



Candidate Information Booklet

Retained (part-time) Firefighters in Bunclody, Gorey & New Ross Fire Stations

Closing Date:

5.00 pm Thursday 16th February 2023

Wexford County Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

This competition is being managed by:

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Background:

The Fire Service responds to all emergency calls from the public for assistance, primarily to protect life and save injury to individuals, but also to prevent and restrict damage to property. Many emergency calls are not just in relation to fires, but can be to incidents involving road traffic collisions, incidents involving chemical spillages or toxic emissions and river rescues, etc. In order to maintain this emergency response we need to recruit more Retained Firefighters. Without Retained Firefighters we will not be in a position to respond to emergency calls with speed and proficiency needed to protect the businesses and citizens of County Wexford and its surrounding areas. This could have a serious impact on communities and businesses in your area.

What are Retained Firefighters?

Retained Firefighters are On-Call Firefighters that go about their daily lives like any other member of the community, they are mechanics, electricians, parents, engineers and factory workers. Wexford Fire Service Firefighters consist of both men and women from within your community.

An electronic alerter will notify them when a 999/112 call is received by the regional control centre in Dublin. When they receive the alert, Firefighters then have a maximum of 5 minutes to attend the station and quickly change into their Fire Kit and leave the station in a fire appliance. Normally a minimum crew of 5 highly skilled Firefighters will leave the station ready to tackle whatever emergency awaits them in a speedy and professional manner, saving lives, businesses and communities. When they have successfully completed their Firefighting roles they return to their normal daily routines.

| Station | Annual Average Number of Calls |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Wexford | 366 |
| Gorey | 161 |
| Enniscorthy | 193 |
| New Ross | 166 |
| Bunclody | 71 |

Benefits to you

The new fire fighter will complete the following training:

- **First Aid training/First Responder training** – Our Firefighters are trained to Emergency First Responder and Cardiac First Responder Advanced levels, including a very high standard in First Aid and CPR. Having a trained Emergency First Responder within your employment can help keep your staff safe and also save training costs within your company as well as meeting your health and safety obligations.
- **Fire Extinguisher training** – All our Firefighters are trained in the operation and correct use of Fire Extinguishers and hose reels. Our Firefighters are also capable of providing demonstrations to your staff.
- **HGV driver training** – Many of our Firefighters are highly trained drivers with C Licence and RSA accredited advance driver training. Wexford Fire Service fund the training and associated costs of their Firefighters to achieve these standards. Drivers of this standard may provide significant benefit to your organization and without the cost of providing the training for such skills.
- **Manual Handling training** – All our Firefighters are trained in manual handling techniques by approved instructors. This training is recognized as required skill in preventing injuries in the workplace.
- **Fire Warden training** – Firefighters are ideal employees for the role of Fire Warden within your company. They have advanced training in fire behavior, requirements for means of escape and most importantly have the ability to remain calm in emergency situations.
- **Health and Safety awareness** – Firefighters are provided with extensive health and safety training within the Fire Service and are therefore extremely vigilant in their approach to risk and putting systems in place to reduce any risks in the workplace.

How does it work when a Firefighter is alerted?

Retained Firefighters are rostered to be available as per their local station availability system. Each Firefighter is allocated a pager that they carry with them at all times and must respond to any alerts arriving in the fire station within 5 minutes of the alert.

Firefighters who are at work and receive a call must leave their place of employment and immediately attend the fire station to join the rest of the crew to attend the emergency to which they have been alerted.

Wexford County Council is very aware that employers need reliable and focused staff, and we advise all our Retained Firefighters that you, their main employer, must be consulted with at all times when making arrangements to attend training or any other Fire Service related requirements.

How long does it take to train a Firefighter?

- Initial 3-week recruit induction course
- 2 week Breathing Apparatus (BA) Course
- 1 week Compartment Fire Behavior training
- Emergency First Responder and Cardiac responder training

There are also a number of other courses that Firefighters will complete during their career some of which are listed below.

- Ongoing refresher training i.e., every 2 years complete 3-day BA refresher training
- Hazardous Materials Course
- ESDS training – HGV advanced driver training which is RSA accredited.
- Pump Operators course
- Officer training

Wexford County Council
Fire Service Retained Firefighter
Qualifications

1. Character:

Each applicant must be of good character.

