

# Caroline County Government Position Description

## Firefighter/EMT

### Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management

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*The duties listed in this position description represent those where the majority of the time is spent or those that are important or critical to the function. However, additional related duties may be assigned. For successful job performance, an individual must be able to perform each essential function satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. The Knowledge, Skills and Abilities, Working Conditions, and Physical Demands, Dexterity and Sensory Requirements are representative of those that are needed or encountered when performing the essential functions of this job.*

#### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

Performs responsible technical and protective service work in the field of fire suppression, prevention, emergency medical services and associated emergency services.

Upon entry, the incumbent uses basic knowledge and skills acquired through required certifications to train and become competent in performing work that involves a variety of duties including emergency response, fire suppression, rescue, emergency life support, salvage, fire prevention, and related duties as assigned. Work involves considerable personal hazard. Initially, work is performed under close supervision, but as experience is gained, work is performed under regular supervision, requiring discretion in deciding what needs to be done in accordance with standard procedures and guidelines. Work is evaluated through observation, reports, and conferences.

The duties/responsibilities of the Firefighter-EMT are distinguished from those of the Firefighter-Medic in that the Firefighter-EMT position requires a lower level of EMS certification, and performs basic emergency care while assisting with the more advanced life support operations.

This position normally works 24-hour shifts.

#### **ORGANIZATION/SUPERVISION**

This position is assigned to the Operations Division of the Department of Fire-Rescue and Emergency Management, reports to the Lieutenant-Operations, and has no supervisory responsibilities.

#### **DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **Essential Functions**

- While wearing personal protective ensembles and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), performs firefighting tasks, (e.g., hose line operations, extensive crawling, lifting and carrying heavy objects, ventilating roofs or walls using power or hand tools, forcible entry, etc.) rescue operations, and other emergency response actions under stressful conditions, including working in extremely hot or cold environments for prolonged time periods.
- Wears an SCBA, which includes a demand valve-type positive-pressure face piece or HEPA filter mask, which requires the ability to tolerate increased respiratory workloads.
- Wears fire protective ensemble, including SCBA, that is encapsulating and insulated, which will result in significant fluid loss that frequently progresses to clinical dehydration and can elevate core temperature to levels exceeding 102.2 degrees F.

- May be exposed to toxic fumes, irritants, particulates, biological (infectious) and non-biological hazards, and/or heated gases, despite the use of personal protective ensembles and SCBA.
- Climbs stairs (usually no more than three flights) while wearing fire protective ensemble, including SCBA, weighing at least 50 pounds or more and carrying equipment/tools weighing an additional 20 to 40 pounds.
- Connects/hooks up apparatus to fire hydrant and operates pumps to supply water at the appropriate pressure and volume using hydrant wrenches, couplings, hoses, spanner wrenches, and other tools; monitors control panel; adjusts and maintains water pressure by adjusting pressure relief valve or automatic pressure governor.
- While wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA, advances water-filled hose lines up to 2.5 inches (65 mm) in diameter from fire apparatus to seat of fire/occupancy (approximately 150 feet [50 m]), which can involve negotiating multiple flights of stairs, ladders, and other obstacles.
- Carries, determines position, raises and extends manual ladders at incident scene. Stabilizes ladder trucks and elevates and operates aerial ladders and platforms while watching for power lines, trees and other overhead obstructions.
- While wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA, climbs ladders and operates from heights in proximity to electrical power lines or other hazards in order to operate master stream devices, rescue victims, or provide access for ventilation.
- While wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA, walks or crawls in the dark along sometimes narrow and uneven surfaces that may be wet or icy to search for and locate victims, and to obtain information about the incident. Rescue-drags, carries or hoists victims (ranging from newborns up to adults weighing over 200 pounds) to safety despite hazardous conditions and low visibility. Searches structure for seat of fire or other hazards.
- Uses force to pry open, cut, or break down doors in order to gain entry into structures or rooms. Cuts through surfaces using power tools.
- Locates seat of fire or other hazard (i.e., gas leak) by observing, listening, or smelling for smoke, sounds, flames, gas, vapors, etc.
- Works in unpredictable emergency environments for prolonged periods of extreme physical exertion without benefit of warm-up, scheduled rest periods, meals, or access to medication(s), or hydration.
- Performs work involving critical, time-sensitive, complex, problem-solving during physical exertion in stressful, hazardous environments, including hot, dark, tightly enclosed spaces, that is further aggravated by fatigue, flashing lights, sirens and other distractions.
- Operates fire apparatus or other vehicles in an emergency mode with emergency lights and sirens; selects the most direct and expeditious route to alarm site; maneuvers and positions apparatus at incident scene.
- Performs work that involves communicating (giving and comprehending verbal orders) while wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA under conditions of high background noise, poor visibility and drenching from hose lines or fixed protection systems (sprinklers).

- Functions as an integral component of a team in which sudden incapacitation of a member can result in mission failure or risk of injury or death to civilians or other team members.
- Performs salvage and overhaul operations involving moving furniture, appliances, merchandise, and other property, covering holes in structures, stabilizing damaged structural components, searching for and extinguishing any hidden fires by looking, feeling or smelling for fire and smoke, and removing and extinguishing burned or smoldering debris from building.
- Performs emergency medical services consistent with level of certification and department policy, requiring a high degree of independent decision making under stressful and time-pressured circumstances, and involving exposure to communicable diseases, interacting with people who are traumatized or who have learning, developmental, psychological, or behavioral disorders, and other unpredictable and potentially dangerous environments.
- Assesses the nature of the patient's condition and makes decisions to determine the appropriate emergency medical treatment in accordance with protocols and guidelines. This includes the use of vision, hearing and touch to observe details such as changes in color, presence of odors, distinguishing the location and type of injury, listening to and distinguishing lung sounds, heart tones, and blood pressure using a stethoscope in noisy environments, or reading the small print on medication labels or gauges on oxygen regulators and blood pressure cuffs.
- Depending on findings and treatment needed, performs various functions including (but not limited to) ventilating the victim's airways by removing obstructions and/or using special devices, hooking up an automated external defibrillator to the patient's chest area to resuscitate, administering medications previously prescribed to patients, assisting with emergency childbirth, controlling hemorrhages, treating for shock, bandaging wounds, and immobilizing painful, swollen or deformed extremities or other body parts.
- Uses standard precautions to eliminate or minimize exposure (respiratory or contact) to body fluids that could be considered potentially infectious wherever possible.
- Responds as part of a team to ambulance alarms and other emergencies and performs appropriate emergency medical service. Lifts and moves patients (up to approximately 200 pounds) with and without assistance.
- Extricates patients from irregular surfaces, stairs, trails, roadways, ditches, vehicles, dwellings, businesses and waterways, involving exposure to all types of environmental conditions.
- Transports patients to a medical facility; reports observations and actions to medical facility staff that will rely on the information given to provide additional treatment.
- Performs emergency skills such as bandaging, splinting, patient movement, application of oxygen, administration of medications (pills, sprays, auto injectors, etc.).
- Communicates verbally, non-verbally, and in written form with co-workers, patients, families and other members of the healthcare team while maintaining appropriate patient confidentiality. Maintains verbal communication with dispatch, local hospitals for medical consultation, and other response units. Completes reports in writing or on computer as needed to record emergency responses. Writes complex incident reports relating to both fire and EMS.
- Checks and maintains fire, rescue and EMS apparatus and equipment to ensure readiness and proper and safe operation; inspects and cleans on a regular basis and performs minor

repairs. Operates pumps, aerial ladders and auxiliary equipment; decontaminates vehicles both inside and out; assures supplies and other expendables are maintained at their desired level.

- Performs rescues from hazardous sites such as auto accidents and collapsed buildings. Pries, breaks, or cuts structures or vehicles to free victims using manual and mechanical equipment.
- Performs job safely in accordance with departmental safety procedures. Operates equipment safely and reports any unsafe work conditions or practices to a supervisor.

