

NORTH OYSTER FIRE RESCUE

Junior Firefighter Program Guidelines



The Junior Firefighter Program was instituted by the North Oyster Fire Rescue as a training program for young men and women, aged 16-18, interested in serving their community and preparing to become active firefighters upon reaching the age of 18. At age 18, the Junior Firefighter is eligible to become a full member of the North Oyster Fire Rescue upon successful completion of the required training prerequisites.

As a Junior Firefighter, members serve in a support role for the senior firefighters at actual emergencies as a supplement to a formal training program. The Junior Firefighters attend weekly training drills with the full Department as well as weekend training and maintenance events. Those selected are expected to act in a mature manner and commit to a demanding, long-term program.

In both training sessions and actual emergency situations, the safety of the Junior Firefighter is of paramount concern to the Department. As such, the activities of the Junior Firefighters are limited in scope and the fire officers closely supervise them. The Junior Firefighters quickly become an integral part of the firefighting team during emergencies, serving in such important capacities as establishing a water supply, supplying equipment for interior firefighters, changing air packs, manning exterior hose lines and assisting with interior overhaul once a fire has been extinguished. It should be understood, however, that despite the training and supervision provided, firefighting is a dangerous activity and serious injury is a possibility. The fire officers, incident command and other fire fighters will make every effort to minimize the Junior Firefighters' exposure to danger. It is also the responsibility of the Junior Firefighter to avoid known hazardous situations.

Due to the inherent dangers of firefighting, strict rules of conduct and tight procedural standards have been established. In an actual emergency, it is essential that all firefighters, including Junior Firefighters, act in a calm and efficient manner. The Junior Firefighters are expected to attend training drills to be prepared for the many challenges presented in an emergency situation. Each member is expected to read and understand these requirements and to adhere to the standards. North Oyster Fire Department officers are available to discuss any questions.

Eligibility

1. Any resident of the North Oyster community, between the ages of 16-18, may make application for membership in the North Oyster Fire Department Junior Firefighter Program.
2. The applicant must be in good academic standing at his / her school at the time of application and during the period of membership as a Junior Firefighter.
3. The applicant must complete an application, including a medical authorization. Included with the application is a parental consent that must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Signature from High School counselor or advisor (if applicable) required. The application must be approved by the North Oyster Fire Chief, and other Recruit Selection Officers

General Rules

1. The general standard of conduct is to act in the manner of a professional. Junior Firefighters represent the NOVFD, and are expected to be courteous and respectful to fellow firefighters and emergency service personnel and all citizens served. The NOVFD will not tolerate vulgar, offensive, discriminatory or threatening language or gestures at any time. Junior Firefighters may not wear any article of clothing that, in the opinion of a fire officer, would be offensive to the public served. Violations will result in disciplinary action, and may include suspension or dismissal.
2. The NOVFD maintains a “zero tolerance” policy with respect to drug and alcohol use and violation of public laws. Any possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, on NOVFD premises or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function, or while in department uniform will result in immediate and permanent suspension from the NOVFD Junior Firefighter Program. Junior Firefighters may not smoke on fire department premises or apparatus, emergency scene, training drill, official function, or while in uniform. Any arrest or conviction for a crime will result in a review of the circumstances by the Fire Chief and Officers, and may result in disciplinary action, including permanent suspension.
3. Junior Firefighters may not use or display emergency identification on their personal vehicle (e.g., red lights and fire department plates).

4. Junior Firefighters may be given building keys or door lock combinations at the Fire Chief's discretion. Junior Firefighters may not bring friends into a fire station or permit them to be aboard fire apparatus unless he / she have been given prior approval from the North Oyster Fire Chief or a North Oyster Fire Department officer.
5. Junior Firefighters may not borrow NOVFD equipment for personal use.
6. Junior Firefighters may not operate NOVFD vehicles. (except with "N" – Reference Driving OG)
7. Power tools, hydraulic and pressurized air operated equipment, and cutting devices such as chain saws/roof saws, are to be operated only under the direct supervision of a fire officer or his / her designee. A Junior Firefighter may not operate any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment or cutting device at an emergency scene-unless under the close supervision of a senior member or fire officer. Full protective gear, including gloves and eye covering, must be worn by the Junior Firefighter when operating any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment, or cutting device.
8. Junior Firefighters may climb NOVFD ground ladders for training purposes only. Any ladder use must be under the direct supervision of a NOVFD fire officer or his / her designee. Ladders or aerial equipment of another fire department may not be used by the Junior Firefighter without the consent of a fire officer from the other department and a NOVFD fire officer.
9. If applicable, Junior Firefighters are not to participate in any NOVFD activity, including emergencies, during school hours. Junior Firefighters are not to leave school, or a school sponsored activity, for an emergency response.

If applicable, Junior Firefighters must maintain grades at school and if they drop they will be put on a temporary leave or suspension until it is shown (via transcripts) that their grades have improved.

If applicable, or if previously agreed upon with the applicant's parent or guardian, Junior Firefighters are not to respond to any alarm dispatched after 9:30 PM on a school night.
10. Junior Firefighters must attend a minimum of 60% of training drills or meetings conducted each year. Junior Firefighters are not required to respond to emergency calls.
11. Junior Firefighters are responsible for the care of all NOVFD gear issued to them, and are financially responsible for loss or damage from other than official use as a Junior Firefighter.