2. Age:

Each applicant must be at least 18 years of age and not more than 55 years on the closing date for receipt of application forms.

Any candidate who reaches the age of 55 years prior to appointment will cease to be eligible for appointment on the result of this competition.

3. Education:

On the closing date for receipt of completed applications, each candidate **must:-**

- (a) have obtained a good standard of general education.
- (b) hold a **current** Class B Driving Licence free from endorsement and have satisfactory experience of driving. Successful applicants will be required to obtain a Full Class B Driving Licence within 12 months of appointment.

4. Health:

Each candidate shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

For the purpose of satisfying the requirement as to health it will be necessary for a successful candidate, before he/she is appointed, to undergo a medical examination (which may include x-ray, physical fitness test and/or other special tests), and any further medical examinations required during his/her employment with the Fire Service, by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the local authority. Candidates shall be required to submit details of their medical history to the Council's medical advisor. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence. Failure to successfully complete the medical may necessitate release from the Fire Service.

5. Garda Vetting:

Each candidate will be required to co-operate with a Garda vetting procedure. The successful candidate must have Garda clearance.

Please Note

Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview, a basic numeracy/literacy test and a practical assessment, conducted by or on behalf of the local authority.

Wexford County Council
Fire Service Retained Firefighter
Conditions of Employment

1. The employment is part-time and will be probationary for one year following appointment.

2. **Age:**

A Fire-fighter must submit a birth certificate to the County Council as proof of age before they are engaged as a recruit.

3. On reaching 55 years of age, or sooner if found to be medically unfit, a Firefighter shall cease to be a Firefighter. The maximum age limit of 55 years may be lowered by the County Council should the normal age for retirement in employment generally be lowered and in such case, the age lower than 55 years shall apply.

Fire-fighters who would be physically capable of working beyond age 55 have the option to continue working for a defined limited period (subject to compulsory medical assessment, on an annual basis). The extended optional period would be to age 58. No Retained Fire-fighter shall be employed beyond age 58, in accordance with the Report of the Expert Group on retirement age for Retained Firefighters (April 2003).

4. **Rostering:**

Firefighters shall participate in any rostering arrangements as agreed.

5. A Firefighter must attend and satisfactorily complete each of the following courses during his/her probationary period or such longer time as the Council decides:-

(a) Retained Recruit Firefighters Course

AND

(b) Breathing Apparatus Wearers Course

AND

(c) Any other course that the County Council may consider necessary.

One repeat course will be provided should any Firefighter fail on the first attempt. Failure to successfully complete the repeat course(s) will result in the termination of the Fire-fighter's employment.

Some or all of the above courses will be held at a recognised training centre which may or may not be situated locally.

Drill fees will be paid at the current hourly rate for Firefighters during training

6. A Firefighter must reside and work within 2.5 kms of the Fire Station. In addition, on receipt of an alert a Firefighter must be able to attend at the Fire Station within five minutes.

A Firefighter, rostered on duty, must remain within convenient proximity of the Fire Station. Failure to respond promptly to fire or other calls shall, at the discretion of the County Council, result in termination of service.

A Firefighter shall notify the Fire Authority in writing of any subsequent changes of residence or place of employment. A change of residence or place of employment that would place the Firefighter outside these limits will mean automatic termination of employment.

A Firefighter shall be required to report for duty to the Fire Station in its present location, or in the event of change of location to such new location as may be decided by the Fire Authority. Changes in the location of the Fire Station will not result in payment of disturbance money or other compensation.

