



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

Part-Time Retained Fire Fighter

Information for Candidates

February, 2025

1. The Position

The Council is seeking applications from suitably qualified candidates with relevant experience for the position of Part-Time Retained Firefighter.

It is proposed to form a panel of qualified candidates from which vacancies will be filled as they arise during the lifetime of the panel across Retained Fire Brigades within County Donegal as follows:

- **Letterkenny Fire Brigade**
- **Stranorlar Fire Brigade**
- **Donegal Town Fire Brigade**
- **Ballyshannon Fire Brigade**
- **Glenties Fire Brigade**
- **Killybegs Fire Brigade**
- **Falcarragh Fire Brigade**
- **Milford Fire Brigade**
- **Glencolmcille Fire Brigade**

2. 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.

3. 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.

(c) 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) All candidates will have to successfully complete a medical examination, in accordance with the Medical Standards for Recruitment to Retained Fire

Service as carried out by the Fire Service's Occupational Health Medical Advisor, prior to appointment.

Please refer to **Appendix 1** for relevant sections of The Medical Standards for Recruitment to the Retained Fire Service.

- (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) In the case where a candidate is deemed medically unfit, an offer of employment is withdrawn. However, if the Fire Service's Occupational Health Medical Advisor offers a candidate a review or refers the candidate for specialist opinion and the candidate is deemed medically fit in due course, they will then be considered for the next available vacancy, in order of merit, should same arise over the lifetime of the panel.
- (v) 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.

(d) Education/Training

- (i) Candidates must have a suitable level of education to enable them to successfully complete the necessary training and tasks to perform satisfactorily the duties of a Retained Fire Fighter.
- (ii) Employment is conditional on applicants successfully completing and passing the following three courses within the first year of employment:
 - QQI Firefighting Skills Recruits
 - QQI Using Breathing Apparatus (Initial Wearer)
 - QQI Using Breathing Apparatus (Compartment Fire Behaviour)

Failure to successfully complete these compulsory training courses will result in termination of employment as a Retained Fire Fighter.

(e) Driving Licence

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. Learner Permit is **not** acceptable.

4. Particulars of the Post

(a) Tenure

- The employment is part-time/retained and may be terminated at any time.
- The retirement age is 55 years, or earlier if found medically unfit to continue.
- The retirement age may be extended to 62 years, as follows:

55 years to 58 years subject to the following:

- (i) Submission of an annual application for an extension.
- (ii) Submission of an annual certification of medical fitness by the Fire Service Occupational Health Medical Advisor

58 years to 62 years – A new Contract will be required each year at 58, 59, 60 & 61 subject to the following:

- (i) Submission of an annual application for an extension.
- (ii) Submission of an annual certification of medical fitness by the Fire Service Occupational Health Medical Advisor

(b) Probation

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.

(c) 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 03/2024.

Annual Retainer

Employment Duration	Annual Retainer Payment
On Recruitment	€13,523.00
2-4 Years	€14,515.00
5-7 Years	€15,739.00
8+ Years	€16,854.00

Hourly Rates – Drills & Fires

Drills	Fires			
	Day		Night	
Rate/hr	1 st Hour	Subsequent Hour	1 st Hour	Subsequent Hour
€49.54	49.54	€24.77	€99.08	€49.54

- (c) Guaranteed pay

The guaranteed pay is made up of the following and will be broken down to be paid as regular income in the quarterly/fortnightly pay cycle as appropriate.

- Annual Retainer
- Weekly Drill Hours
- Attendance at Incidents
- Promoting Community Fire Safety

Possible minimum earnings based on the above:

Firefighter 0-1 Year	€22,118.00
Firefighter 2-4 Years	€23,110.00
Firefighter 5-7 Years	€24,334.00
Firefighter 8+ Years	€25,449.00

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.

- Retained Firefighters are required to be available and attend alerts 24 weeks in the year on a 'week on/week flexible' basis. Retained Firefighters will have the flexibility to swap days with colleagues subject to the approval of the Station Officer. Across the 24 weeks where the Retained

Firefighter is rostered 'flexible', they can if they so wish attend incidents. The 'week on/week flexible' roster will commence as soon as crewing levels are sufficient to allow for it. Recruitment is a priority in this regard.

- The maximum number of Drill Hours on an annual basis will be 96 hours. A minimum attendance at 85% of the drill hours (81.5 hours) is required.
- Any failure to meet the standards above will be dealt with through the Councils Disciplinary Procedures. This is in compliance with National standards/agreements currently in force.
- All payments will be subject to deduction of statutory contributions such as PAYE and PRSI, etc.
- 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.

(d) Residence and Place of Work

- For **Letterkenny, Stranorlar, Ballyshannon, Glenties** and **Milford** Fire Stations, 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.
- For **Donegal Town, Killybegs, Falcarragh** and **Glencolmcille Fire Stations**, candidates must live and work within a maximum distance of **4.0 kilometres** of the respective fire station. The location of residence and place of work must be acceptable to the Chief Fire Officer.
- Where a place of work is dynamic or changeable, work should be limited to within a distance of **3.0 kilometres** of the fire station for **Letterkenny, Stranorlar, Ballyshannon, Glenties** and **Milford** Fire Stations.
- Where a place of work is dynamic or changeable, work should be limited to within a distance of **4.0 kilometres** of the fire station for **Donegal Town, Killybegs, Falcarragh** and **Glencolmcille Fire Stations**.
- 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.

- 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.

(e) Other Conditions

- A Retained Fire Fighter must carry the appropriate fire service alerter at all times when on duty.
- 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.
- 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.
- Each employee must comply with all National or Local agreements as may be in force from time to time.
- 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.
- 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.

(f) Garda Vetting

Candidates for the post of Retained Fire Fighter are subject to Garda Vetting. Please note all candidates must attain a satisfactory Garda Vetting Disclosure prior to appointment, otherwise the offer of employment will be withdrawn. In the event where a Garda Vetting Disclosure indicates that there is a case pending, then the appointment cannot proceed at that time and the offer of employment will be withdrawn. The candidate will however retain their position on the panel and will be considered for the next vacancy should same arise within the lifetime of the panel.

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

(g) Citizenship Requirements

Eligible candidates must be, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms; (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or (b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or (c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or (d) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or (e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa or (f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

(h) Conflicts of Interest

The post holder shall not engage in any gainful occupation, other than as an employee of a local authority, to such an extent as to impair the performance of his or her duties as an employee of a local authority or in any occupation which might conflict with the interests of the local authority or which might be inconsistent with the discharge of his duties as a local authority employee.

5. The Recruitment Process

(a) Submission of Application Forms

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

(b) 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.

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.

(c) 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.

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, may render an applicant ineligible to proceed to the next stage of the recruitment process.

(d) 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:

- 1) Physical assessment 1 (Casualty Drag).
- 2) Physical assessment 2 (Confined Space).
- 3) Physical assessment 3 (Equipment Carry).
- 4) Claustrophobia assessment (Breathing Apparatus and Confined Spaces).
- 5) Acrophobia assessment (Ladder Climb and Working at Height).
- 6) 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.

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.

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

(e) Right to Information and Review #RFF 2025

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 quoting the above reference number.

(f) Confidentiality

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

(g) Other

Appointments to the Council are subject to satisfactory checks with regard to references, qualifications, medical examinations, and Garda Vetting, as applicable.

(h) 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.

(i) 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

Appendix 1

Medical Standards – Recruitment to Retained Fire Service

1.2 GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR RECRUITMENT

The following entry standards should apply to all recruits to the fire service.

1.2.1 Age

Applicants should be over the age of 18.

1.2.2 Strength

The strength of applicants should be assessed by undertaking tests of handgrip and leg/back pull strength, on a load cell dynamometer. The recruit on entry should have handgrip strength of,

Dominant hand 35 kg or above

Subordinate hand 33 kg or above

And a leg/back pull strength of 117 kg or above

1.2.3 Practical Aptitude Tests

It is recommended that brigades continue to apply existing aptitudes tests in the areas of ladder work, working in confined spaces and hose drills.

