

# Application Pack

## Guidance Notes

Please read through these Guidance Notes prior to completing the Application Form.

*So much more than fighting fires.*



we're supporting

**AGE POSITIVE**



**Stonewall**

**DIVERSITY CHAMPION**

## West Midlands Fire Service Core Values

### We value...

- Improvement
- People
- Diversity
- Service to the community

### Improvement

We value improvement at all levels of the service by...

- Accepting responsibility for our performance
- Being open-minded
- Considering criticism thoughtfully
- Learning from our experience
- Consulting others

### People

We value all our employees by practising and promoting...

- Equality and respect
- Recognition of merit
- Honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- Personal development
- Co-operative and inclusive working

### Diversity

We value diversity in the service and the community by...

- Treating everyone equitably and with respect
- Providing varying solutions for different needs and expectations
- Promoting equality of opportunity in employment and progression within the service
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination

### Service to the Community

We value service to the community by...

- Working with all groups to reduce risk
- Treating everyone equitably and with respect
- Being accountable to those we serve
- Striving for excellence in all we do

## Career Opportunities with West Midlands Fire Service

The West Midlands Fire Service has a core vision to make the West Midlands safer to the diverse population of the West Midlands county area.

Covering the areas of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton, we provide services to over 3 million people. We are accountable to the public, via the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority.

The West Midlands Fire Service is headed by our Chief Fire Officer, who is responsible for providing the wide range of services a modern fire and rescue service is expected to provide. We have a core vision to make **West Midlands safer** by **preventing** fire, by informing and educating and informing about safety awareness, **protecting** the public from fire, by ensuring they are safe at home and at work and **responding** to emergencies, when we are needed most.

To support this aim, we employ over 2,500 employees, from a wide range of backgrounds, bringing a wide range of skills to our organisation.

Our job opportunities cover so much more than fighting fires.

We employ over 600 support staff in a wide range of job roles, from senior management to specialist roles; administration and clerical; from catering to cleaning, to name just a few.

With community fire stations strategically positioned across the West Midlands, there are opportunities at these sites for catering, cleaning, administration and firefighting roles.

And we have further opportunities at our Training Centre in Smethwick, Transport Engineering Workshops at Perry Barr, and a wide range of opportunities at our Headquarters in Birmingham City Centre including Safeside volunteers.

In addition to responding to emergencies, our firefighters are committed to community fire safety; educating and informing the public of the dangers of fire. It is a challenging role, with opportunities to gain promotion to the highest levels.

We believe in fair working practices and are committed to Equal Opportunities for all. We offer excellent working conditions including flexible working hours, family friendly policies and competitive salaries. We encourage career development through personal reviews, career opportunities, temporary promotions and actively encourage internal promotion. And with the experience gained within our environment, the skills are interchangeable should you wish to progress outside our organisation.

**To find out more about the current job opportunities available log onto [www.wmfs.net/Jobs\\_Online](http://www.wmfs.net/Jobs_Online)**

In addition, we offer volunteering opportunities as Visitor Guides at the Safeside facility adjacent to Fire Service Headquarters. Safeside is a state-of-the-art scenario based interactive learning safety complex with Visitor Guides at the heart of the experience.

For more information, please see advert on the back of the Application Form.

# Guidance Notes for completing the Application Form

**Before completing the application form, please read through these guidance notes and familiarise yourself with the form and the questions being asked. Once you have completed the application form please retain these guidance notes for your reference.**

## Section 1 Position Applying For

The Job Reference Number and Job Title for the position you are applying for can be found at the top of the Job Description.

## Section 2 Personal Details

It is important that you complete this section accurately as the information requested is needed to process your application and to allow us to communicate with you.

The West Midlands Fire Service is positive about age diversity and is striving to employ a workforce of mixed age that includes older and younger people. For this reason we ask for your date of birth as part of the monitoring in order to check our processes are fair. If a post requires a minimum age to be stipulated for legal reasons, this will be stated on the Person Specification.

West Midlands Fire Service is committed to good employment policies and practices for people with disabilities. Any information given regarding a disability will be treated positively.

Disability is defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as:-

‘Anyone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

The West Midlands Fire Service offers a Job Interview Guarantee Scheme to people with disabilities. The purpose of the scheme is to guarantee a job interview to candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum criteria of the post for which they are applying.

The scheme is one of the positive actions West Midlands Fire Service is taking to encourage applications from suitably qualified people with disabilities.

If you have a disability, it would be to your benefit to indicate this in the space provided.