12. Junior Firefighters are to report directly to the station at all times. Junior Firefighters are not to drive personal vehicles to any scene unless directed by a NOVFD Officer.
13. Report any injury to a NOVFD fire officer or health and safety officer.
14. Firefighters may not accept monetary payment or gifts for services rendered as a firefighter. Any citizen offering payment of any kind should be advised that payment for firefighting services is not expected. Never accept contributions at an emergency scene. Those individuals seeking to make a contribution should be advised to consider a voluntary contribution to NOVFD

Emergency Response

1. Junior Firefighters may respond to emergency alarms, except as outlined in (2) below. Junior Firefighters may respond on NOVFD apparatus if seats are available (Junior Firefighters will relinquish seats to senior firefighters as needed). Junior Firefighters are under the command of fire officers from the time of their arrival at the hall or emergency scene until released from duty by a NOVFD fire officer. If no officer is aboard the apparatus, the Junior Firefighter will be under the command of the driver until reassigned to a NOVFD fire officer. Junior firefighters are not to leave an emergency scene without the knowledge and consent of a NOVFD fire officer (each firefighter is to speak with a fire officer directly, not via a third party).
2. Junior Firefighters may not respond to an emergency alarm relating to a hazardous material incident, biological or nuclear hazard, explosive device, terrorist incident, police jurisdiction/crime scene assistance, known murder/suicide or mass casualty. Junior Firefighters are not to respond to a mutual aid alarm outside of North Oyster Fire Department Jurisdiction unless directed by a NOVFD Officer.
3. Prior to responding to alarms, the Junior Firefighter must be trained, and demonstrate proficiency in the use of S.C.B.A. equipment. Junior Firefighter use of S.C.B.A. equipment at an emergency scene is reserved for defensive, escape purposes only. A Junior Firefighter is to remain well clear of an area of operation requiring use of supplemental breathing air.
4. Junior Firefighters are not to acknowledge a call-out with Nanaimo Firecomm. Junior Firefighters may operate the base station as radio dispatcher (if properly trained) and he/she may be tasked to assist base radio operations.

5. Under no circumstances is a Junior Firefighter to enter a burning structure, confined space or underground area, or area subject to a collapse hazard. Once a fire has been brought under control, and the building determined to be structurally safe, the Junior Firefighter may enter the building if accompanied at all times by a NOVFD fire officer or his / her designee. This must be with the consent of the Fire Chief or Officer. Junior Firefighters may operate exterior hose lines under the direction of a fire officer or his/her designee. Junior Firefighters must remain well clear of a motor vehicle fire or other type fire presenting exposure to flammable liquids or hazardous materials. At an emergency scene, a Junior Firefighter may not climb a ladder or operate from a roof or other elevated position. At an emergency scene, a Junior Firefighter may not operate any power tool, hydraulic or pressurized air operated equipment, or cutting device unless under the close supervision of a senior member or fire officer.
6. Upon arrival at an emergency scene, a Junior Firefighter is not to enter a private dwelling or other structure with senior firefighters for investigation or emergency action of any type, unless expressly instructed to do so by the Fire Chief or an Officer. Junior Firefighters are to remain with the apparatus or in close proximity to the incident commander, and await specific orders from a NOVFD fire officer. If the Junior Firefighter receives orders from an officer (or request from a firefighter) of another fire department, it is incumbent upon the Junior Firefighter to advise that officer or firefighter of his / her status as a Junior Firefighter and the limitations placed upon him / her. If ordered to enter a structure by a NOVFD fire officer for any type of emergency action, the Junior Firefighter must be accompanied at all times by a fire officer or his / her designee.
7. All orders received from a fire officer are to be obeyed and executed completely. If, due to safety concerns or for any other reason, the Junior Firefighter is unable to complete an assigned task, the officer issuing the order, or another officer in his / her absence, should be immediately notified by the Junior Firefighter who received the order.
8. At an emergency alarm involving downed power lines or gas leak, the Junior Firefighter must remain aboard the apparatus until the area of operation for the Junior Firefighter is determined to be safe by a fire officer.
9. If assisting with directing traffic, the Junior Firefighter must be properly qualified and wear appropriate P.P.E. The Junior Firefighter must operate only in an area within sight of fire apparatus and / or a police vehicle displaying flashing warning lights. The Junior Firefighter is not to direct traffic in snow or ice conditions that may impair motor vehicle control. When assisting with traffic control or crowd control, the instructions of a police officer are to take precedence.

10. Firefighters are not to make any public comments or make statements to the media at the time of an emergency incident, or following the incident, concerning conditions relating to the emergency scene. Examples of comments to avoid are the cause and origin of a fire, condition of fire victims, condition of a home interior or fire fighting technique. All public inquiries are to be referred to the Fire Chief or Officer. It should be understood by the Junior Firefighter that fire inspectors or arson investigators and other governmental officials are required to inspect certain types of damage - their presence may in no way indicate suspicion of wrongdoing on the part of the property owner. Firefighters must also understand that individuals whose property has been damaged or destroyed and / or family members injured or killed are extremely sensitive to the statements and actions of emergency personnel. NOVFD firefighters are expected to demonstrate the utmost of respect and compassion for these individuals in both their words and actions.
11. Valuables found at an emergency scene are to be immediately turned over to a fire officer or police officer. Theft by a Junior Firefighter will result in an immediate dismissal from the Junior Firefighter Program and the R.C.M.P. will be notified.
12. Junior Firefighters are not to have any direct contact with an injured person or the deceased. Report any accidental contact with blood or other bodily fluid to a fire officer or safety officer immediately, so that medical treatment can be initiated promptly.