7. It shall be necessary for Firefighters to be released from their normal employment, on any occasion that attendance at fires or other emergencies shall be required. Written evidence from the employer as to availability must be provided and the County Council in its sole discretion shall decide as to whether the availability as so evidenced is acceptable. Self-employed persons must provide written evidence as to availability. Such written evidence must cover a candidate's availability for initial training and on recruitment for fire and other calls, drills, training, and such other duties which he/she may be required by the County Council to perform. If the County Council deems his/her attendance to be unsatisfactory, it may terminate his/her service.
8. Absence from training or fire calls without good reason will lead to disciplinary proceedings which may include suspension without pay and dismissal from the Fire Service.
9. All Firefighters joining the Fire Service after the 15th June 1996, will, as a condition of their employment, operate and be remunerated in accordance with the revised working practices introduced on the basis of the report of the Wexford Fire Services Working Group (November 1995) and the findings of the Arbitrator, Mr. John O'Connell, dated 14th June 1996 and will be subject to Composite Agreement of August 1999. This condition will apply whether or not the changes proposed have been introduced on the date of appointment.
10. Firefighters are required to attend Fire Service Training Programmes which will include:
- Regular or weekly training sessions,
 - The training itemised at 5 above,
 - Full day training session or major emergency exercises,
 - Other training arranged by the Chief Fire Officer including training courses outside County Wexford,
 - It shall be necessary for each Firefighter to undertake driving instructions for fire brigade appliances, as and when decided by the employer in order to qualify as a Category C driver.

11. A Firefighter shall be available at all times when required for attendance at fires or other incidents.
12. Firefighters will be called to attend fires in a manner to be decided by the Chief Fire Officer which may include the following:

- (a) Pocket Alerter

Firefighters will co-operate in reasonable measures designed to facilitate call out. In particular, each Firefighter shall carry a Fire Service pocket alerter at all times and it shall be his/her responsibility to ensure that it is kept in proper working order.

13. When required, a Firefighter will substitute for any other Firefighter absent through sickness, annual leave or any other reason.
14. A Firefighter shall be responsible for items of personal equipment issued to him/her in connection with his/her employment.
15. Firefighters are issued with personal protective clothing as listed below;

- a) one firefighters helmet
 - b) two pairs of firefighters boots
 - a) two firefighters tunics
 - b) two pairs of firefighters pants
 - c) two pairs of firefighters gloves
 - d) two flash hoods

Firefighters shall ensure that all personal protective clothing issued is maintained to a satisfactory standard.

16. A Firefighter, as and when required, shall perform such duties as are assigned to him / her from time to time by the Chief Fire Officer and/or other designated person by the Council and without prejudice to the generality of this requirement, driving duties and general firemanship duties such as the wearing of breathing apparatus, the operation of pumps, lifts, hoists, rescue and cutting equipment, hydrant testing, etc. All activities shall be conducted in accordance with Wexford County Council's Safety Management System and comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Firefighters are under the immediate control of the Station Officer of the Brigade to which they are attached and must give adequate notification of their intended departure at any time, from their station ground, to the Station Officer.

A Firefighter shall report for duty in a sober manner in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

17. When required, a Firefighter shall assist in or carry out the cleaning, testing or repair of equipment. Cleaning of Fire Station premises and environs is included in this requirement.

18. A Firefighter shall carry out any further duties which may be assigned to him/her from time to time by the Local Authority. These duties may include driving duties (when the Firefighter is suitably qualified) or deputising for the Station Officer or Sub-Station Officer, where necessary.

19. Wexford County Council recognises the Trade Union SIPTU as having negotiating rights for Firefighters. Firefighters will be bound by agreements entered into on their behalf by their Trade Union.

20. **Recruitment:**

Selection shall be by means of an interview, a basic numeracy/literacy test and a practical assessment, conducted by or on behalf of the local authority.

A local authority may decide, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to a competition, to carry out a short listing procedure. The number of persons to be invited to interview shall be determined by the local authority from time to time having regard to the likely number of vacancies to be filled. A Panel may be formed on the basis of the interview. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the local authority that they possess the qualifications declared for the post and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may within the life of the panel be appointed as appropriate vacancies arise. The life of the panel, unless extended by Chief Executive's Order, will not exceed 12 months. The County Council will not be responsible for any expenses a candidate may incur in attending for interview.

21. **Health:**

A Firefighter shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Medical Examination, etc.

Under the terms of the agreed Occupational Health Scheme for members of the retained fire service, you will be required to undergo a regular medical examination by a Medical Practitioner nominated by the Council.

Retention as a Firefighter will depend upon receipt of satisfactory reports by Medical Examiner(s) and to the general condition above as to health. An operational Firefighter must maintain a good level of physical fitness.

22. **Sick Leave:**

Any absence on sick leave must be reported to the Station Officer or Sub-Station Officer on the first morning of illness.