### **Other Duties**

- Performs routine clerical and administrative functions such as preparing reports and training materials.
- Assists with public information presentations on fire safety, injury prevention, what to do in case of emergency, and other services available in the department.
- Assists with pre-fire planning and company level fire inspections of selected occupancies in order for employees to be familiar with building layout, hydrant locations, exposures, hazardous materials, and other areas or situations of high risk.
- Performs daily maintenance and housekeeping activities in and around the fire station including dusting, floor maintenance, clean up of apparatus, equipment, hose and tools, and appliances.
- Reads departmental correspondence, professional literature, and technical manuals to maintain knowledge and stay informed of new developments in the field.
- Attends training programs on fire and emergency medical services related topics and techniques both at the assigned station and other locations to maintain and enhance skills and abilities; reviews and studies current literature; maintains all appropriate certifications.
- Develops and conducts training sessions for other response personnel on a variety of fire and emergency medical services related topics.
- Supports the mission of the department.

***Mission Statement:** To provide the citizens of our county and those who may pass through with the most proficient delivery of fire protection, emergency medical, and disaster related services that can be accomplished by prudently using all resources available to us with special focus on the most valuable resource, "Our People".*

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- **Fire Suppression/Emergency Medical Services/Emergency Management** - Thorough knowledge of the principles, practices and methods of modern fire and EMS functions and operations; general knowledge of applicable ordinances and State laws, and general knowledge of maintenance procedures for apparatus and equipment.
- **Equipment/Machines/Tools** – Skill in the use of a variety of manual and power tools, and maintenance, medical, and technical rescue equipment.
- **Communications** – Ability to communicate information and ideas clearly, concisely and effectively, both orally and in writing; and to read, to understand, follow and give verbal, non-verbal, and written directions.
- **Critical Thinking/Reasoning/Problem Solving** – Ability to perform work involving the application of the principles of logical thinking; to collect data and solve abstract problems; to

apply extensive understanding of operating policies and procedures to solve complex problems; to make sound decisions affecting co—workers, patients, the public and other organizational members; to apply the principles and practices of a wide range of administrative or technical methods in the solution of administrative or technical problems; and to comprehend and apply information contained a variety of written materials such as professional literature, technical manuals, and maps.

- **Records/Reports** - Ability to maintain accurate records and to write complex incident reports relating to both Fire and EMS.
- **Work in Emergency Situations** – Ability to think and respond quickly to emergencies and stay mentally alert for prolonged periods; to drive safely under emergency conditions; to work in unpredictable emergency environments for prolonged periods of extreme physical exertion without benefit of warm-up, scheduled rest periods, meals, or access to medication or hydration; to continuously provide attention to details, and to work for long periods of time under unusual pressure.
- **Safety** – Ability to perform job safely in accordance with departmental safety procedures and to wear SCBA, and fire protective ensemble while performing firefighting tasks and other personal protective equipment as required for maintaining a safe environment when caring for patients.
- **Physical** – Physical strength and ability to perform the essential functions of the position. (See “Working Conditions” and “Physical Demands, Dexterity and Sensory Requirements” stated below.)
- **Mathematics** – Ability to use mathematics involving the practical application of fractions, percentages, ratios, proportions, geometric construction, algebraic solutions of equations and inequalities.
- **Training/Acquiring New Skills** – Ability to participate in training and comprehend and apply new concepts and job-related skills.
- **Interpersonal Relationships** – Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with fellow employees, County officials, volunteers, outside agencies and the general public with an emphasis on developing strong positive relationships.

### **EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING**

Requires a High School Diploma or equivalent. At all times, must possess a valid, Virginia driver’s license and have an acceptable driving record. Must currently hold and maintain certification or equivalent in the following:

- Basic Cardiac Life Support (Health Care Provider CPR)
- Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC) III
- Virginia Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (EMT-B)
- Virginia Department of Fire Programs Firefighter II
- Virginia Department of Fire Programs Hazardous Materials Operations

Within one year in assigned position, the following certifications must be attained and maintained throughout employment:

- Virginia Department of Fire Programs Basic Pump Operator or Driver Pump Operator
- Virginia Department of Fire Programs Rural Water Supply
- Incident Command System (ICS) 100, 200, 700, 800

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

After an offer of employment has been made but prior to appointment, individuals must successfully complete a medical examination, drug screening, and background investigation. Additional medical examinations may be administered to employees periodically, in accordance with policy.

