

**Professional Volunteer
Firefighter
Recruitment Orientation Guide**



BROCKWAY VOLUNTEER HOSE COMPANY, INC.

This document has been created to familiarize prospective members with the opportunities and benefits offered by joining the membership of the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company. This guide will briefly explain the minimum qualifications needed to become a member and serves to explain the admission process. We welcome your application and feedback.

Brockway Volunteer Hose Company, Inc.

751 Taylor Way, PO Box 253

Brockway, PA 15824

Phone: 814-268-4000

www.brockwayfd.com

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company is to serve the citizens and guests of Brockway Borough and Snyder Township by utilizing education, training and other resources available to safely protect life, property and the environment from incidents involving fire, hazardous materials and other emergencies.

OUR CORE VALUES

Service • Professionalism • Integrity • Respect • Constant Improvement • Trust • Community
Service and Involvement • Health • Safety • Teamwork • Leadership

OUR VISION

- To provide an acceptable level of emergency response and fire protection for the community in times of need.
- To be a community-oriented service provider while maintaining focus on our core values.
- To treat our fellow citizens with the consideration and compassion they deserve in their time of need.
- To be good neighbors throughout the local community.
- To encourage, educate, develop and promote our youth as our community's most valuable resource and asset.
- To treat our fellow members with respect, admiration and compassion for the challenges they face in volunteering and in life.
- To appreciate our members for their dedication, recognize them for their contributions and reward them for their achievements.
- To be fair and honest in our interactions with the municipality governments and outside agencies we serve.
- To be recognized as leaders in our community and among our peers.
- To continually monitor our operations, administration and service delivery, recognize our limitations and swiftly implement effective change when necessary.

LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT

BROCKWAY VOL. HOSE CO., INC.

**751 TAYLOR WAY
P.O. BOX 253
BROCKWAY, PA 15824**

Phone: 814-268-4000

Fax: 814-265-0187

Dear Applicant,

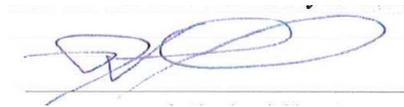
Thank you for your interest in becoming a professional volunteer firefighter with the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company. The position of firefighter is one of tremendous responsibility and individual dedication. Being a firefighter demands a great deal from each individual, however becoming a firefighter is one of the most rewarding things you can do.

We have prepared this packet of material for you to review in anticipation of possible questions you may have.

Our department is held in the highest regard by our community. We are a progressive organization that maintains a high level of professionalism and expertise. Becoming a part of our firefighting team carries with it not only great responsibility, but it also carries personal pride. This department is very proud of the men and women who are part of the organization who are highly motivated and committed to improving and protecting our community. We constantly strive to enhance, upgrade, and improve the level of fire protection and emergency services we provide.

We hope the information contained in this guide is helpful to you and your family. Should you have further questions please do not hesitate to contact us, or feel free to stop by the firehouse. If you would like to apply for membership, please complete the application at the end of this packet and return it to the fire station.

Sincerely;



Michael J. Hoskavich, Fire Chief
Brockway Volunteer Hose Company, Inc.

Terrance P. Fustine, President
Brockway Volunteer Hose Company,

WHY VOLUNTEER?

Ask any professional volunteer firefighter why they accept the challenges they do and they will tell you in their own words that they feel a need to help others and give back to their community. As firefighters work to fulfill their need to help others, they also meet the ever-growing needs of their community. When you join the fire service you are joining a profession steeped in tradition, a brotherhood dating back to the beginning of American History. Today you can walk into any firehouse in the Country, tell them you are a firefighter and you instantly have this connection and shared sense of commitment to something greater than yourself.

Firefighting is very demanding on an individual and their family. Many hours of training are involved, requirements must be met and regulations and standards are to be upheld. Our volunteer firefighters are not compensated in the traditional way for their efforts. There is no monetary bonus, or financial incentive to work harder. However, there is a reward! It comes from the pride the volunteer receives both individually and as part of a team. It comes in the form of a friendly handshake from a grateful citizen or a smile of gratitude. The child's awe as they see the inside of a fire truck, getting to blow the siren or seeing the flashing red lights while talking to one of the firefighters. The smile from a neighbor, friend, or family member in your community who thanks you for being a part of a thriving, valuable and irreplaceable community organization.

Many like the feeling they get when they help people in their time of need and some feel it's their obligation to serve the community. Yet others just want to belong to the team. Whatever motivates you to volunteer, everyone gains the self-satisfaction of being at their best when others are dealing with what is often the worst that life has to offer.