Where a Fire-fighter is absent due to sickness, a certificate from a qualified Medical Practitioner must be submitted on the third day of a continuous absence and on a weekly basis thereafter.

Return to Work Form must be completed by any staff member absent on uncertified and certified sick leave. The form must be countersigned by the Station Officer and forwarded to a Senior Fire Officer prior to submission to Human Resources. The medical certificate should state the general nature of the illness. This information will be treated in

confidence. The local authority reserves the right to refer you for an independent medical examination. A certificate of fitness will be required before resuming work.

Where a Firefighter becomes incapacitated as a result of serious illness or injury, retainer fee shall be paid for twelve weeks on receipt of a Medical Doctor's report. The retainer fee may be extended to six months depending on the merits of the case and the applicant's attendance records. Extended sick leave would generally only be extended to a Firefighter on one occasion only. Where a Firefighter is absent on sick leave he/she must inform the Station Officer. If the period of sick leave extends for more than two consecutive days he/she must submit a sick leave certificate from a Medical Practitioner to the Council.

- 23.** Annual leave shall be provided in accordance with the organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 and the Organisation of Working Time Act (Regulations) 2001. Annual leave shall be taken within the appropriate leave year, such leave should be pre-approved. The present annual leave entitlement is 28 days per annum.

You will be required to participate in the rostering of holidays at the commencement of each quarter to ensure that the appropriate number of personnel approved by the Station Officer will be available for duty.

- 24.** Remuneration will be as follows:-

- (i) An annual retaining fee, paid in instalments.
- (ii) Fees for attendance at fires, training and other incidents.

(Rates for (i) and (ii) above will be as determined from time to time. The current rates are attached).

Payments to Firefighters will be made fortnightly for fire fees and quarterly for retaining fees.

Payment of the retaining fee will be subject to satisfactory attendance at Training Sessions.

Average total operative pay per station based on both 2022 activity and rates of pay:

| Station | € |
|----------------|-----------|
| Gorey | 30,541.10 |
| New Ross | 31,140.42 |
| Bunclody | 20,868.66 |
| | |

Note: Firefighters may be eligible for social welfare job seekers allowance in addition to the above payments

Wexford County Council

Fire Service

Retained Firefighter

Present Rates of Pay : Operative from 1st October, 2022.

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Retaining Fee : | 0- 2 Years | €8,696 |
| | 2-5 Years | €9,664 |
| | 5-10 Years | €10,834 |
| | 10 Years Plus | €11,907 |

Hourly Rate of Attendance: Attendance at Fire Practices and Drills

Drill Rate Per Hour €22.94

Fire Hourly Rate of Attendance

| Day | | Night/Weekend | |
|-----------------|--------|----------------------|--------|
| 1st Hour | €45.88 | 1 st Hour | €91.76 |
| Subsequent Hour | €22.94 | Subsequent Hour | €45.88 |

(A 75% attendance or excused at fire drill during the year ending the previous 31st March is necessary to be eligible for clothing allowance).

Additional Relevant Information

- An applicant who is found to be ineligible at any stage of the competition will not be further considered. Provision of inaccurate, untrue or misleading information will lead to disqualification from the competition, withdrawal of employment offer or dismissal.
- A candidate who does not attend for interview when and where required by the council, or who does not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the council requires in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.
- An invitation to attend for interview is not regarded as an admission that you possess the prescribed qualifications and/or requirements for this post. Documentary proof will be required before appointment where you claim credit for particular qualification, experience, etc.
- Information provided by the candidate in the application form will be used for the purpose of this competition only. By applying for the post, the applicant is consenting to their information being used for this purpose.
- **General Data Protection regulation (GDPR)**
The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive. When you submit an application for a competition, we create a computer record in your name. Information submitted as part of your application is used in processing your application. where the services of a third party are used in processing your application, it may be required to provide them with information, however all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the security of your data.
- **Former Public Service Employees**
Candidates should note that anyone who has taken part in public service early retirement schemes set out below is not eligible to take part in this competition.

Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in the Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment in the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010, dated 1st November 2010 introduces a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public funds. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduces, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the public services by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2009-2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility) and the Minister's consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any public service body.

- **Declaration**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER