



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

Part-Time Retained Fire Fighter

Donegal County Fire Service

Information for Candidates

February 2024

1. General

Donegal County Council proposes to create panels of qualified candidates for the position of Part-Time Retained Fire Fighter, from which it will fill vacancies as they arise across all Retained Fire Brigades within County Donegal:

- Letterkenny Fire Brigade
- Buncrana Fire Brigade
- Carndonagh Fire Brigade
- Merville Fire Brigade
- Stranorlar Fire Brigade
- Donegal Town Fire Brigade
- Ballyshannon Fire Brigade
- Bundoran Fire Brigade
- Killybegs Fire Brigade
- Glenties Fire Brigade
- Dungloe Fire Brigade
- Gweedore Fire Brigade
- Falcarragh Fire Brigade
- Milford Fire Brigade
- Glencolmcille Fire Brigade

2. Qualifications and Requirements for the Post

(a) Age

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age at the last date for receipt of applications.

(b) Character

Candidates must be of good character. The Council may make whatever enquiries it considers necessary to satisfy this condition.

Prior to appointment, candidates must undergo and successfully complete the Garda Vetting process.

(c) Education/Training

- (i) Candidates must have attained a suitable level of education to enable them to successfully complete the appropriate training and to perform satisfactorily the duties of a Retained Fire Fighter.
- (ii) Employment is conditional on applicants successfully completing and passing all modules of the Recruits Course, the Breathing Apparatus Initial Wearers Course and Compartment Fire Behaviour Course for Retained Fire Fighters within the first year of employment. Failure to complete and pass all modules of these compulsory training courses will result in termination of employment as a Retained Fire Fighter.

(d) Health

- (i) Each Retained Fire Fighter must be free from any defect or disease which would render him/her unsuitable to hold employment and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.
- (ii) To ensure that Fire Fighters are capable of safely and efficiently undertaking the tasks that they are required to perform, it is necessary to specify standards, which should be achieved by all entrants to the service. Successful candidates, before being employed, will have to successfully complete a medical examination in accordance with the Medical Standards for Recruitment to Retained Fire Service, carried out by the Fire Service's Occupational Health Medical Advisor.
- (iii) The medical examination will include an eyesight test. Candidates are not permitted to wear spectacles or contact lenses during the medical examination for new recruits or during the Suitability Assessments.
- (iv) Following employment, Retained Fire Fighters must participate in the Occupational Health Care scheme for Members of the Retained Fire Service as and when required by Donegal County Council, the Chief Fire Officer or the Fire Service's Occupational Health Medical Advisor.

(e) Medical Assessment

Medical Assessments will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Medical Standards for Recruitment to the Retained Fire Service, 2005. The Medical Standards fall into 3 No. general categories: Requirements/Disqualifications/Disqualifications susceptible to remedial treatment.

The following specific conditions could be considered as disqualifying an applicant:

Failure to satisfy the Medical Advisor re physical capacity, agility, hearing, eyesight (including colour vision), unimpaired loco motor systems etc; History of epilepsy; Alcohol or drug dependency; Chronic bronchitis, asthma or other disabling disease of the lungs; Organic disease of the cardiovascular system, including blood pressure; All types of diabetes; History of vertigo/balance problems; History of mental instability; History of low back symptoms; History of significant knee joint injury or disease; History of night-blindness; Chronic skin disease, including dermatitis, psoriasis etc.

The following conditions would render an applicant unsuitable for operational duties but may be susceptible to remedial treatment:

Gastric or duodenal ulcer; Patent perforation of one or both ears, otitis media or gross nasal sepsis or obstruction; Hernia; Varicose veins; Unsatisfactory dental condition or oral sepsis requiring treatment; Albuminuria, unless shown to be simple orthostatic of normal renal function; Over or under-weight – greater or lesser than 15% of predicated body-weight according to standards tables for height and weight;
Failure at strength test(s).

3. Tenure

- (a) The employment is part-time/retained and may be terminated at any time.
- (b) The retirement age is 55 years, or earlier if found medically unfit to continue
- (c) The retirement age may be extended to 60 years, as follows:

55 years to 58 years subject to the following

- submission of an annual application for an extension
- submission of an annual certification of medical fitness by the Fire Service Occupational Health Medical Advisor

58 years to 60 years – A new Contract will be required each year at 58 & 59 subject to the following:

- submission of an annual application for an extension
- submission of an annual certification of medical fitness by the Fire Service Occupational Health Medical Advisor

- (d) Each Retained Fire Fighter will be required to serve a probationary period of not less than 9 months during which time suitability for continued employment in the Fire Service will be assessed.

4. Remuneration

- (a) A firefighter shall be paid at the appropriate approved national remuneration rates for attendance at incidents, training and community fire safety activity.

The Retainer and other fixed allowances (where applicable) will be paid from the date on which the candidate takes up duty as a Retained Fire Fighter (i.e. the date on which he/she is given a pager on successful completion of the Retained Fire Fighter Recruits Course and reports for duty to his/her brigade).

- (b) The current national remuneration rates are in accordance with Circular EL/03 2023.

Annual Retainer

Employment Duration	Annual Retainer Payment
On Recruitment	€11,769.00
2-4 Years	€12,751.00
5-7 Years	€13,963.00
8+ Years	€15,067.00

Hourly Rates – Drills & Fires

Drills	Fires			
	Day		Night	
Rate/hr	1 st Hour	Subsequent Hour	1 st Hour	Subsequent Hour
€47.50	€47.50	€23.75	€95.00	€47.50

Firefighter basic pay is based on an annual retainer payment, attendance at incidents (minimum guaranteed 75.0hrs annually at flat rate), drills (81.5hrs annually based on attendance requirements), training, community fire safety activity (minimum guaranteed 40.0hrs annually) and other fixed allowances.

Possible minimal earnings based on the above:

Firefighter 0-1 Year	€18,905.00
Firefighter 2-4 Years	€19,887.00
Firefighter 5-7 Years	€21,099.00
Firefighter 8+ Years	€22,203.00

Holders of the post will be paid at the appropriate point on the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Department Circular.

New entrants will commence on the minimum point of the scale.

- (c) Failure to attend 85% of the drills or 75% of the incidents that he/she is eligible to attend in a quarter will result in 50% of the Retainer being withheld.
- (d) Failure to meet the standard in a second quarter in any twelve months will result in 100% of the Retainer being withheld.
- (e) Any further failure to meet the standard will be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure. This is in compliance with National standards / agreement currently in force.
- (f) Currently payments will be made quarterly by Donegal County Council and this will change in accordance with national agreements.
- (g) All payments will be subject to deduction of statutory contributions such as PAYE and PRSI, etc.
- (h) For new entrants under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme, effective from 1st January 2013, superannuation contributions are as follows:
 - 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration and
 - 3% of pensionable remuneration

Pension and retirement lump sum are based on career-average pay. Pensions will be co-ordinated with the State Pension Contributory.

In order for a new entrant to the scheme to qualify for a pension, he/she must have a minimum of two years employment.

5. Duties

- (a) Each Retained Fire-fighter will be required to attend at incidents, drills and training, at such times and for such periods as required by the Fire Authority or the Chief Fire Officer.
- (b) For the purpose of (a) each Retained Fire-Fighter will operate in accordance with such rostering arrangements as exist, or as may be arranged by the Fire Authority, or the Chief Fire Officer from time to time.
- (c) Each Retained Fire-fighter will perform such other duties as are assigned to him/her from time to time by the Fire Authority or the Chief Fire Officer.

6. Residence and place of work

- (a) Candidates must live and work within a maximum distance of **3.0 kilometres** of the respective fire station. The location of residence and place of work must be acceptable to the Chief Fire Officer.
- (b) Where a place of work is dynamic or changeable, work should be limited to within a distance of **3.0 kilometres** of the respective fire station.
- (c) Any change of residence or place of work that puts the Retained Fire-Fighter at a distance more than that permitted by the Chief Fire Officer from the Fire Station or to a location unacceptable to the Chief Fire Officer will result in termination of employment as a Retained Fire Fighter.
- (d) Changes of residence or workplace must be notified in writing to the Chief Fire Officer. Failure to do so may result in termination of employment as a Retained Fire Fighter.

7. Other Conditions

- (a) A Retained Fire Fighter must carry the appropriate fire service alerter at all times when on duty.
- (b) A Retained Fire Fighter will be required to report for duty to the Fire Station in its present location or in the event of a change of location, to such new location as may be decided by the Fire Authority. Changes in the location of a Fire Station will not result in payment of disturbance money or other compensation.
- (c) Each Retained Fire Fighter, including the self-employed and the unemployed if they take up employment, must **submit a Letter of Release (as per Application Form Appendix I)** from their employer stating that their employer will release them to attend fire brigade incidents and training. When a Fire Fighter changes employment a new letter of release must be submitted to the Human Resources Dept., Donegal County Council. Failure to do so may result in termination of employment as a Retained Fire Fighter.
- (d) Each employee must comply with all National or Local agreements as may be in force from time to time.
- (e) Each employee must use and cooperate with the use of any new technology that may be introduced by the Fire Authority or by the Chief Fire Officer.

- (f) Candidates must hold a full Category B Licence, not be disqualified from driving by a Court and not be subject to any restricted licence recommendations by a Medical Practitioner on the Irish Medical Council Register (Specialist or General) at the latest date for receipt of applications for the competition.
- (g) As part of your role in the retained Fire Service, firefighters shall where required by the Chief Fire Officer, obtain a Class C Driving Licence.

8. The Recruitment Process

8.1 Submission of Application Forms

- (a) Applications will only be accepted by email on the prescribed application form.
- (b) Details regarding the submission of applications are detailed on the form.
- (c) Late applications will not be considered.

8.2 Short-Listing

Candidates may be short-listed on the basis of information supplied. In the event of a short-listing exercise being required, application forms will be examined and assessed against a set of pre-determined criteria, based on the requirements of the job. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications and experience on the application form.

8.3 Distance Requirements

The distances from the applicant's residence and place of work to the Fire Station will be independently measured. Applicants living/working outside the maximum acceptable distance, in accordance with Section 6 (a-d) above, from the Fire Station will not be called for suitability assessment.

Certain occupations are deemed incompatible with the role of a Retained Fire Fighter and will render an applicant ineligible to proceed to the next stage. Any occupation that is likely to take an applicant outside the maximum acceptable distance or limit the candidate's ability to attend any training or incidents, will render an applicant ineligible to proceed to the next stage of the recruitment process.

8.4 Suitability Assessments

Candidates who meet the criteria for consideration for the post of Retained Fire Fighter must undertake a number of suitability assessments. The tests will assess the suitability of applicants under six headings:

- (i) Physical assessment 1 (Casualty Drag).
- (ii) Physical assessment 2 (Confined Space).

- (iii) Physical assessment 3 (Equipment Carry).
- (iv) Claustrophobia assessment (Breathing Apparatus and Confined Spaces).
- (v) Acrophobia assessment (Ladder Climb and Working at Height).
- (vi) Literacy assessment (Numerical Reasoning, Reading and Listening).

In advance of attending the suitability assessments, applicants are requested to complete a **Cardiac Screening Questionnaire** and have same signed and stamped by their own GP, to ensure that they are fit to undertake the Suitability Assessments.

In addition to this, applicants are requested to complete a Self-declaration form, to confirm their current COVID-19 status.

Applicants will not be permitted to wear spectacles or contact lenses during any of the Suitability Assessments. Applicants must satisfy themselves as to their ability to safely undertake the Suitability Assessments. Failure to successfully complete any of the Suitability Assessments will render an applicant ineligible to proceed to interview stage.

8.5 Interview

Candidates who successfully complete the suitability assessments will be called for interview.

Where it is considered that it would be reasonable not to admit all candidates to the interview, by reason of the number of applications received and the standard of knowledge, training or experience in general of the candidates, only persons likely to attain at the interview a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment shall be called for interview.

8.6 Garda Vetting

Candidates for the post of Retained Fire Fighter are subject to Garda Vetting See Appendix III of the application form – NVB1 form.

Retained Fire Fighters, once appointed, are the subject of regular Garda Vetting.

8.7 Other

Appointments to the Council are subject to satisfactory checks with regard to references and qualifications.

8.8 Right to Information and Review

The Council is committed to offering feedback and information to candidates. Any candidate who wishes to do so may request to have a decision or the process reviewed. Any such request must be submitted in writing, stating the grounds of the request and this must be submitted to the Human Resources

Department, Three Rivers Centre, Lifford, Co. Donegal, within five working days of the date of notification of a relevant decision.

8.9 Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

8.10 Canvassing will Disqualify

Any attempt by a candidate (or by any persons acting on their behalf) to canvass or otherwise influence any officer of the Council (or persons nominated by it to interview or examine applicants) in the candidate's favour, either directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise, will automatically disqualify the applicant for consideration for the position.

8.11 General Data Protection Regulation

Donegal County Council is committed to protecting your personal data and we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 – 2018, and the General Data Protection Regulation.

- **Basis for Processing your Personal Information**

The basis for processing your personal data is to process your application for the position you have applied for with Donegal County Council under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources Department policies and procedures.

When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied on your application form. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. You are entitled to obtain at any time, a copy of information about you, which is kept on record.

- **Sharing of Information**

Outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated shortlisting and/or interview board.

If, following the competition, you are placed on a Panel and offered a position, the information provided in your application form will form part of your Personnel File.

Furthermore, should you be offered a position and subsequently confirm your interest in the position, the information provided on your application form will be used to request service records and employment references.

- Storage period

Your application will be retained for two years from the date a panel for this position is formed. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition.

Donegal County Council's Privacy Statement can be assessed at:

www.donegalcoco.ie