Imagine having to prepare yourself to cope with situations that range from structure fires, hazardous material spills, motor vehicle crashes, and almost any other conceivable emergency. This diversity is coupled with the fact that these skills may be needed at any time of the day or night, seven days a week, in any weather, and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances, yet these same factors contribute to our profession being so personally rewarding. The personal rewards and satisfaction received from what we do are often beyond description.

There is the sense of accomplishment when you control a structure fire or extend compassion for automobile crash victims, and there is fulfillment from teaching fire safety to children.

The bottom line in our business is measured by the loss of life, pain and suffering, and the property damage we have successfully prevented or reduced. Protecting Life, Property and the Environment are always our priority.

Volunteering in emergency services is one of the most important decisions you may ever make. We hope that you give this decision the time and serious consideration it deserves, and decide to join our ranks.

Our human resources are our greatest assets and we want you to be a part of our team!

ABOUT US

Your neighbors, your friends and maybe even your relatives make up our Hose Company team. We are factory workers, students, farmers, business people, nurses, police officers, carpenters, electricians, mechanics, office workers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters.

We are people just like you; with families, jobs and active lifestyles who still find time to give back to our community. The Brockway Volunteer Hose Company offers a friendly environment for you to discover your capabilities and make the most of your investment in volunteering.

The Brockway Volunteer Hose Company was organized on January 16, 1904. An excerpt is as follows:

“Brockwayville was a small community nestled in the Little Toby Valley of Jefferson County, boasting a population near 1200 and growing was the scene of a meeting in the early 1900 of a group of young men interested in forming a Fire Company.

The only equipment for fighting fire available was a two wheel hose cart and 500 feet of hose, purchased by the borough in 1898.

Twenty-seven young men met in Heiges Hall to form an organization to fight fire. The hose cart was housed in an addition to the main building that stood between the Railroad and Toby Creek on the south side of Main Street.

The members met on January 16th, 1904 and after the object of the meeting was stated proceeded to perfect an organization by the election of Harry Lindy as temporary chairman and Alex Adams as temporary secretary.

The name Brockwayville Volunteer Hose Company was adopted and the officers elected were William P. Harris, President, Harry Kellar, Vice President, Alex Adams, Secretary, TC Bedner, Treasurer, LH Pasualichio, Financial Secretary, Edward J. Durbin, Foreman, Jacob Dillson, Assistant Foreman.

Soon after this, the Borough Council appointed Edward J. Durbin as Chief of the Brockwayville Volunteer Hose Company which position he held for 21 years and two months.”

Currently we operate a Ladder Truck, Rescue, Engine, Tanker and Brush unit out of a single station in the Borough of Brockway. The total coverage area is approximately 43 square miles with an approximate population of 4,500 residents. We also have a first due response to the municipalities of Warsaw Twp., Washington Twp., Polk Twp., Sandy Twp., Horton Twp., and Falls Creek Boro.

We provide comprehensive firefighting, vehicle extrication, specialized rescue, fire prevention education and various annual community events.

The Brockway Volunteer Hose Company is seeking volunteers to bolster its ranks in a diverse range of services to help us serve our community.

EMERGENCY INCIDENT RESPONSE

Unlike a paid career fire department, we have no scheduled duty shifts. Our Department is on-call, at all times – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To accommodate your busy and varying lifestyle, volunteers respond when they are available in the area of our protection.

The Brockway Volunteer Hose Company is dispatched through the Jefferson County Emergency Communications Center. Volunteers are alerted of calls via pagers and I Am Responding, a page that goes to your cellphone.

Once dispatched, firefighters respond to the fire station, put on their protective clothing, staff the appropriate apparatus and respond to the incident. POV response is not particularly permitted, unless special circumstances or permission from the Fire Chief is given.

We respond to structure fires in commercial and residential properties providing valuable life saving techniques and property conservation. We respond to motor vehicle crashes providing disentanglement and patient extrication. We respond to hazardous materials spills, leaks and releases under a Hazardous Material Operations level of training. We also respond to other classifications of incidents including service calls for downed trees and power lines, commercial and residential automatic fire alarms, assistance during severe weather conditions, police assistance, search and rescue support, evacuations and numerous other types of situations that require trained emergency responders. The list is endless and constantly evolving!

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

-Quality Fire Training – You provide the commitment and dedication, and we provide all of the training at no cost. We offer local and in-house training; State certified courses, Regional and National Fire Academy courses and multiple seminars and conferences.

-Recognition & Awards Program – This program recognizes and awards our volunteers for their service and accomplishments.

-Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – We protect our firefighters with PPE that meets or exceeds National Standards.

-Uniforms – Look professional and show your pride in your Class A uniform, which is available after three years of membership. Also, tee-shirts are provided.

-Social Event – Members and their guest enjoy our annual recognition and awards banquet each year recognizing individual and department accomplishments. This special evening is also our opportunity to say thank you to loved ones and community members who support us throughout the year.

-Peace of Mind – We recognize that firefighting and providing emergency services is an inherently dangerous business. That's why we take extra measures to protect our volunteers. Brockway Borough and Snyder Township provide workman's compensation coverage to members if they are injured on the job, training or other scheduled department events. We care about your health, safety and well-being. Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD) and counseling is even available to help our volunteers deal with the emotional impact of

the tragedies we're unfortunately exposed to in our line of work. Supplemental life insurance is paid for by the department. This service is provided free-of-charge.

-Life Long Relationships – The fire service will provide with something that not a lot of other organizations will. Relationships will be forged literally through fire. This is a bond that will never be broken. These are simply priceless.....

EXPECTATIONS

Although no previous experience or training is required, you need more than just a desire to help people. You also need courage and dedication, assertiveness, integrity and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. You must also commit to continuing education.

Our service is one that calls on its members to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments. Our volunteers need to be team players, respecting each other's role and contributions. You need to be willing to work on-call and to deal with occasional interruptions to your lifestyle, dropping what you're doing at the 'sound of the alarm' to respond to the emergency needs of your fellow citizens.

We also have many other programs that we conduct that are outside of calls for service scope. Our members train, we conduct community outreach programs, and fundraise. Our equipment is not cheap. We have to do our best, so we can give our community the best.

COST

Zero. All costs for all training and standard PPE are covered by the Hose Company. Equipment and gear outside the scope will be on your own.

APPLICATION PROCESS

You have taken the first step by expressing interest in becoming a professional volunteer firefighter and reviewing this information. The following steps will help guide you through the process needed to become a member of the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company.

1. Read the membership packet and complete the application.

Minimum Requirements for Membership Application:

- Eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- Legal resident of the United States of America
- Be subject to being certified by a physician as being physically fit to perform the duties of a firefighter, if applicable.
- Have lived within the BVHC protection area for a minimum of a year.
- Be subject to a thorough background investigation, to include criminal and arson background, and character evaluation.
- Valid Pennsylvania Driver's License or Identification.

2. Submit your completed application to the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company along with a copy of your Pennsylvania Driver's License or other recognized Identification.
3. At the next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Company, your application will be presented to the Investigation Committee as a prospective member. At this meeting your name will be submitted to the department for consideration and documented in the meeting minutes.
4. Following the meeting your application will be reviewed by the membership committee. They will check all references and complete a criminal background check.
5. Following a successful review of your application, the Membership Committee Chairperson will contact you and invite you to meet with the officers of the department. During this meeting the officers will provide you with additional information about the organization, answer any questions you may have, discuss expectations and evaluate you for potential membership.
6. Following a majority vote, at a regular Company meeting, of the membership, after the officers and committee present their findings, you can begin the next steps in the membership process. If you do not receive a majority vote the executive committee will meet with you and discuss your options.
7. The final step in the interview process is you will be asked to attend a regular business meeting and present yourself to the general membership.
8. If the members vote to approve your probationary membership the following will take place:
 - You will be assigned a Company mentor. The mentor will ensure that all of your paperwork is in order and makes it to the correct person for filing.
 - You will complete an orientation process with your mentor. This includes station awareness, apparatus and familiarization, and operating guidelines.
 - You will receive a copy of the Company By-Laws.
 - Meet with a senior line officer to receive PPE and a pager.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Probationary Firefighters are required to complete the PA Essentials Program (168 Hours) within 2 years of membership. If you have completed a prior version, submit the certification for approval. The program is broken into 7 modules:

IFSTA Essentials of Firefighting Program

- Introduction to the Fire Service 16 Hours
- Fire Ground Support 32 Hours
- Exterior Firefighter 56 Hours
- Interior Firefighter 40 Hours
- NIMS 100 & 700 Online
- Hazardous Materials Awareness 4 Hours

- Hazardous Materials Operations 24 Hours

Total Hours Level 1 – 4 168 Hours

Following completion of the Essentials Program, all firefighters must meet annual training requirements to maintain a response status. They are as follows:

- A minimum of 16 hours of a state approved course.
- Hazardous Materials refresher
- SCBA assessment, when applicable
- Apparatus assessment, when applicable

OTHER REQUIREMENTS.

Along with training, there are other functions within the Company that include sanctioned activities, fundraising, maintenance, and above all, calls for service. You must attend a percentage of each annually. Those requirements include:

- Monthly Company Meeting - 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7pm. **50%**
- Monthly Fire Department Training – 1st Monday of each month at 6pm. **25%**
- Monthly Equipment Maintenance – 3rd Monday of each month. **25%**
- Fundraising – Ticket sales, monthly donut sales, annual pancake breakfast, and so on. **25%**
- Calls for Service. **25%**

All Company members are expected to assist in fundraising activities.

CLOSING

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have. We look forward to you becoming a member of our organization!

Application Instructions

1. Review the welcome letter and make sure that you have the time and commitment to become a member
2. Complete the application. Note that a background check will be completed for all new applicants
3. Return the application to the department. You can either mail the application or drop it off at the station.
4. After the background check is completed, the membership committee will recommend you at the next monthly meeting (first Tuesday of every month).
5. You are then welcome to attend the remainder of the meeting and begin participating in membership activities.

Note: This application process can take several weeks to complete. Depending on the timing of the initial inquiry, it may take two full months for the applicant to be recommended for membership. Due to insurance reasons, during this wait potential candidates are not allowed to participate in any activities during the approval process.

Membership Application

Personal Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Middle Initial: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: (____) _____

Cell Phone Number: (____) _____

Social Security Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Email: _____

Drivers License #: _____ State: _____ Class: _____ Exp Date: _____

(Please provide a photo copy of current driver's license and attach to the application)

Have you ever filed an application the company before? Yes No

If yes, give date: _____

I am interested in helping with the following activities (check all that apply):

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Firefighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Prevention | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Firefighting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Record-Keeping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Upkeep | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Police |

Are you a member of another Fire or Ambulance Company? Yes No

If yes, please give name, address and phone number:

Employment History

Current Employer: _____ Job Title: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: (____) _____ Dates Employed: _____

Previous Employer: _____ Job Title: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: (____) _____ Dates Employed: _____

Are you currently employed? Yes No

May we contact your present employer? Yes No

Firefighting/Emergency Service Related Training/Certification (attach copies of certificates)

Please list any pertinent skills or certifications that could be beneficial to the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company (driving, mechanical, electrical, administrative, etc.)

Medical/Criminal Background

Do you currently have any medical conditions that would prevent you from performing any firefighting duties? No Yes (if yes, explain):

Have you ever been convicted of a crime (including traffic violations) and/or do you have any criminal charges pending against you? No Yes (if yes, explain):

Have you ever been convicted of a felony level crime? No Yes (if yes, explain):

How did you hear about the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company?:

Why do you want to join the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company?:

Member Recommendations

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

References:

Name, address, telephone number and years known

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I swear, or affirm, that all information given in this application for membership to Brockway Volunteer Hose Company, Inc. is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also understand that if it is proven that I intentionally falsified the information provided, I may be rejected for membership without an opportunity for reapplication. If proof of falsification occurs after being accepted into membership, I also understand that the falsification may be grounds for my expulsion from the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company, Inc.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

In the course of my application for membership in the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company, the officers and members of the company may desire to make certain inquiries as to my background, character, and experience. It is in my interest to permit such investigations to take place by the officers: and therefore, in consideration of my desire to have all material considered, I hereby authorize the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company and its members and officers to make such inquiries as they deem appropriate. This includes, but is not limited to, any individual or group, institution, current or former employer, or emergency service agency. It is understood that I shall make no claim against the persons furnishing information and shall make no claim against any of the afore mentioned sources of information, including the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company, for providing or reasonably using any or all information. Also, to the best of my knowledge, all statements and answers which I have given are true, correct, and accurate. I further understand that any misrepresentation or omission of facts may result in nullification of this application and/or subsequent membership based on its contents.

PSP Criminal History will be completed by the Brockway Volunteer Hose Company upon submission of this application.

Do not write below this line – BVHC use only

Date Application Received: _____

(Application to be read before company at the next regular monthly meeting)

Findings of the investigating committee chairman: Favorable Unfavorable

Signature of Investigating Committee Chairman:

Date of Probationary Membership: _____

Date of Active Membership: _____