A Prospect’s Guide to Joining the Bonner Springs Fire Department

This document has been created to familiarize prospective members with the opportunities and benefits offered by joining the membership of the Bonner Springs Fire Department. This guide will briefly explain the minimum qualifications needed to become a member and serves to explain the interview and acceptance process. We welcome your feedback.

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Dear Citizen:

As Chief of the Bonner Springs Fire Department, I am committed to providing the most effective and efficient fire, rescue and emergency medical service delivery system to our community.

You will find that participation as a volunteer member of our organization will bring personal rewards and satisfaction, raise self-esteem, and provide you with a tremendous sense of accomplishment and pride for a job well done. It will also provide your community with a valuable service that has the potential to touch us all.

However, service as a member of our fire department requires a serious commitment. Your decision to join our organization should not be made hastily. This guide has been developed to provide the information you need to make an effective decision that is right for you and us.

Once you understand what’s involved in being a Bonner Springs Fire Department member, we hope that you are able to make the commitment we need. The service provided by our volunteers is truly valuable to the citizens, businesses and visitors of our community. We hope that you are able to contribute to our community’s public safety.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me, one of the officers, or the administrative assistant should you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

Dennis W. “Denny” Hubbel

Fire Chief
Why volunteer?

- Have you ever heard a siren or seen a fire engine – and wondered what was happening?
- Have you ever witnessed or come upon a motor vehicle accident – and wished you could help?
- Have you been there when someone was stricken with sudden illness – and wanted to assist?
- Are you looking for new friendships, challenges and rewards?
- Do you want to become involved in your community?

“Firefighting is not for everyone—but Volunteering can be.”

The fire and rescue service is one of the most diverse and challenging vocations today. It is this diversity that attracts most men and women to join our ranks.

Different people volunteer for different reasons. Action oriented people enjoy the excitement and adrenaline rush that emergency services has to offer. Some see the volunteer fire service as an alternative to ‘driving a desk by day’ – by allowing them to ‘drive a fire truck at night!’

Many like the feeling they get when they help people in their time of need and some feel it’s their obligation to serve the community. Yet others just want to belong to the team. Whatever motivates you to volunteer – everyone gains the self-satisfaction of being at their best when others are dealing with what is often the worst that life has to offer.

Imagine having to prepare yourself to cope with situations that range from structure fires to childbirth to hazardous chemical spills to heart attacks to almost any imaginable emergency in between. This diversity is coupled with the fact these skills may be needed at any time of the day or night, seven days a week, in any kind of weather, and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances. Yet these same factors contribute to our profession being so personally rewarding.

We realize that firefighting is not for everyone, but we believe that volunteering can be. There is plenty of work to be done on or behind the scene.

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from what we do is often beyond description. There is the sense of accomplishment when you control a building fire, joy and elation when a child is born, compassion for accident victims, and fulfillment from teaching fire safety.

The bottom line in our business is measured by the loss of life, pain and suffering, and the property damage we have prevented and reduced. Volunteering in emergency services is one of the most important decisions you may make. We hope you give this decision the time and serious consideration it deserves, and decide to join our ranks.
About us

It’s about people. Fire engines don’t put out fires – people do. Defibrillators don’t save lives – people do. The Jaws-of-Life never rescued anyone on its own – it takes people. Our human resources are our greatest assets. And we want you to be a part of our team.

The Bonner Springs team of volunteers is comprised of your neighbors, your friends and maybe even your relatives. They're people just like you – with families, jobs and active lifestyles who still find time to give back to their community. The Bonner Springs Fire Department offers a friendly environment for you to discover your capabilities and make the most of your volunteering investment.

Established in 1903, the Bonner Springs Fire Department is the premier provider of emergency services in Western Wyandotte County– protecting residents and businesses in the community.

We provide comprehensive fire fighting, extrication, specialized rescue, water/ice rescue, fire prevention education and basic life support emergency medical services to the Bonner Springs community from one station.

