



Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

On Call Recruitment Employer Information



Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service have approximately 570 firefighters and fire service staff.

The county area is organised into three Operational command areas that support 38 fire stations throughout Cumbria, On-call fire fighters provide cover at 35 of these stations.



WHAT ARE ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS?

In some parts of Cumbria, there are fewer emergency incidents than others; therefore, it doesn't make economic sense for taxpayers' money to be spent on firefighters being at the fire station all the time.

Instead, Cumbria has community fire stations which are crewed by On-call firefighters, who carry out their daily lives just like anyone else. Some of these On-call firefighters work in supermarkets, others as groundkeepers, accountants, mechanics, factory operatives and teachers, whatever their background, they offer an agreed amount of cover to enable the local fire appliance to remain available to respond to emergencies.

On-call firefighters work as part of a team, using the latest equipment and life saving techniques, to attend property fires, farm incidents, road traffic collisions, chemical spills, animal rescues, floods, storm damage and many other types of incidents.

On-call firefighters are continually trained to a professional standard by attending weekly training evenings at their fire station and completing refresher training courses where required.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

During their agreed hours, On-call firefighters carry a pager which alerts the individual when a 999 call is received in their local area. They then have to attend their fire station within 5 minutes of receiving the call.

On-call firefighters respond from wherever they are in the local area, including the many people who respond from their workplace. We are mindful of employers' needs and we encourage our On-call staff to ensure their primary employers are considered a priority by maintaining their On-call availability in agreement with their managers.

We understand the inconvenience of an employee having to rush off at any moment, and that they could be away for a period of time, however there are many benefits and you as an employer will have the satisfaction that you could really be making a difference.



WHY ARE WE RECRUITING FOR ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS?

Due to changing work patterns, recruiting On-call firefighters, particularly those who can be available during the day (8am - 6pm), remains a challenge.

There are already many businesses who allow their staff to be On-call firefighters whilst they are working but we need more, could it work for you?

BENEFITS TO YOU AS AN EMPLOYER

One of the main problems we encounter is that many people no longer live and work in the same area, therefore, many On-call fire stations are well crewed during evenings while people are home, however weekdays and weekend cover is a challenge.

This can lead to the nearest fire appliance to your business being unavailable to respond to emergency calls in its own area.

Whilst an appliance from another area will always respond, any delay may allow an incident to escalate and could mean the difference between life and death.

Valuable characteristics of a firefighter

- **Skills** – a firefighter learns many skills that can be useful in the workplace. Firefighters are trained to work well in a team, to think quickly, take responsibility, use their initiative, communicate fast and accurately, and to keep calm in a crisis.
- **Trauma training** – all firefighters are trained to a high standard under guidance provided by Paramedic Instructors. They also receive a First Aid at Work Certificate.
- **Manual Handling training** – all firefighters are trained by a recognised instructor in the correct procedures to be adopted when lifting or moving items. The training involves learning simple techniques that could prevent injuries occurring, thus potentially reducing time lost at work through injury.
- **Health and Safety training** – risk assessments and hazards are all part of the training for firefighters so they can support health and safety officers to meet their obligations and improve the safety of all your staff.
- **Large Goods Vehicle training** – many firefighters are trained to drive large goods vehicles, as well as learning to drive using blue lights in an emergency; this is similar to an advanced driving test in that it raises their awareness of road conditions.
- **Motivated staff** – staff that are able to fulfil their ambitions and potential and are usually happier and more productive in the workplace. On-call firefighters are committed to the community they serve, which means that they are more likely to be dedicated and long serving members of staff.

- **Training to deal with anything** – firefighters must be able to deal with a whole range of situations – they never quite know what they might find when they respond to an emergency so they are more likely to be able to cope with the ups and downs of life.
- **Enhancing the reputation of your business** – we run regular articles about On-call firefighters and their supporting primary employers; this can help gain greater publicity for your business. Promoting your organisation as caring about its community and supportive of its staff can be very beneficial.

COMMITMENT FROM YOU THE EMPLOYER

We rely massively on the partnerships we build with local employers allowing their staff to be released during their normal working day.

You will always be the “primary employer” and as such have the priority over the working time of your member of staff.



WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

As an equal opportunities employer we do not discriminate, we are looking for a workforce representative of the local community.

Male / female of all ages (above 18) that are physically fit, motivated and able to commit some time are encouraged to apply.

We can be flexible to accommodate family needs and the requirements of you the primary employer.



INITIAL TRAINING NEEDS

Firefighters must be well trained, skilled and knowledgeable staff if they are to work safely and effectively in the wide range of operational incidents they are called upon to attend.

Our initial training schedule for a recruit firefighter includes two consecutive weeks of training followed by;

- Initial Road Traffic Collision (RTC) course (2 days)
- Hazardous materials awareness course (2 days)
- Working at Height course (2 days)

These courses can be spread throughout the first nine months upon successful completion of the initial recruit course.

Once a firefighter has successfully completed their initial training course, they will be deemed “competent to ride” and will start to respond to emergency calls.

CONTINUOUS TRAINING NEEDS

Firefighters must maintain and develop their skills continuously. All firefighters train on one weekday evening a week for 2 hours – their drill night.

Each year there are specific training courses which firefighters must attend; these are in addition to the training they receive on their drill night, they will be notified of these dates in advance to allow for the necessary arrangements to be made, weekend dates are usually available.

IF MY EMPLOYEE GETS CALLED OUT, WILL I KNOW HOW LONG THEY WILL BE GONE FOR?

Each of the fire appliances has a mobile phone and your employee is encouraged to use this facility to estimate a return time as soon as they can. For example, in the event of a false alarm call, they may be back within 20 minutes.

MY BUSINESS IS OFTEN ON CALL FOR BUSINESS. HOW WOULD THIS WORK?

As their primary employer you would always get priority.

We are always on hand to offer employers advice and support where we can. We recognise the importance of the support you lend your local crews and communities.

What if my employee gets injured whilst at an incident?

All firefighters are trained to a high standard and so injuries on incidents are rare. We have an Occupational Health Department and employees also have the option to use the firefighter charity rehabilitation centre to support their recovery. The firefighter's charity is a National organisation which was formed to help out serving and retired members of the fire service.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

Becoming an employer of an On-call firefighter is a big step for any organisation – no matter how big or small.

For this reason, we want to make sure that you have a realistic understanding of the commitments and benefits that this will pose on your business. If you would like to find out more about becoming an employer of an on-call firefighter, please contact recruitmentfire@cumbria.gov.uk

www.cumbria.gov.uk/oncall



We look forward to hearing from you....

