



Chabot College Fire Technology

WHAT IS THE JOB?

Firefighters protect communities against the loss of life, injury, and destruction of property by fire. Firefighters work as a team with each person assigned to a special job. They respond to various emergency and non-emergency calls such as fire alarms, different types of fires, public service requests, vehicle accidents, hazardous material situations, and medical aid calls. Some of the duties include locating the source of a fire, connecting hose lines and nozzles, rendering emergency medical care, operating power tools and hand tools, and placing ladders onto buildings to assist with rescue or fire operations. In order to ensure their equipment works properly, firefighters are also responsible for apparatus, fire station, and equipment maintenance.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Firefighters work indoors and outdoors. They perform work in physically and mentally challenging situations and for prolonged periods of time under dangerous conditions. They are required to eat, sleep, and work at a fire station while on duty, sometimes for a few days at a time. Hours vary but often include being on duty for 24 hours and then being off duty for 24 or 48 hours. Typical municipal firefighters average 56 hours per week, while Federal or State firefighters work 72 hours per week. Firefighters may also be exposed to toxic smoke, gases and fumes, flames, hazardous chemicals, heat, stress, and high levels of noise.

EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

Employment prospects as a firefighter in the State of California can vary, since

most firefighters tend to stay on the job anywhere from 20 to 40 years. While turnover is not high in most departments, residential and commercial growth can influence the hiring of additional firefighters to staff needed fire stations. Prospects are fairly good for applicants who meet the high health and physical qualifications. Those with a college education may have a better chance. Advancement can be made to Engineer, Captain, Battalion Chief, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief and Fire Chief.

EARNINGS POTENTIAL

Earnings can vary depending on the type and size of employer, geographic location, and union contract. Larger cities usually pay more than midsize and smaller cities, while usually offering more chances for promotional opportunities and specialty assignments such as fire inspector or fire investigator. Federal and State firefighting personnel earn less pay than municipal or county firefighters. In the Bay Area, entry-level wages range anywhere from \$2000 to \$6000 per month, and firefighters with several years experience can earn between \$4000 to \$8000 per month with educational incentives or specialty assignment differentials. In addition to pay, firefighters usually receive excellent benefit packages including a paid retirement plan.

NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS

Firefighters need to have excellent health, physical agility, strength, stamina, manual dexterity, and eye-hand-foot coordination. They need the ability to climb, stoop, and reach; have normal color discrimination; and the ability to lift at least 50 pounds. Firefighters need mechanical abilities to

operate equipment. They also need the ability to perform well under stress and have a willingness to risk death or injury. They need to demonstrate emotional stability and self-confidence as well as the ability to work with different types of people under situations of extreme duress. Firefighters also need to have excellent communication skills. High school or college level coursework in math, English, health, geography, chemistry, physical education, computers, and mechanical trades would be helpful.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Students studying Fire Technology at Chabot College can pursue careers as firefighters, while also preparing themselves for future promotional opportunities. The types of employers include city, county, state and federal fire service organizations as well as those maintained by the military and private industry, including insurance companies and investigation agencies.

UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION

For students interested in a notification program to keep up-to-date with volunteer and career employment opportunities, training and education courses, and various newsworthy items related to fire and EMS issues occurring nationwide, they can sign up for the Chabot College Fire Technology & EMS e-mail mailing list. This free mailing list is available to anyone, whether enrolled in Chabot College courses or not. Mailing list recipient names and email addresses are kept confidential. If interested in joining the email list, contact Steve at sprziborowski@chabotcollege.edu.

Firefighter Certification Process

DEGREES AVAILABLE

Fire Technology:

- Associate of Arts or Science (AA/AS)
- Certificate of Achievement

NOTE: The only difference between the Associates Degree and the Certificate of Achievement is that the Associates Degree requires General Education units and the Certificate of Achievement does not. Both require the same number of Fire Technology units.

FIREFIGHTER 1 ACADEMY

The Chabot College Firefighter 1 Academy is accredited by the Office of the State Fire Marshal / State Fire Training, and is offered once in the Spring Semester and once in the Fall Semester.

The Academy consists of four courses, Fire Technology (FT) 89, 90A, 90B, and 90C, and meets Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and all day Saturday. FT 89 is a one-week Introduction to the Fire Academy course that must be completed successfully before enrollment in FT 90A/B/C. A student successfully completing the Academy (and FT 91A, 91B, and 91C) receives a Firefighter 1 Academy completion certificate.

Prerequisites to enter the Firefighter 1 Academy include Fire Technology 50, 51, 52, and Health 81 (all completed with a grade of "C" or higher). A current EMT certificate (course completed outside of Chabot or Las Positas) will be accepted in lieu of Health 81. Students should attend Fire Technology Conditioning through the Physical Education Department (PHED 2FIC & 2FSC) to prepare for the physical requirements of the Fire Academy.

FIREFIGHTER 1 STATE CERTIFICATION

To receive a State Firefighter 1 Certificate, a student must then complete either 6 months of service as a full-time firefighter or 12 months of service as a volunteer firefighter. Volunteer experience is

FIREFIGHTER 1 CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Fire Technology program is based on the Uniform Fire Technology curriculum as approved by the State Board of Fire Services and the California Fire Chiefs Association.

Successful completion of the program qualifies the pre-service student for State Firefighter 1 Certification (pending experience requirements).

FIRST SEMESTER

- Fire Technology 50
- Fire Technology 51
- Fire Technology 52
- Health 61
- PHED 2FSC

SECOND SEMESTER

- PHED 2FIC
- Health 81
- Health 83
- Fire Technology 89

THIRD SEMESTER

- Fire Technology 90A
- Fire Technology 90B
- Fire Technology 90C
- Fire Technology 91A
- Fire Technology 91B
- Fire Technology 91C

available for student firefighters through the Chabot College Work Experience program. After completing the Academy, a student can enroll in Fire Technology 95 and 96 (Work Experience and Work Experience Seminar) and participate as a Work Experience Student Firefighter in various local fire departments, gaining valuable experience and time that may be considered to be volunteer in order to complete the State Firefighter 1 Certification process. Chabot College does not sign-off students for their State Firefighter 1 Certification. Only the Fire Chief of a California Fire Department can sign the State Firefighter 1 Certification Application for a student.

HOW TO GET STARTED

1. Apply for admission at the college.
2. Decide whether you want to pursue a Certificate of Achievement or an Associates Degree.
3. Begin taking the courses in the recommended order.
4. Talk with a Counselor and/or the Fire Technology Coordinator to discuss your options and if you have any questions. Counseling appointments can be made by calling the Counseling Department at 510-723-6718.

APPROXIMATE COSTS

Students must pay enrollment fees each semester and buy books, supplies, uniforms, and other necessary items. Enrollment fees for California residents are \$20.00 per unit. Uniform costs are approximately \$300. Financial aid is available to qualified students. Consult the Financial Aid Office, 510-723-6746, Building 100, Room 110.

For further information, please visit the Fire Technology web site at www.chabotfire.com You can also contact Bob Buell, Fire Technology Coordinator at Chabot College, in room 1556, at 510-723-6851 or via e-mail at bbuell@chabotcollege.edu.