Our headquarters is located on Metropolitan near the K-7 highway & Nettleton Avenue intersection. The Bonner Springs EMS Department moved from its earlier City Hall location and began sharing space at the fire station in 2010.

As a 100% volunteer organization, we take emergency services very seriously. While individuals volunteer to serve their community, our volunteers must realize that the fire department provides a service to the City of Bonner Springs and surrounding communities - a service paid for by the taxpayers of our community. Despite being non-salary professionals, we are still bound to provide service just like our paid counterparts in other communities - and thus we must be committed to providing our services 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

The department currently maintains a fleet of two pumper/engines, one aerial apparatus, one rescue truck, two brush trucks, one light support vehicle, two chief staff vehicles, a public education trailer, a command vehicle, an event vehicle, and a Zodiac water rescue boat.

Supported by an active auxiliary Scramblers organization, the Bonner Springs Fire Department’s membership is comprised of approximately 40 active members.

The Bonner Springs Fire Department seeks quality like minded volunteers to bolster its ranks in a diverse range of services. We offer a long list of benefits including state-of-the-art training, an opportunity to gain experience, and a friendly, fun, professional atmosphere.

“Bonner Springs Fire Department...an organization professionally operated by volunteers!”
How we’re organized

Like many corporations, we have a very defined system of organization. The Chiefs and line officers bear the responsibility of operational and administrative duties.

The department is led by the fire chief. He oversees what is called the ‘chain of command.’ This chain of command is very important in that it provides clear direction, lines of communications, and accountability for everyone involved in the chain. On an incident scene, the chain of command provides for identifying areas of responsibility and accountability for the personal safety of every individual working within the incident command system.

Under this system, each level only reports to one supervisor. Firefighters report to an Officer. The Officers report to the Assistant Chief, who is responsible to the Fire Chief.

Teamwork is the foundation of our success – during an emergency and back at the station. Before you can become a good leader, you need to learn to be a good follower. Knowing and understanding how you fit into the chain of command will be one of the most important lessons you can learn. Know your position and play it well. You will receive a copy of our current organizational chart – or chain of command – during your new recruit orientation.
How we respond

Unlike a career fire department, we have no scheduled duty shifts. To accommodate your busy and varying lifestyle, volunteers are on-call at all times – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Volunteers respond only when they are available in the area of our protection district. Upon being dispatched, volunteers respond to the fire station, don their protective clothing, staff the appropriate apparatus, and respond to the scene. Only chief officers respond directly to the scene.

The Bonner Springs Fire Department is dispatched through the Wyandotte County Unified Government dispatch center. Utilizing an enhanced 911 system (E-911), dispatchers alert the volunteers via Motorola pagers with voice and tone capability.

The department covers a 17 square miles. Encompassed within our response area are approximately 15 miles of federal and state highways, two public event venues, and 7 miles of railroad track.

The Bonner Springs Fire Department responds to many entanglements involving automobiles, motorcycles, and often tractor-trailers. We respond to hazardous materials spills, leaks and releases under a ‘first responder’ level of operations. This means that we investigate the hazard within the limitations of our training and capabilities and call upon the resources of a qualified Haz-Mat Response Team as needed. The members of the Bonner Springs Fire Department have been called and have answered the call to respond to a varying degree of requests for service at all hours of the day or night. From changing a battery in a smoke detector to intensive auto extrication to building fires to water rescues to removing a puppy from the ductwork in a home.

The members of the Bonner Springs Fire Department have many tools at their disposal to facilitate their mission; among those are: Jaws of Life, Thermal Imaging Camera, positive pressure ventilation fan, et al.

DEMOGRAPHICS:
Population: 7,500
Area: 17 sq. mi.
Serving: Primarily residential, light commercial and industrial properties

RESPONSE VOLUME:
Fire/Rescue: 350-400 per year

Fire Calls - 2011

- Fire 15%
- Rescue & EMS 43%
- Service Call 7%
- False Alarm 5%
- Incident Control 11%
- Good Intent 17%
- Water Leak 17%
-مؤتمر 0%
Our mission

To provide the highest level of fire protection, fire prevention, rescue and emergency medical services to the residents, businesses, and visitors of the City of Bonner Springs.

