

## Join the Bravest: Become a Rock Island Firefighter/Paramedic!



**Are you seeking a challenging and rewarding career where you can make a critical difference in the lives of others?**

The City of Rock Island Fire Department (RIFD) actively seeks highly motivated and dedicated individuals to join our team as entry-level Firefighter/Paramedics. As a member of our progressive department, you will play a vital role in protecting life and property through fire suppression, advanced life support, emergency medical services, specialized rescue operations, and community engagement.

### **Why Choose the Rock Island Fire Department?**

- **Meaningful Service:** Directly contribute to the safety and well-being of the Rock Island community.
- **Dynamic Environment:** Experience a diverse range of emergency responses, from medical emergencies to complex fire incidents.
- **Integrated EMS and Fire Operations:** As a Firefighter/Paramedic, you will be an integral part of both fire and EMS responses, equipped and ready for any situation.
- **Progressive Department:** Join a department that responds to over 8,500 calls annually with modern equipment and a commitment to excellence across four fire stations.
- **Career Growth:** Benefit from ongoing training, opportunities for advancement, and specialty pay for advanced certifications.
- **Competitive Compensation and Benefits:** Enjoy a starting salary of \$60,843 (effective January 1, 2025, with a 3.00% increase on December 22, 2025), plus stipends for Paramedic/PHRN (\$3,100 annually) or EMT-Basic (\$450 annually), step increases, longevity pay, and a comprehensive benefits package.

## **Our Commitment to the Community:**

The Rock Island Fire Department is a progressive agency operating out of four fire stations, responding to a high volume of calls annually. Our resources include:

- 1 Shift Commander
- 2 ALS Ambulances (staffed by Firefighters/Paramedics who also respond to fire calls)
- 3 Engines
- 1 Ladder Truck
- 1 Light Rescue Vehicle

We are dedicated to providing exceptional emergency services and actively engage in fire prevention and public education initiatives to enhance the safety of our community.

## **Are You Ready to Answer the Call?**

### **We are looking for individuals who demonstrate:**

- Courage, integrity, and a strong sense of duty.
- Excellent physical fitness and the ability to perform demanding tasks.
- Sound judgment and problem-solving skills in high-pressure situations.
- Exceptional teamwork and communication abilities.
- A genuine commitment to serving the Rock Island community.

### **Minimum Requirements:**

- United States citizen.
- High school diploma or General Education Degree (GED).
- Valid driver's license.
- Must be 21 years of age by the date of hire and under 35 years of age by the date of the written examination (refer to IL General Assembly compiled statute 65 ILCS 5/10-2.1-6 for potential exceptions).
- Requires possession of an EMT-Basic, EMT-Paramedic, or PHRN License **before a conditional offer of employment can be extended.** EMT-Basics will be required to obtain their EMT-Paramedic license under the guidance of the City of Rock Island Fire Department and will be required to sign a binding contract for reimbursement for the cost of training.
- Requires proof of successful completion of the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) **with Ladder Climb** within the previous twelve (12) months **before a conditional offer of employment can be extended.**
- Must reside within the states of Illinois or Iowa.

## The Examination Process:

The City of Rock Island Board of Fire and Police Commissioners oversees a thorough and fair examination process for entry-level Firefighter/Paramedic positions. The steps involved are as follows:

### Step 1 - Online Application

- Complete the online application through the City of Rock Island website: <http://www.rigov.org> (Click on the “Employment” icon).

### Step 2 – Written Exam

- The City of Rock Island utilizes the **National Firefighter Selection Inventory (NFSI)** developed by Industrial/Organizational Solutions (I/OS).
- Study guides are available at the I/OS website: <https://iosolutions.com/>
- Applicants must choose **one** of the following in-person testing options at the **Rock Island Police Department, 1212 5th Avenue, Rock Island, IL 61201**:
  - **Option 1:** Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 6:00 pm
  - **Option 2:** Saturday, January 17, 2026, at 8:00 am
- **Important:** Please call Isabel Peña at **309-732-2800** to schedule your preferred testing time. This helps us determine the necessary number of tests. You can change dates if needed.
- **Walk-ins who have not filled out an online application will not be allowed to test.**
- The written examination is scored by I/OS, and results are provided to the Board of Fire & Police Commissioners.

### Step 3 – Initial Background Check

- An initial background check will be conducted by personnel from the Fire Department and Police Department. This includes:
  - Verification of application materials.
  - Contacting previous employers and personal references.
  - Criminal history review for disqualifying offenses as per Illinois Public Act 097-0251.

#### Step 4 – Oral Interview

- Applicants who successfully pass the written exam and initial background check will be invited for an oral interview conducted by the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners.
- **Oral interviews are scheduled for:**
  - Tuesday, February 3, 2026, beginning at 4:00 pm
  - Wednesday, February 4, 2026, beginning at 4:00 pm
  - Thursday, February 5, 2026, beginning at 4:00 pm (Only if Tuesday and Wednesday are full)
- **You MUST take the written examination to be eligible for an interview.**
- You can sign up for an interview when you schedule your written exam time with Isabel Peña at **309-732-2800**.
- A minimum score of 70% is required to pass the oral interview.
- The scores from the written examination and the oral interview are combined to create an initial score.

#### Step 5 – Preference Points

The following preference points will be added to the applicant's initial score for eligible candidates:

- **Veteran's Preference (5 points):** Minimum of twelve (12) full months of active duty service with an honorable discharge.
- **Paramedic/PHRN License (5 points):** Possession of a current EMT-Paramedic or PHRN license.
- **City of Rock Island Resident (5 points):** Proof of residency is required (lease, mortgage, or driver's license).
- **Important:** Applicants eligible for preference points must claim them in writing within ten (10) days after the initial scores are posted, or the claim will be waived.

#### Step 6 - Eligibility List

- The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners tabulates the final scores, incorporating preference points.
- Successful candidates are placed on an ongoing Eligibility List in order of their total score.
- The Eligibility List remains in effect for two years.
- All Firefighter/Paramedic vacancies are filled from this list.
- At the time of a vacancy, a conditional offer of employment will be extended if the following requirements have been met:

- Proof of successful CPAT with Ladder Climb within the previous twelve (12) months.
- Possession of an EMT-Basic, EMT-Paramedic, or PHRN License.
- Must be 21 years of age at the time of appointment.

### **Post-Conditional Offer Requirements:**

- Candidates accepting a conditional offer must undergo a thorough medical examination by the City's Physician, including a drug screen.
- Psychological examinations may also be required. (See attached "General Medical Requirements" for review.)
- **Important:** Candidates on the eligibility list must report any changes in name, physical address, or email address to Fire Chief Bob Graff at **graff.robert@rigov.org**.
- Declining a first conditional offer will not remove a candidate from the eligibility list. Declining a second offer will result in removal.
- **Failure to meet any deadlines or complete any part of this process will result in disqualification.** There will be no variations in the schedule.

### **Probationary Period:**

- Upon appointment by the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners, new Firefighters/Paramedics serve a twelve (12) month probationary period, typically with initial assignment to ambulance duties.
  - During probation, successful completion of the following is required:
    - 7-week Basic Firefighter Academy at the Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) in Champaign, IL.
    - 1-week Hazardous Materials Operations class (if not already certified).
    - 1-week Vehicle/Machinery Operations class (if not already certified).
    - 1-week Fire Apparatus Engineer (if offered).
    - Obtain an Illinois Class B Non-CDL license or Iowa Class B license (or equivalent) if not already possessed.
  - Probation may be extended until a State of Illinois EMT-Paramedic license is obtained.
  - Upon completion of the probationary period, a performance evaluation will be conducted. Appointment to full-time, regular status is based on the recommendation of the Fire Chief and approval by the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners. Candidates who do not meet the requirements of the position during probation will not be appointed to full-time status.
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## PHYSICAL ABILITY REQUIREMENTS

The Rock Island Fire Department utilizes the **Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT)**, a standardized test designed to simulate essential firefighting tasks. The CPAT consists of eight events:

- Stair Climb
- Hose Drag
- Equipment Carry
- Ladder Raise and Extension
- Forcible Entry
- Search
- Rescue
- Ceiling Breach and Pull

**Ladder Climb Requirement:** Per Illinois State Statute (Public Act 097-0251), the Rock Island Fire Department also requires candidates to complete a **Ladder Climb** (ground or aerial).

