10) Has ten (10) or more moving violations
- 11) Has six (6) or more current points
- 12) Has two (2) or more non-payment of insurance surcharges
- 13) Has two (2) or more non-payment of Parking Ticket Adjudication Act
- 14) Has a combination of two (2) or more no-payment of insurance surcharge and/or Parking Ticket Adjudication Act
- 15) Has two (2) or more convictions for driving while suspended or revocation.
- 16) Has failed to appear in court two (2) or more times.
- 17) Has two (2) or more convictions for reckless driving
- 18) Does not possess a valid New Jersey Driver's license.

B. CRIMINAL HISTORY – A candidate, volunteer, or employee may be disqualified from membership if that person's criminal record history background check reveals a record of conviction of an indictable offense or convicted of any crime or offense involving moral turpitude.

### C. OTHER

- 1) Is not a resident of the State of New Jersey or authorized to work in the U.S.
- 2) Refuses to consent to any part of the security and/or background investigation.
- 3) Has had their employment from a Federal, State, County or Municipal Fire Department or any other Emergency Services Organization terminated for disciplinary reasons or who has resigned “not in good standing” from these types of positions.
- 4) Has been found to have falsified any document or intentionally given false information in any part of this employment process.
- 5) Has failed to meet any one of the requirements of the employment screening process.
- 6) Has refused/failed to submit to a urine sample or has submitted urine sample which has been found to be positive for an unauthorized controlled substance.
- 7) Has an unacceptable past employment/volunteer history with an emergency service organization (disciplinary action for performance and/or attendance).