

**HICKORY FLAT VOLUNTEER
FIRE DEPARTMENT**



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
PACKET**

All applicants will complete the entire application form and return it to Station 3. Signatures requiring notarizing can be done before returning it or Chief Berry can notarize it later if you sign it in his presence.

The applicant will not be allowed to actively participate in training, emergency responses, or work details until the application is approved. The applicant is encouraged, however, to visit during training and work details to familiarize himself or herself with the department before and after submitting the application. This will also allow us to get to know you.

After the application is received, the applicant will be interviewed by the Chief and an officer or trustee. The persons conducting the interview will stress the importance of participation, training, safety, organizational structure, and the need for being an effective fire department. They will also answer any questions that the applicant might have. They will determine if the applicant has any health problems that might interfere with his or her performance as a member of the department.

The interviewing personnel will recommend to the Board of Trustees as expeditiously as possible that the applicant be conditionally accepted or rejected.

If the applicant is accepted by the Board, he will then start a six month probationary period, after which, the board will review his performance and attendance. The applicant will at that time become a full member, be reclassified to another position, or terminated.

As specified in the Department's By-Laws, regular membership is open to any person eighteen years old or older, lives in the HFVFD district and who is willing to volunteer their services and meet the minimum training requirements.

EXCEPTION: Junior members must be at least 16 years old.

. Prospective members can obtain an application from any member or download it from the website. It should be completed and submitted to the fire chief. Thereafter the applicant begins an orientation period of indefinite duration where he is encouraged to learn about the department and take part in its activities as much as possible. He should attend weekly meetings, drills, and other activities; as well as spend time with other members who will orient him to the department's organization, equipment, procedures, and rules.

Applicants may not operate department vehicles although they may ride along with the permission of the member driving. They may not use emergency warning devices on their personal vehicles. They are allowed none of the privileges of drivers of emergency vehicles. If they appear on the scene of an alarm, they are to stay outside the secured area where the general public is excluded (fireground) unless escorted by a department member. They are to refrain from speaking for the department or representing themselves as members of or spokesman for the department.

Applicants are welcomed and encouraged to take part in department training, however some drills are dangerous (such as live fire training) so the instructor/commander may limit their participation to a support or observer role.

. During the orientation period, the applicant will be interviewed by the Chief or Trustees. He will be briefed on the department's mission, organization, and rules. The member conducting the interview might ask questions on the applicant's background, his reasons for wanting to join the department, and his willingness to do work.

During the orientation period the department may investigate the applicants reputation, honesty, and standing in the community. This will be accomplished by means of checking references, driving history, and criminal records.

. Following completion of the orientation period, interview, and background investigation, the Board of Trustees will meet and review the candidate's application. By majority vote of the board, the applicant will be admitted to membership.

. Following admission, each new member will begin a six month probationary period. Probation is not the same as orientation but is in addition to it. During the probation period, the new member is subject to dismissal without cause by vote of the Board of Trustees.

Upon admission, the member becomes part owner of the department. Because of that, he carries certain privileges and responsibilities. The new member will complete a basic firefighter course within 12 months after being accepted as a member. Each member must be constantly aware that the Fire Department is nothing more than the sum of the work of the individual members. Every member is obliged to carry his share of the workload, what work one fails to do must be taken over by somebody else. This includes not only the work to be done at fires, but maintaining equipment, house-cleaning, and fund raising as well. As a private corporation, the success or failure of the department depends on the effort that the individual members are willing to put forth. The department depends on its members and the community depends on the department. We agreed to provide fire protection and rescue services to the citizens of Cherokee County. If we fail to do so, we are perpetrating a fraud on the public.

- a. Members must not respond to alarms, attend any department function, or represent the department in any way while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any other mood-altering substance.
- b. Members must refrain from any conduct which would bring discredit on the department.
- c. Members must obey all state and local traffic laws while responding to alarms in private vehicles.
- d. Members must refrain from fraternizing with persons of questionable character.
- e. Members must act with due regard to the safety of others in responding to and operating at, the scene of alarms.
- f. Members shall treat both citizens and other emergency service personnel with respect and courtesy.