Medical examinations are consistent with position requirements. They are designed to reveal any medical condition that might put the person at increased risk to self or others as a result of certain

exposures or activities, and to exhibit freedom from any physical, emotional or mental condition which adversely affects the performance of essential job duties with reasonable accommodation.

**OTHER CONDITIONS**

- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Non-Exempt
- Essential Employee
- 12-Month probationary employee

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

The following working conditions are encountered frequently:

Office setting	Communicable diseases
Field setting	Blood, bloodborne pathogens & other body fluids
Driving	Time pressures
Extreme temperatures	Unpredictable work during a shift
Adverse weather	Stressful emergency situations
Wet/humid conditions	Frequent change of tasks
Bright light	Fast pace of work
Darkness or dim/poor light	Responding to calls day and night
Allergens	Overtime
High background noise	Physical danger and abuse
Vibration	Working while fatigued
Slippery, steep, or uneven surfaces	Tedious or exacting work
Traumatic and other disagreeable situations	Noisy/distracting environment
Traffic/road hazards	Possibility of safety risks
Subject to dehydration	Working independently
Hunger or irregular meals	Working closely with others as part of a team
Limited or disrupted sleep	Performing multiple tasks simultaneously
Wearing self-contained breathing apparatus and personal protective gear while performing emergency operations.	

The following Working Conditions are encountered occasionally:

Hazardous materials	Smoke, burning materials and airborne particles
Fumes/gasses/noxious odors	Mechanical, chemical, and electrical hazards
Falling objects	Explosives
Animals/wildlife/insects/snakes/ticks	Moving machinery
Confined spaces	Work in high or precarious places

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS/DEXTERITY AND SENSORY REQUIREMENTS**

The following demands/requirements are frequently performed. (Examples of job activities are not all inclusive.)

<b><u>DEMAND</u></b>	<b><u>REQUIRED JOB ACTIVITY</u></b>
Standing	Required for most duties in the station and everyday fire, rescue, and EMS operations. Examples include inspecting, cleaning and maintaining vehicles, apparatus and equipment; observing conditions and determining strategy/tactics on an emergency scene; listening/talking to others; giving directions/instructions; and patient assessment/care.
Walking	Required for most duties in the station and everyday fire, rescue, and EMS operations. Examples include inspecting and cleaning vehicles/apparatus/equipment; moving equipment; and moving to and from various locations at incident scenes and in the station.
Sitting	Required for driving vehicles to/from scene, performing administrative work such as writing reports, maintaining records, and reading correspondence and other publications.
Bending/Stooping/ Kneeling/Crouching	Required for many fire, rescue and EMS operations such as patient care and transportation; some fire suppression activities such as to gain access to victims, areas or materials during search and rescue, hooking up hoselines, moving equipment and supplies; and daily maintenance around the station.
Carrying	Required in the station and for many fire, rescue and EMS operations, such as carrying medical equipment, stretchers, patients or victims, power or hand tools and equipment, ladders, and hoselines.
Gripping	Required for many fire, rescue, and EMS operations such as lifting stretchers, using a variety of power and hand tools and equipment; hoselines, gripping a steering wheel.
Pushing/Pulling/ Prying and Exerting Force	Required for everyday fire, rescue, and EMS operations such as gaining access in buildings and vehicles by using an axe or other tools, or forcing doors/windows; moving obstructions; using tools and equipment to ventilate areas; moving victims/patients, rolling/unrolling hose; or clearing areas or moving building contents during salvage and overhaul operations.
Twisting/Turning	Required to treat victims/patients at scene and in ambulance; to gain access to victims; to perform search and rescue; hose deployment; forcible entry; to clean and inspect vehicles.
Dragging	Required to move victims or obstructions during search and rescue, to drag hoselines to appropriate position, to clear areas of debris or move building contents during salvage and overhaul operations.
Climbing	Climbing is required for steps, ladders, and embankments, and to access vehicles/apparatus for maintenance or to access equipment.
Quick Movements	Required for everyday fire, rescue, and EMS operations; there are many urgent situations where personnel must be aware of surroundings and move/react quickly to changing situations, such as for victim rescue, patient care, fire containment, and to retreat from hazards.
Stretching, Reaching, and Working Above Shoulders	Required to gain access to equipment on apparatus; to access ceilings, attics or windows; load hose; pick up equipment; for extrications and rescues; moving patients; working from ladders; and daily maintenance in the station.
Lifting	Lifting is required for hand/power tools, hoses, ladders and other equipment, and victims/patients. Regularly lifts 10 - 50 pounds in full turnout gear that weighs approximately 50 pounds. Many times, lifting is required while climbing stairs or walking to carry victims, hose, hand tools, etc. Occasionally, up to a maximum of 200 pounds may be lifted, but usually, the weight may be dragged or the 2-person lifting technique may be used.

Touching/Feeling	Used for numerous EMS and fire operations such as feeling for heat behind a wall/door or floor, performing search and rescue to locate victims, or checking victim/patient conditions.
Dexterity in the use of fingers/hands	Required for most fire, rescue, and EMS duties, such as putting on turnout gear, holding/using tools and equipment; patient care, maintenance around the station; and using the computer.
Writing (handwriting/use of computer)	Required for preparing/completing incident or patient reports and memos, maintaining records, and participating in training and independent study.
Seeing/Reading (distances, up-close/small print; peripheral and night vision; and color, depth and texture perception)	Required for many fire suppression, EMS and rescue activities, such as visualization for walking, driving, recognizing hazards, assessing patients' medical signs and symptoms, administering appropriate treatment such as reading medication levels, reports, patient history/medical records, maps, signs/placards, apparatus gauges/control panels, memos, written policies or directives, training materials and independent study; sizing-up the fireground, or in identifying/accessing/rescuing victims.
Hearing	Required for almost all responsibilities such as driving, radio and telephone communications, patient care (such as listening to breathing); to communicate with patients, hospital staff, co-workers, and the public; to understand commands and to exchange information at the emergency scene.
Speaking	Needed for everyday fire, rescue, and EMS operations, such as radio/telephone communications; communicating with patients, hospital staff, co-workers and the public; exchanging information or giving directions/instructions at the emergency scene and in the station.
Sense of Smell	Required to detect smoke and the presence of various hazardous materials; needed for patient care to identify the presence of certain conditions.
Use of foot controls	Needed for driving and operating apparatus/equipment.
Wearing special gear/protective devices	Requires SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) and turnout gear (approximately 50 pounds combined--includes mask, tank, coat, boots, pants, hood, gloves and helmet) on calls for everyday fire suppression-related calls while exerting energy without benefit of warm-up (see exertion of energy below) and while lifting tools/equipment/victims and performing most other demands and requirements above. Surgical gloves are required for patient care.
Exertion of Energy	Frequently, <u>excessive</u> exertion is required without benefit of warm-up upon arrival at the emergency scene. (Excessive exertion includes excessive changes in heart rate, breathing rate and overall feeling of fatigue.) On average, these periods usually last from 15 minutes to 45 minutes. After the emergency scene is somewhat under control there may be periods of <u>moderate</u> exertion (with some excessive exertion possibly being involved) lasting another 10 - 30 minutes.

The following demands/requirements are occasionally performed.

Running	Required to retreat from hazardous conditions in emergency situations.
Crawling	Required to access victims/patients; for extrication operations; to crawl through attics or crawlspaces, or under obstacles, hazards, or heat/smoke layer; and to inspect vehicles, apparatus and equipment.
Jumping	Required to jump a ditch or other barrier to access/retreat from a situation.