

APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Henrico County

Program Title: Entry-Level Firefighter Hiring Process for Henrico County

Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Cristol Klevinsky

Title: Management Specialist

Department: County Manager's Office

Complete Mailing Address: 4301 E. Parham Rd., Henrico, VA 23228


Telephone: 804-501-4370 Website: henrico.us

Email: kle@henrico.us

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: John A. Vithoukas

Title: County Manager

Signature: 

1. Short Overview

One of the primary challenges for modern public safety agencies is to have a workforce reflecting the diversity of its community. When a public safety agency does not mirror the diversity of its community, it could stand to reason that the level of trust and confidence the residents of the community have in their public safety agency could be jeopardized. In an effort to make sure the Division of Fire's compliment reflects the community we serve, a joint project including subject matter expertise from the Henrico County Division of Fire (DOF), the Henrico County Department of Human Resources (HR), and the Henrico County Attorney's Office was implemented to revise the 2014-2015 Entry-Level Firefighter Hiring Process. The project's goal is to hire the highest quality candidate representative of our community and is the best fit for Henrico Division of Fire.

2. Problem/Challenge/Situation

In 2013, as a part of the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) reaccreditation process, the DOF contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) to facilitate methodology to document the agency's path into the future via a "Continuous Improvement Strategy." The process identified that the DOF's workforce was significantly less diverse than the County's population.

According to 2012 United States Census data, Henrico County's population was 310,972, which included a demographic makeup of 57% White, 29% African American, 7% Asian, 5% Hispanic, and 2% two or more races. In contrast, the DOF's 522 uniformed member compliment, in 2014, consisted of 92.5% White males, 5.7% African American males, 1.5% White females, and 0.2% African American females. Both CPSE and CFAI recommended the

DOF develop and implement a diversity recruitment plan, involving human resources staff and DOF personnel. This would incorporate industry best practices, enhancing the diversity of the qualified applicant pool, and in turn, the DOF workforce. Recommendations also included the DOF identify, remove, and reduce, where possible, potential obstacles to diversity hiring efforts, such as the lengthy hiring process.

3. How the Program Was Carried Out

Using the recommendations of CPSE and CFAI, the DOF built a collaborative planning team to develop the Henrico County Division of Fire 2013-2018 Continuous Improvement Strategy. A prioritized goal in this strategy was to improve the diversity of our workforce, focusing on recruiting the highest quality Entry-Level Firefighter candidate. The goal clearly stated the need to "...develop a work force that is prepared to achieve the mission and vision of the Henrico County Division of Fire while exemplifying the core values." Objectives to accomplish this goal in the 24-month timeline focused on the enhancement of the recruitment and retention of the DOF's workforce through revised programs and enhanced outreach processes. This process required the establishment of a committee to research and identify critical gaps in the existing recruitment and retention processes. Equally important was the implementation of a workplace satisfaction assessment tool to guide the development of an employee retention process. This information supports the final task of developing, delivering, and implementing a comprehensive recruitment program that focused on reaching a diverse audience of prospective employees.

The collaborative team, made up of DOF, County Human Resources, County Attorney partners, incorporated feedback from numerous County agencies and community partners, who noted that a high-quality candidate must demonstrate an acceptable level of mental and physical aptitude while demonstrating a desire to serve others. The candidate must also have a deep-rooted connection to the community, coupled with an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of being a focused part of a team.

In order to accomplish these goals and objectives, the DOF, working in close collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, hired a Personnel Coordinator in the summer of 2014. A primary mission for this position was to incorporate the feedback and recommendations from the planning group to develop a plan to enhance recruitment efforts and hire the extraordinary candidates noted. The Personnel Coordinator interacted with community leaders, all ranks of DOF personnel, and other county agencies to discover opportunities to improve the diversity of the agency. Common themes that were seen from these interviews included:

- A lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a firefighter
- A perception and belief that the Henrico County Division of Fire was not an employer of choice for minorities or females
- A lack of awareness by protected class communities of the opportunities with the Division of Fire
- A long, biased, ineffective hiring process

Of these four areas, the Division of Fire had the most control over the ability to reevaluate and revise the existing hiring process. This effort was accomplished in several relatively low-cost, high-benefit steps:

Establishing a consistent application process date and timeline: Previous application periods varied over the course of the DOF history. Feedback from the interviews conducted by the Personnel Coordinator indicated that not having an established hiring process timeline gave the appearance of appealing to an exclusive audience of potential employees. The incumbent firefighters stated when questioned about the application process, they were embarrassed that they could not give a firm answer of timelines or the next hiring date. Henrico County Division of Fire (DOF), Department of Human Resources (HR), and the County Attorney's Office all agreed that this was a significant issue that could be easily resolved and decided an annual recruitment effort would begin on December 1st annually.