### CPAT Testing Sites with Ladder Climb:

Most CPAT testing sites in Illinois offer the Ladder Climb component. You can schedule your CPAT with Ladder Climb at the following locations:

- **MABAS 24 (Homewood, IL):** <http://www.mabas24.org/index.php/cpat> or (708) 607-2728
- **NIPSTA (Glenview, IL):** <https://www.nipsta.org/240/CPAT-Schedule> or (847) 998-8090
- **Central Illinois Fire Chiefs (Decatur, IL):** <https://centralillinoisfirechiefs.com/CPAT/CPAT.aspx> or (217) 424-2811

**Acceptable Proof:** The City of Rock Island accepts CPAT completion cards/certificates from any valid testing facility that includes confirmation of successful completion of the Ladder Climb test, issued within the previous twelve (12) months before a conditional offer of employment can be extended.

**Submitting Proof:** If you already possess a valid CPAT card with Ladder Climb, you can attach proof of completion when completing the online application.

*Local CPAT Dates (at the QCCA Expo Center, 2621 4th Avenue, Rock Island, IL) dates are to be determined for the Summer of 2026.*

**Important:** A reserved time is mandatory for practice and testing. Call Isabel Peña at **309-732-2800** to schedule your time when dates and times are available.

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## **GENERAL MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Candidates receiving a conditional offer of employment will undergo a comprehensive medical examination by the City Physician. Failure to meet the required medical standards will result in disqualification. The City covers the cost of the initial medical examination, excluding any specialized tests or additional information the applicant chooses to provide.

The following are **examples** of general causes for rejection based on the City's medical standards and do not represent the complete list. A complete copy of the medical requirements is available upon request.

### **EYE AND VISUAL REQUIREMENTS**

A. COLOR VISION: Failure to identify red, green, or both.

B. STANDARD VISUAL ACUITY: Uncorrected vision less than 20/40 in one eye and 20/100 in the other; corrected vision less than 20/20 in one eye and 20/40 in the other.

C. NEAR VISUAL ACUITY: Corrected near vision acuity worse than J 6.

D. REFRACTIVE ERROR: Refractive error exceeding 8 diopters spherical equivalent (plus or minus).

E. CORRECTIVE DEVICES: Complicated impairments requiring contact lenses (e.g., keratoconus, corneal scars, irregular astigmatism) or inability to comfortably wear ordinary glasses without significant visual disturbances.

## **EARS AND HEARING REQUIREMENTS**

Hearing acuity loss by an audiometric test of 20 decibels or more for speech frequencies (500-1000-2000 Hz) in either ear or speech reception of phonetically balanced words below 90% normal reception in either ear.

## **LUNGS AND CHEST**

Required chest x-ray and thorough evaluation of present and past respiratory diseases. Medical surveillance ensures the ability to wear the required respiratory protective equipment.

## **HEART AND BLOOD VESSELS**

Disqualifying conditions include heart murmurs from valve or vessel diseases, persistent rapid heart rate (over 100 bpm), history of cardiac failure, hypertension, and significant heart rhythm disturbances.

## **ABDOMINAL/ORGANS AND WALLS**

Disqualifying conditions include recent hernias, severe hemorrhoids, pregnancy or termination within the last six weeks, intestinal obstructions, and hepatitis within the last six months.

## **GENITO-URINARY ORGANS**

A urine examination for sugar and albumin will be performed, along with a thorough review of medical history.

## **METABOLIC: ENDOCRINE OR HEMIC DISORDERS**

Disqualifying conditions include diabetes or a history of diabetes, gout, uncorrected anemia, and other disorders that impede job performance or require frequent/prolonged treatment.

## **NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS**

Evaluation of past and present history for conditions such as epilepsy, hysteria, multiple sclerosis, and severe ear injuries.

## **PERSONALITY DISORDERS**

Interview to assess the applicant's ability to work effectively with others without conflict.

## MUSCLES, BONES, JOINTS, EXTREMITIES

Disqualifying conditions include tuberculosis of the bone, arthritis, healed fractures interfering with duties, spine curvature, herniated disc (or related surgery history), major amputations restricting activities, and significant limitations of motion.

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## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The City of Rock Island offers a comprehensive compensation and benefits package to its Firefighter/Paramedics:

### BASE WAGE:

- Starting salary (effective January 1, 2025): **\$60,843 annually**.
- Annual stipend: **\$3,100** for Paramedic/PHRN pay; **\$450** for EMT-Basic.
- General wage increase (effective December 22, 2025): **3.00%** applied to the base wage.
- Step increases: **5%** for years 2-6 of service.
- Merit-based pay increases beyond the top step, up to 3.0% annually.

### LONGEVITY PAY:

Annual increases based on continuous service:

- 5 years: \$950
- 10 years: \$2,150
- 15 years: \$3,350
- 20 years: \$4,550
- 25 years: \$5,750
- 30 years: \$6,950

### HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN:

- Effective on the first of the month following 30 days of full-time employment.
- The city pays 77% of the premium; the employee pays 23% through payroll deduction.
- Choice of health plans offered.
- Voluntary dental plan available (employee pays 100% of the premium).

## **PENSION:**

- Retirement benefits at 50% of the final salary after 20 years of service and at age 55.
- Additional pension credit for service beyond 20 years.
- Job-incurred disability: 65% of final salary until normal retirement age.
- Non-job-related disability: 50% of final salary (minimum 7 years of service).
- Firefighters are not subject to Social Security contributions.
- Employee contributions are tax-deferred.

## **VACATION / HOLIDAY LEAVE (24-hour shifts):**

- 0-6 years of service: 7.68 hours per pay0-6
- 7-15 years of service – 9.58 hours per pay period
- 16+ years of service - 11.68 hours per pay period

This is provided the employee receives compensation for at least one full week during each pay period. Probationary employees are not allowed to use vacation leave during their probationary period.

## **KELLY DAYS:**

Full-time Fire Department personnel who work a 24-hour shift are scheduled a Kelly Day (one 24-hour shift off) every eighteenth (18th) on-duty shift, or an average of 6.75 Kelly Days annually.

## **SICK LEAVE**

Full-time Fire Department personnel who work a 24-hour shift accumulate paid sick leave benefits at the rate of 5.2 hours per pay period, provided the employee receives compensation for at least one week each pay period.

## **PERSONAL LEAVE**

Non-probationary Fire Department personnel receive a total of forty-eight (48) hours of paid time off per year for personal leave in the form of a bank.

## **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

Non-probationary Fire Department personnel receive up to a total of twenty-four (24) hours of paid leave for a death in the employee's immediate family.

### **MILITARY LEAVE**

Employees who are members of regular reserve units of the Armed Forces or the National Guard are paid the difference between their regular salary and the salary they earn while on active duty up to fourteen (14) days per year.

### **SPECIAL LEAVE**

Leave with pay will be allowed for employees to attend training sessions, professional conferences, and other types of meetings and educational seminars, which are beneficial to the employee in the performance of duties. This leave must be approved by the Department Manager.

### **RESIDENCY**

Residency requirements have changed with the new collective bargaining agreement. Employees must live within the states of Illinois or Iowa. Employees who have left work and who accept an overtime call-back assignment shall maintain a 60-minute or less response time from their domicile (irrespective of weather or road conditions).

### **CONTRACT PAYOFF**

Suppose you are currently under a financial contract with another fire department for your required training (IFSI Basic Operations Academy or Paramedic program). In that case, we may be able to assist you with paying off your contract. Please see Chief Bob Graff for details.