Our vision

⇒ To provide the most outstanding level of emergency care and fire protection possible.
⇒ To be a community oriented service provider while maintaining focus on our core objectives.
⇒ To treat our customers with the consideration and compassion they deserve in their time of need.
⇒ To be good neighbors to the Wyandotte County community.
⇒ To partner with private businesses, local government and public organizations to develop and implement innovative life safety risk reduction programs.
⇒ To encourage, educate, develop and promote our youth as our community’s most valuable resource and asset.
⇒ To treat our fellow members with respect, admiration and compassion for the challenges they face in volunteering.
⇒ To appreciate our members for their dedication, recognize them for their contributions, and reward them for their achievements.
⇒ To conduct ourselves in a professional manner deserving of the pride and praise of our community.
⇒ To be fair and honest in our dealings with town government and outside agencies.
⇒ To be recognized as leaders in our industry and our community.
⇒ To continually monitor our operations, administration and service delivery, recognize our limitations … and swiftly implement effective change when necessary.

Our 24/7 pledge

As an Organization and as Individual Members of the Bonner Springs Fire Department we pledge to:
⇒ Do the things we say we will…
⇒ Try our best to do them well…
⇒ Care about the people we serve, their property and each other…24 hours each day – every day.
Opportunities

We offer the opportunity for you to volunteer in the area that you feel most comfortable, where you feel you can contribute the most, and where you'll benefit the most from your volunteering experience.

If getting hot, dirty and physical is your game - this is for you. We offer virtually unlimited opportunities to explore the exciting world of firefighting and the training to do it safely. Whether you only assist on the outside - or run into the fire as others are running out - there's plenty for everyone to do on the fireground.

You'll assist in traffic control, crowd management, and general assistance at emergency scenes and non-emergency events. If you like ropes, knots, and getting technical - This is for you.

Scramblers - The Scramblers provide support to our busy fire department. Scramblers bearing food, water, a hot cup of coffee, or a cold wet towel are a very welcomed site on the fireground! The support members also play an important role in public education events such as the annual Open House, Relay for Life, and other department/family functions.

Anyone who does not have the desire to participate directly in emergency services, or those who cannot meet the physical demands for active membership, are encouraged to serve our department in this capacity. Scramblers do not participate in any emergency responses nor are they required to attend the required training under our operations division. This is a great opportunity for those who want to actively contribute but cannot meet the extreme physical challenge that structural firefighting entails. There's plenty to do behind the scenes.
Join today and enjoy these benefits

**Quality Training** - You provide the commitment and we provide all of the training for FREE. From in house training, KU certified courses, to regional and national seminars and conferences - we offer you the opportunity to explore every avenue of emergency services and train you to be the best at what you do.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** - We protect our firefighters with the latest technology in fire resistive coat, pants, boots, gloves, Nomex hood and traditional style fire helmets complete with a leather front proudly identifying the department name, your rank, and department identification number.

**Duty Uniforms** - Look professional and show your Bonner Springs Fire Department pride in your French blue station uniform personalized with your name. Uniforms are provided after a minimum length of service. Other apparel is issued periodically or offered under a reduced or shared cost program.

**Fire Station** - The original part of the fire station was built in 1976. It stands as a hallmark to the dedication of our volunteers and as the centerpiece of our community. In October 2010, the new addition to the building was dedicated to the department members and the community. It was at this time the Bonner Springs EMS Department moved from its City Hall location to the newly remodeled building.

**Social Events** - Members and their families enjoy attending several annual events. Each December the Fire Department hosts a Christmas celebration to recognize the past year’s accomplishments of the department and our volunteers, and provide the little ones an opportunity to sit on Santa’s lap. Throughout the year we offer a variety of opportunities for you and your family to get to know the other members of your department in a relaxing atmosphere. From S’Mores Night to the Tiblow Days parade, Open House, and more - we not only work hard - we play hard too! The Fire Department is an extension of your family!

**Peace of Mind** - We recognize that firefighting and providing emergency services is an inherently dangerous business. That’s why we take extra measures to protect our volunteers. A comprehensive Firefighter’s Relief Association from the Kansas State Firefighters Relief Association provides an extensive supplemental insurance paid for by the Relief Association to provide some measure of financial security to you and your family should you be injured or fatally wounded in the line of duty. There are even programs and services in place to ensure that your claim is handled properly and that you receive the benefits you deserve.

We care about your health, safety and well being. That’s why we insist (and pay for) you to have a medical physical examination completed prior to beginning your service. The department as well as the City have programs in place and available to provide critical incident stress debriefings and counseling to help our volunteers deal with the emotional impact of the tragedies we’re unfortunately exposed to in our line of work. This service is provided free of charge.
Expectations

Although no previous experience or training is required, you need more than just a desire to help people. You also need courage and dedication, assertiveness, and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. Our service is one that calls on its members to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments. Our volunteers need to be team players, respecting each other's role and contributions. You need to be able to work on-call and to deal with occasional interruptions to your lifestyle, dropping what you’re doing at the 'sound of the bell' to respond to the emergency needs of your fellow citizen.

An apprentice can expect to spend between 10-15 hours each week on fire department business. This entails meetings, training, emergency responses and other miscellaneous activities. Some weeks will be more and other weeks much less. The days of the week or times may vary depending on the level of activity. However, most regularly scheduled events occur on Tuesday & Thursday evenings.

We’ve listed a lot of the benefits you can expect from us, and in return there are certain objectives we expect you to meet:

TO APPLY:
⇒ You must be at least 18 years of age.
⇒ You must possess a high school diploma or GED.
⇒ You must be a citizen of the United States.
⇒ You must be physically, intellectually and emotionally capable of performing the duties to which you are assigned.
⇒ You must live and or work within a 15 minute travel radius of the fire station (abiding by all traffic laws).
⇒ You must have no record of felony convictions.

UPON ACCEPTANCE:
⇒ New members must complete a one year apprenticeship program.
⇒ New members must successfully pass a physical examination conducted by our medical facility and paid for by the City.
⇒ New members will be considered on probation for a period of one year. Their apprenticeship activities will be reviewed throughout the one year period and the apprentice member will be recommended for continued service or termination at that time.
⇒ Promotion from Apprentice Firefighter to Firefighter status requires that the aforementioned requirements be fulfilled along with the probationary requirements of their membership classification.
⇒ All members must attend 30% of the calls per year and 50% of all regular monthly training and maintenance meetings (23 per year). Meetings are held on the second and fourth Thursdays every month. Apprentice training is held every Tuesday evening.
⇒ All personnel are responsible for attending various public educations events, ie. Tiblow Days, Open House, Relay for Life as well as various other public education and department events.
⇒ Failure to complete the minimum requirements can result in termination of membership.
The Process

⇒ Each prospective member must complete and submit a standard fire department application.
⇒ The application for membership will be reviewed in October.
⇒ The applicant will be contacted and invited to attend an Orientation meeting and a Physical Abilities testing process.
⇒ The applicant will be invited to attend the first regular training meeting occurring in December. At that time the applicant will be issued a pager, key, be allowed to respond on apparatus, and begin training.

Ask Yourself...

⇒ What attracted you to our agency?
⇒ What work experience do you have?
⇒ What skills, experience or knowledge do you feel you have to contribute?
⇒ What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
⇒ Do you have previous volunteer experience?
⇒ What would you like to get from volunteering here?
⇒ What do you like to do in your spare time?
⇒ Do you like to work on your own, with a group or with a partner? Why?

Contact Us

To obtain an application or to ask any questions regarding this guide or the application process, contact the fire station by calling: 913-422-5674. An application may also be obtained by visiting the City’s website. www.bonnersprings.org

The City of Bonner Springs Fire Department does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, creed, sexual orientation, religion, or marital status. If an applicant is approved for membership, such approval is conditional upon final receipt of references and background information consistent with the standards of the City of Bonner Springs.