Equally valuing the written and the physical components of the hiring process:

Historically, proctored written tests were administered in the early stages of the hiring process. This test qualified the applicant to continue in the application process to the next step of a physical assessment. Inclusion of this factor had historically been a filter used by the DOF to gauge how well a candidate would progress through the hiring process. Research conducted by the Personnel Coordinator on Henrico Division of Fire determined that there was no correlation between a high written test score and a "better" Firefighter. This research also indicated that African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans tended to score lower on the written test than other demographics groups. The vendors of the Entry-Level Firefighter written exams also stated through their validation mechanism that if an applicant scored a minimum score they could predict their success in a recruit academy. It was decided by the collaborative team of DOF, HR and the County Attorney's Office that both the written test and the physical ability test were both pass or fail components of the hiring process.

Maximize the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT): The CPAT process is designed to objectively assess the physical capability of a candidate in common tasks and exertion levels often seen in fireground operations. Historically, the DOF offered the bare minimum of one mentoring session and two practice sessions to allow candidates to properly train for the CPAT process. This practice resulted in females failing the test at a disproportionate ratio compared to their male counterparts. To address this challenge, the DOF increased the mentoring session opportunities to 15 available sessions and supported the available practice sessions. With minimal fiscal investment, this adjustment resulted in a 25% increase of the number of female applicants who passed CPAT.

Development of a Profile Screening Tool: Throughout the hiring process, there are numerous methods to quantitatively assess a candidate; however there was no tool to evaluate and rank candidates on qualitative attributes. The fourth adjustment to the DOF process was to develop a Profile Screening Tool which evaluates and ranks the candidates based on their desire to serve others, their involvement in their community, a clear demonstration of commitment to a team, understanding of importance of education, assessment of technical and mechanical skills and certifications, previous military service, and documented leadership skills. This information is gathered in the Personal History Questionnaire. This assessment allows the blinded evaluation of candidates, regardless of race or gender, providing a holistic picture of the desired Entry-Level Firefighter that had been described by the original focus group.

Increase the number of candidate interviews: Previous hiring processes limited the number of interviews with staff to approximately 80 candidates. Using information from the previous steps, including data from the Personal History Questionnaire, the DOF extended 184 offers of interviews to candidates. This process included the implementation of formal training of Internal

Peer Interview Panels. The goal of this was to make the panel members understand their personal biases and to not let these biases affect the rating of the candidate. The training also allowed the development of a cadre of panel members that could be rotated through the numerous interview sessions. Additionally, a formal assessment matrix was developed to support the objective assessment of each candidate in his or her interview.

Beginning with the 2015 hiring process, the DOF integrated more technology to reach a wider and more diverse audience. This included the traditional marketing techniques of County resources, print and television media to announce the application opportunity. The DOF heavily integrated use of social media in the marketing process to include use of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The Division also developed a video, called “Be Prepared”, to give a summary of what is to be expected in the career of Henrico County Division of Firefighter. The video was uploaded on the Henrico Division of Fire website and shared across all of the noted social media platforms. Using County HR resources, the Entry-Level Firefighter application was submitted and tracked online.

4. Financing and Staffing Cost

Conscious fiscal stewardship is an important part of administering an effective hiring process. There was no established budget for this project initially, however costs were monitored and the most efficient low-cost methods were used to extend the application outreach process.

- Understanding the ways that messages are received by current job seekers, the DOF leveraged the use of word of mouth and social media to share information on the

application process. This allowed us to reduce the number of paid advertisements.

Additionally, the DOF was able to directly connect with career centers at local colleges and universities. This effort allowed more direct access to resources and information for new college graduates, and reduced the traditional fees associated with participation in career fairs coordinated by the schools.

- In an effort to reach those not on social media, business card sized recruitment tools were developed and distributed to sworn and civilian staff requesting staff members identify people they came in contact with or within their community circles and share the recruitment information. The cards stated that the recipient had been identified as a possible excellent future member of the DOF team and invited the recipient to apply to become a part of the DOF family.
- Partnering with Henrico County Public Schools, advertisement banners were developed and placed at fire stations. This effort allowed high school students to practice their communications development and printing trades while providing a low-cost alternative to the traditional printing processes.

5. Program Results

29 recruits entered Recruit School 65, 28 will graduate on March 18th, 2016. This was the most diverse recruit school in all aspects including race, gender, and ethical origin, level of education, military services that the department has ever hired. Because of the broad subjective and objective evaluation of the applicants, this recruit school did not lose a single recruit because of their inability to perform the tasks of the job or inability to complete course work. The recruit academy staff stated:

- They came together as a team faster than any previous recruit schools
- Their ability to overcome challenges was greater than any previous recruit school
- Their comradery and esprit de corps was exceptional!
- Completed exercises and tasks in record time with minimal instruction because they understood the importance of teamwork
- Every vendor, Public Safety partner, other county agencies, and surrounding fire departments that worked with this recruit school consistently spoke highly of their character, and physical prowess.
- The people in the Department, County Government and the community have looked at the diversity of this recruit class with great pride.

6. Brief Summary

Noted by the Henrico County Manager, John Vithoukaskas, this "...Program has transformed the Henrico Division of Fire!" By undertaking this revolutionary revision to the DOF hiring process, the Division has produced personnel and resources that were once thought impossible to achieve. This is only the first step of the journey to reflect our community and has set the example to similar agencies on the importance, value and the ability to mirror the community's diversity. This process has demonstrated that achieving diversity is a reachable goal through commitment. The process proved that standards do not have to be lowered to hire a diverse workforce, when in reality our standard was raised to higher diverse workforce.

To date, 48 highly qualified Entry-Level Firefighters have joined the ranks of the DOF. Of these hired, 34 members have Bachelor's degrees, seven members have military service, 13

have participated in college athletics, and 25 are Henrico County residents. This process has resulted in active and retired members of the DOF, and the DOF Training staff commenting that “This was the best Recruit School [they] have ever worked with!”

Supplemental Materials

- Personal History Questionnaire
- 2014-2015 Entry Level Firefighter Hiring Process

Firefighter Hiring Process Overview

Step 1: Application Dates: December 1, 2014-January 5, 2015

Interested candidates must submit a County of Henrico online application. Applications are only accepted online. Click [Here](#) to apply or go to www.henricojobs.com. Please provide an email address for notifications and status updates. Call Henrico County Human Resources 804-501-4628 if you need assistance completing your online application.

Minimum requirements for candidates to apply:

- Minimum of 18 years of age by the date the application process closes. There is no maximum age limit. However, all candidates must be able to successfully pass the Candidate Physical Agility Test.
- High School graduate or equivalent
- Possession of a valid Commonwealth of Virginia Operator's License. A candidate's DMV record can have no more than six (6) demerit points in one (1) year or nine (9) demerit points in two (2) years. Additionally candidates with a DUI or *reckless driving conviction* are not eligible for hire until five (5) years from the end of their completed sentence/penalty.

Step 2: Personal History Questionnaire

Personal History Questionnaire and Required Documents- Due by January 19, 2015.

Click [HERE](#) to print the Personal History Questionnaire.

Delivery Options: Mail or Deliver packet in sealed envelope to Henrico County Division of Fire 7721 East Parham Road, Henrico, Virginia 23294-4304. Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30 pm

Required Documents- Make sure all copies are legible

Proof of high school or GED

Proof of College Credits/Degree (If applicable)

Official DMV Driving History Record-Must show Driver Points

Photocopy of Military Discharge form DD-214 or NGB-22 National Guard (If applicable)

Documents become property of Henrico County Division of Fire and will not be returned. Incomplete questionnaires will not be accepted.

Step 3: Written Test March 7, 2015 and March 14, 2015

After submission of the online application and Personal History Questionnaire those candidates meeting the minimum requirement for the position of entry firefighter will be invited to sit for a written test. Those candidates that score above the established cut-off will advance to the next step in the process.

Photo ID required for test entry (Driver's License, Military ID)

Step 5: Candidate Physical Agility Practice Sessions

Henrico Division of Fire will utilize CPAT to assess a candidate's physical agility to complete critical firefighting tasks effectively and safely. [CPAT Overview](#)
[/fire/helpmewith/fireemployment/cpatoverview/](#)

Those candidates that score above the established written test score and are invited to CPAT will be notified of all opportunities' to participate in the CPAT Orientation and Mentoring Session. These same candidates will also be notified of the dates the CPAT testing will take place. Each candidate invited to CPAT is eligible to take advantage of the Orientation and Mentoring sessions and will be allowed 2 practice CPAT testing opportunities and one final CPAT test opportunity. If a candidate passes the CPAT during one of the practice testing opportunities they do not have to return for the final CPAT testing opportunity. Candidates must sign a waiver form before participating in the CPAT.

Candidates will be scheduled practice sessions from March 15, 2015 until May 11, 2015.

Henrico Division of Fire will also accept current valid CPAT cards/certificates from candidates who test with an IAFF licensed agency within the last 6 months of May 2015. CPAT cards/certificates must be received by the Henrico Division of Fire before May 15, 2015.

Step 6: CPAT Test

CPAT Testing week of May 11-15, 2015.

Those candidates who pass the CPAT will proceed to the next step of the hiring process.

***Successful completion of the testing (written and physical) does not guarantee an interview or offer of employment.**

Step 7: Personal History Questionnaire and Document Review

The Henrico County Division of Fire Personnel Section and the County of Henrico Department of Human Resources will further review and verify information provided by each candidate on their application. The Personal History Questionnaire will be reviewed and evaluated.

Step 8: Panel Interviews

Top Candidates will be contacted by the Division of Fire Personnel Section regarding scheduling a panel interview.

Step 9: Chief's Interview

Candidates that are rated highly qualified will be scheduled to interview with the Fire Chief.

Step 10: Conditional Offer

The candidates that are offered conditional employment must still pass (3) more evaluation steps.

- Medical Examination
- Drug Test
- National and State criminal history records check and FBI finger print check

Candidates that pass these steps will be offered a final offer of employment.

Step 12: Hired

Candidates that accept the final offer of employment will then be notified of when to report the County of Henrico Division of Fire Basic Firefighter Recruit Academy. All candidates are required to successfully complete the twenty-three (23) week Division of Fire Basic Firefighter Recruit Academy regardless of previous firefighting qualifications or experience level.

Name: _____

Date: _____



Henrico County Division of Fire (Entry) Firefighter

Hiring Process

Personal History Questionnaire *Confidential*

Please Complete and Submit

By January 19, 2015

Henrico County Division of Fire
ATTN: Personnel Section
7721 East Parham Road
Henrico, Virginia 23294



Name: _____

Date: _____

Please Read These Instructions First!

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT

This Personal History Questionnaire is part of the initial phase of the employment process and must be completed by the applicant; All information must be **PRINTED IN INK OR TYPED. It is imperative that all questions are answered in detail.**

- **This information will be used by Henrico County Division of Fire for the Entry Level Firefighter hiring process.**
- **The intentional omission or falsification of any material fact is just cause for disqualification or dismissal of a candidate.**
- **If you have served in the military, include a copy of your DD 214 with the Personal History Questionnaire.**

You must answer every question in this Personal History Questionnaire. If a category or question does not apply, place N/A (Not Applicable) in the designated area. Attach additional pages if there is insufficient space for your answers.

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

NOTE: This check sheet provides a list of all required documents that must be submitted with the Personal History Questionnaire to Henrico County Division of Fire. The Personal History Questionnaire and all required documentation must be postmarked **By January 19, 2015**. A complete Personal History Questionnaire must be submitted along with photocopies of the following documents, except where an original/certified document is specifically indicated. *(We will not accept individual documents; please send ALL requested documents in one packet).* **An incomplete Personal History Questionnaire will halt any further consideration of your application for the position.** Your completed Personal History Questionnaire and associated documents must be postmarked by the closing date of **January 19, 2015 (no items will be accepted via fax).**

1. **Authorization to Obtain Information**
2. **Proof of High School Graduation or GED**
3. **Proof of College Credits/Degree** *(If applicable)*
4. **Form DD 214** (For Veterans) or **NGB-22** (National Guard) *(Do not send original document; send copy).*
5. **DMV Record from State of your current valid driver's license** – *(send original driving record document from DMV to Henrico County Division of Fire along with other documents requested on this check sheet.)*
6. **Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) Certification/Documentation** - *Only complete #6 if IAFF CPAT certification issued by another jurisdiction and is within 6 months of May 2015.*
7. Attach a **copy** of all fire/EMS/trade or mechanical certifications to the back of this form.

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

County of Henrico, Virginia

AUTHORIZATION TO OBTAIN INFORMATION

I authorize the County of Henrico to perform a background investigation in connection with my application for employment. This investigation may include information as to my credit, schools attended, police convictions, Division of Motor Vehicles' records, personal references, professional references, previous employers, present employer, physicians' records, medical records and other appropriate sources.

I authorize the release of any information that the County of Henrico may request from the above sources.