When checking for height or confined space phobias, particular care should be taken to avoid the exclusion of candidates because of natural hesitation when confronted with an unfamiliar situation, or self-elimination because they are initially frightened by a test which to complete would require the self-confidence developed either by previous experience or proper training. Care should be taken to avoid danger to candidates in carrying out such tests.

1.2.4 Educational Requirements

Retained brigades should ensure recruits have a standard of numeracy and literacy, which will enable them to benefit from training provided.

1.3 MEDICAL AND FITNESS STANDARDS

The Purpose of the medical examination is to determine if the applicant would be fit to undertake operational duties as a fire fighter having regard to –

- I. The operational conditions to which fire-fighters may be subject at a fire or emergency, and
- II. The medical requirements set out hereunder.

The medical requirements and standards set out in this document are based on the Draft Fire Service Guidelines “Medical Requirements for Recruit Fire-Fighters (Whole-time and Part-time)” which were issued in May 1983 by the Dept of Environment, and which have been subject to review by a specialist in occupational health medicine with experience of the fire service.

1.3.1 Medical Standards

The Medical Standards fall into three general categories

- I. Requirements
- II. Disqualifications
- III. Disqualification's susceptible to remedial treatment

1.3.2 Requirements

Applicants shall comply with the following requirements

- I. Physical Capacity – Applicants shall be fit to undertake fire service duties as assessed by aerobic capacity (VO Max) in the step test, and lung function by measurement of the forced expiratory volume in one second (FEV) and the forced vital capacity (FVC)
- II. Limbs – Applicants shall have agility of limbs, and muscle power as defined in para 1.2.2 above
- III. Applicants shall have unimpaired loco motor systems, and be capable of running, climbing ladders, jumping, crawling and performing all kinds of manual labour.
- IV. Hearing – should be tested by audiometric test
- V. Eyesight – Applicants should;
 - a) Have uncorrected visual acuity of 6/9, 6/12 or better.
 - b) Not wear spectacle or contact lens.
 - c) Have no more than +3.00 dioptres of hypermetropia in each eye.
 - d) Have no more than -0.25 dioptres of myopia in each eye (applicants under 25 years)
 - e) Have no more than -0.75 dioptres of myopia in each eye (applicants aged 25 and over)
 - f) Be able to read N12 at 30cm unaided with both eyes open.
 - g) See at least 6/60 unaided with each eye individually.
 - h) Have a normal visual field in each eye, as determined by confrontation techniques.
 - i) Have no history of night blindness or any ocular disease that is likely to progress and result in future failure of the visual standards for firefighters

Colour vision – Applicants should have an appropriate level of colour perception. Individuals with either normal colour vision or slightly abnormal green colour vision are suitable for appointment to the fire service. Applicants will be tested with the Ishihara plates. Those who pass (having made no more than two errors in plate identification) have normal colour vision. Those who fail should be tested by Farnsworth D.15. Applicants who fail this test are unsuitable.

1.3.3 Disqualifications

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

Failure to comply with any of the above in para 1.3.2

History of epilepsy

Alcohol or drug dependency

Chronic bronchitis, asthma or other disabling disease of the lungs

Organic disease of the cardio-vascular system, including blood pressure
All types of diabetes mellitus whether insulin dependent or non-insulin dependent
A history of vertigo or any illness affecting the sense of balance
History of mental instability
History of low back symptoms
History of significant knee joint injury or disease
History of night-blindness
Chronic skin disease, specifically allergic contact dermatitis, irritant dermatitis, and severe psoriasis

1.3.4 Disqualifications Susceptible to Remedial Treatment

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

- I. Gastric or duodenal ulcer
- II. Patent perforation of one or both ears, otitis media or gross nasal sepsis or obstruction.
- III. Hernia
- IV. Varicose veins
- V. Unsatisfactory dental condition or oral sepsis requiring treatment
- VI. Albuminuria, unless shown to be simple orthostatic of normal renal function
- VII. Over or under-weight – greater or lesser than 15% of predicted body-weight according to standard tables for height and weight
- VIII. Failure at strength tests

1.3.5 Fitness Standards

The fitness of applicants should be assessed on the basis of the step test, with applicants having an aerobic capacity (VO₂ (max)) of 45 ml/kg/minute or greater.