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. It would also be helpful to state whether you require any particular arrangements to be made in order for you to attend for an interview or assessments.

### **Section 3      Qualifications/Training**

When completing this section, enter the details of all examinations taken and any relevant training received, with results (if applicable). If you are currently studying and have not yet completed the course or you are awaiting exam results, please state this clearly under grade/result. All shortlisted applicants will be requested to present appropriate, original certificates at interview stage.

### **Section 4      Employment History**

When completing this section, please include details of any employment whether paid, voluntary or working from home. If you have no present or previous employment please state 'NONE' across the relevant section/s.

### **Section 5      Other Information**

Please complete the information requested in this section. Your responses will only form part of the shortlisting criteria if stated on the Person Specification as a requirement for the position you are applying for.

### **Section 6      Relevant Experience**

As part of this application pack, you will have received a copy of the Job Description and Person Specification for this position. The Person Specification details the experience, skills and personal qualities required to carry out the role and shows how these areas will be assessed at each stage of the selection process.

Please ensure that any additional sheet is clearly marked with your name at the top of the sheet, and that you attach it securely to your application form.

To complete this section you should refer directly to the Person Specification as this details the experience, knowledge and skills that would be required by the postholder to undertake the role. The Person Specification also shows how each area will be assessed.

Where it states 'application form', this means it is an area that will be assessed through your application form and particular attention should be paid to this. Therefore, when detailing your experience, you should aim to cover these points on the Person Specification.

## Section 6 Relevant Experience *continued*

It is important to only include the experience and skills that are directly relevant to the position you are applying for. When your application form is assessed for a shortlist, you will be marked on how well you have evidenced your experience, knowledge and skills in relation to particular elements of the Person Specification. To score a high mark it is important that you include enough detail to evidence what you have done, rather than to simply refer to that particular experience, knowledge or skill.

Some examples of evidencing are shown below:

**“I have excellent communication skills.”** This provides slight evidence but is not sufficient.

**“I have excellent communication skills and have to communicate effectively on a daily basis with all levels of staff, members of the public and agencies in order to complete the task.”** This provides good evidence and will be marked higher than the previous example.

**“I have excellent communication skills and have to communicate effectively on a daily basis with all levels of staff, members of the public and agencies through a number of different methods such as on the telephone, face-to-face and in writing”**

This provides good evidence and will be marked higher than the previous example.

You may draw from experiences, knowledge and skills gained from work, school, further education, voluntary work, home and hobbies.

**Please be aware that CVs are not accepted as part of an application form.**

**You should ensure that all information is entered on the application form.**

## Section 7 References

References will only be taken once an employment offer has been made. Please provide the name and address of two people from whom a reference can be obtained. The first should be your present or, if you are not currently employed, your most recent employer. The second should be another relevant employer or your college, university or school. If applicable. If you have not previously been in employment or education, please leave both boxes blank and an appropriate reference will be discussed with you at interview stage.

## Section 8 Declaration

By signing your application form you are confirming that the information you have provided on the application form is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

Please note that if you send your application to us by email, you will be required to sign your application form at interview, should you be successfully shortlisted.

## What happens next ?

- You can return the completed application before the closing date at time by post, or e-mail.
- If you do not hear from us within 28 days of the closing date of the vacancy you may assume that, on this occasion, you have been unsuccessful.
- Candidates who have been successful in being shortlisted will be contacted within 28 days of the closing date and will receive clear details about the date, time and location of the interview and any assessments/tests, if applicable.
- All members of the interview panel will have received training to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly.
- Both successful and unsuccessful interviewees will be advised of the result, normally within 5 working days of the final interview.
- All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references, document checks and medical clearance and some positions may also require a criminal records disclosure to be obtained for you.

## Help us to help you

- By offering feedback so that we can improve the service we provide.
- By advising us, should your circumstances or details change, or if you are unable to attend an appointment.
- By advising us if you require any additional arrangements to be made to assist you in participating in any part of the selection process.

## Returning your Application Form

**Please note that it is your responsibility to ensure that your application form reaches us by 12 midday on the closing date.** Late applications will not be accepted unless by prior agreement with the Recruitment and Assessment Team in exceptional circumstances.

Please return this form:

By post, to the: **Recruitment and Assessment Team**  
**West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters**  
**99 Vauxhall Road**  
**Birmingham B7 4HW**

Please ensure that the correct postage is used.  
Any applications that we receive with incorrect postage will not be accepted.

Via e-mail to: **applications@wmfs.net**

If you have any queries, please contact the Recruitment and Assessment Team on **0121 380 6225/6235**.