I understand and agree that all information received by the County in connection with this application and background investigation is confidential and shall not be disclosed to me.

Signature:

Date:

Print Name:

Social Security #:

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

**Henrico County Division of Fire
Entry Firefighter**

PERSONAL HISTORY

Instructions: Responses must be typed or printed in black ink. If additional space is needed to answer any question, entry should be continued on a separate sheet(s) of paper. No spaces are to be left blank; if a section does not apply, fill in "N/A" (not applicable).

NAME:			
Last	First	Middle	
ADDRESS:			
Street	City	State	Zip Code
TELEPHONE: Home: () -		Work/Cell: () -	
E-MAIL ADDRESS:			
DRIVERS LICENSE NO:	STATE:	EXPIRATION DATE:	

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Henrico County Division of Fire seeks to develop our workforce from within our community.

1. Did you graduate from a Henrico County Public or Private School? Yes _____ No _____
2. Are you a resident of Henrico County? Yes _____ No _____
3. If yes, how many years as resident of Henrico County? _____
4. Do you currently work in Henrico County? Yes _____ No _____

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

List all employment in **chronological** order beginning with your present employer and going back 10 years. Include self employment, part-time and/or periods of unemployment (attach additional sheets, if necessary.) If you were dismissed from a job or forced to resign, please attach a statement giving complete details.

FROM (Mo/Yr) _ / _	TO (Mo /Yr) _ / _	POSITION: _
Employer		Supervisor
Address	City, State Zip Code	Telephone
Reason for Leaving		
FROM (Mo/Yr) _ / _	TO (Mo /Yr) _ / _	POSITION: _
Employer		Supervisor
Address	City, State Zip Code	Telephone
Reason for Leaving		
FROM (Mo/Yr) _ / _	TO (Mo /Yr) _ / _	POSITION: _
Employer		Supervisor
Address	City, State Zip Code	Telephone
Reason for Leaving		
FROM (Mo/Yr) _ / _	TO (Mo /Yr) _ / _	POSITION: _
Employer		Supervisor
Address	City, State Zip Code	Telephone
Reason for Leaving		

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

REFERENCES

In the space below, please list three professional and three personal references, not including relatives. Please provide at least two phone numbers and an email address for each reference.

Name	Address where person can be contacted (include City, State, Zip Code)	Contact information
		Primary Number: Secondary Number: Email Address:
		Primary Number: Secondary Number: Email Address:
		Primary Number: Secondary Number: Email Address:
		Primary Number: Secondary Number: Email Address:
		Primary Number: Secondary Number: Email Address:
		Primary Number: Secondary Number: Email Address:
		Primary Number: Secondary Number: Email Address:

Please inform the listed references that Henrico County Division of Fire may contact them at anytime during the hiring process. Please sign that we have your authorization to contact the above references at anytime.

Signature

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

SKILLS/CERTIFICATIONS

In addition to placing a high value on formal education, Henrico County Division of Fire also recognizes the inherent value-added to our profession of the skilled trades such as plumber, electrician, HVAC technician, licensed contractor, welder and many others. Please list any trade certification or licensure you possess.

Name Skill or Trade	Name of Technical School and Location City, State and Zip Code	Skill Level Certification	Date of Completion of Certification Training

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As a community-oriented organization, Henrico County Division of Fire values community involvement by our members. Please list any community organizations to which you belong or have previously belonged. (attach additional page(s) if necessary).

Name of Organization	Address	From	To

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Henrico County Division of Fire values the ability to direct, to lead and motivate others. Please list any formal leadership positions you have held in the professional, educational or community setting. (attach additional page(s) if necessary).

Name of Organization	Address	From	To

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

GROUP/TEAM ACTIVITIES

Henrico County Division of Fire requires all personnel to effectively work in teams to achieve the mission, goals and objectives of the division. Please list any group/teams to which you belong to or have previously belonged to including junior high school, high school and/or college.

Name of Organization	Address	From	To

Henrico County Division of Fire – (Entry) Firefighter

Name: _____

Date: _____

PERSONAL HISTORY CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I _____ hereby certify that the statements made by me in this Personal History Questionnaire are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any willful misstatements or material omissions in this application will be sufficient cause to disqualify me from employment consideration with the County of Henrico. If such misstatements or omissions are found after employment, it will be considered grounds for dismissal. I understand that this completed application and any materials submitted with it are property of the County of Henrico and will not be returned. In the case of a panel interview, I authorize my application to be viewed by members of the panel.

DATE

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT