

A Prospect's Guide to Joining the Eagle-Matt Lee Volunteer Fire Company

This document has been created to familiarize prospective members with opportunities and benefits offered by joining the membership of the Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Company. This guide will briefly explain the minimum qualifications needed to become a member and serves to explain the interview and admission process. We welcome your feedback.



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Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Company

{ Fire - Rescue - EMS Assists }

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Dear Citizen:

As Captain of the Eagle-Matt Lee Volunteer Fire Company, I am committed to providing the most effective and efficient fire, rescue, and EMS assist delivery system to our community.

You will find that participation as a volunteer member of our organization will bring personal rewards and satisfaction, raise self-esteem, and provide you with a tremendous sense of accomplishment and pride for a job well done. It will also provide your community with a valuable service that has the potential to touch us all.

However, service as a member of our fire company requires a serious commitment. Your decision to join our organization should not be made hastily. This guide has been developed to provide the information you need to make an effective decision that is right for you and us.

Once you understand what's involved in being a volunteer, we hope that you are able to make the commitment we need. The service provided by our volunteers is truly valuable to the citizens, businesses and visitors of our community. We hope that you are able to contribute to our community's public safety.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Co.#1

Rick Gardner

Rick Gardner
Captain

>why volunteer?

Have you ever heard a siren or seen a fire engine - and wondered what was happening?

Have you ever witnessed or come upon a motor vehicle accident- and wished you could help?

Have you been there when someone was stricken with sudden illness — and wanted to assist?

Are you looking for new friendships, challenges and rewards?

Do you want to become involved in your community?

"Firefighting is not for everyone -but Volunteering can be."

The fire and rescue service is one of the most diverse and challenging vocations today. It is this diversity that attracts most men and women to join our ranks.

Different people volunteer for different reasons. Action oriented people enjoy the excitement and adrenaline rush that emergency services has to offer. Some see the volunteer fire service as an alternative to “driving a desk by day” — by allowing them to “drive a fire truck at night.”

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 to motor vehicle accidents, and from heart attacks to almost any imaginable emergency in between. 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 kind of weather, and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances. Yet these same factors contribute to our profession being so personally rewarding.

We realize that firefighting is not for everyone, but we believe that volunteering can be. There is plenty of work to be done on or behind the scene — including running the business of delivering emergency services.

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from what we do is often beyond description. There is the sense of accomplishment when you control a building fire, compassion for accident victims, and fulfillment from teaching fire safety.

The bottom line in our business is measured by the loss of life, pain and suffering, and the property damage we have prevented and reduced.

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

>about us

It's about people. Fire engines don't put out fires - people do. Defibrillators don't save lives - people do. The Jaws-of-Life never rescued anyone on its own - it takes people.

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



The Eagle-Matt Lee team of volunteers is comprised of your neighbors, your friends and maybe even your relatives. They're people just like you - with families, jobs and active lifestyles who still find time to give back to their community. Eagle-Matt Lee offers a friendly environment for you to discover your capabilities and make the most of your volunteering investment.

Established in 1816, the Eagle-Matt Lee Volunteer Fire Company is a provider of emergency services in upstate New York — protecting residents and businesses in the Village of Ballston Spa, Town of Ballston, and the Town of Milton. We also participate in mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments.

A 100% volunteer organization, we provide comprehensive fire fighting, extrication, specialized rescue, water/ice rescue, fire police, fire prevention education and EMS assistance from our station at 35 Washington Street in the middle of the village.

We take emergency services very seriously. While individuals volunteer to serve their community, our volunteers must realize that the fire company not only covers our village, but also proudly provides contractual services to the Town of Ballston and the Town of Milton - a service paid for by the taxpayers of these communities.

Despite being unpaid professionals, we are still bound to this contractual service obligation just like our paid counterparts in other communities - and thus we must be committed to providing our services 24 hours a day - every day.

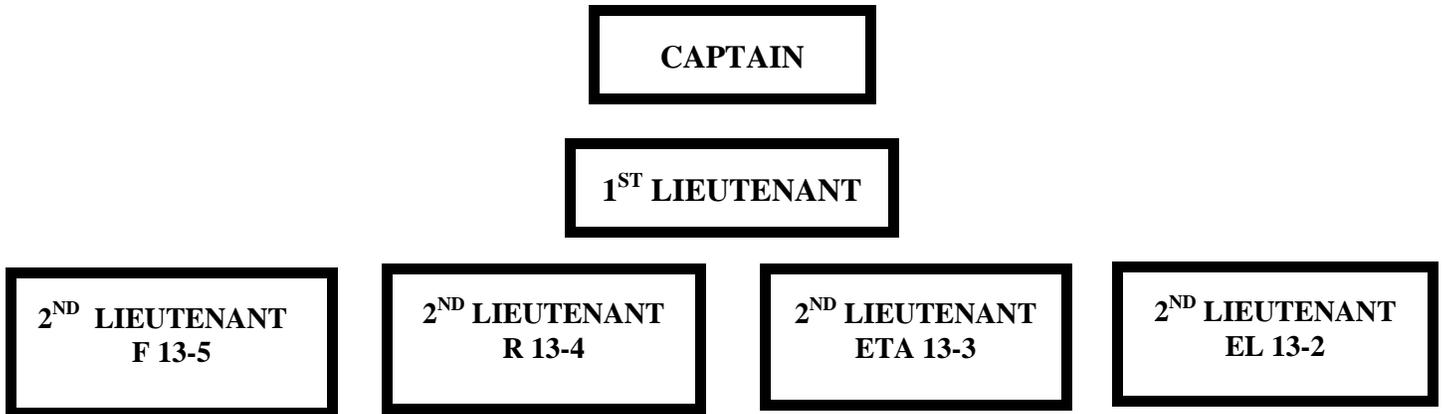
The company currently maintains a fleet of one ladder truck, one engine/tanker, one rescue truck, and our forestry/brush truck.

Eagle-Matt Lee is served by a membership of approximately 60 members. This includes Active Firefighters, Fire Police, Veterans, and Associates.

Eagle-Matt Lee seeks volunteers to bolster its ranks in a diverse range of services. We offer a long list of benefits including a state-of-the-art training center, flexible station assignments and a friendly, fun, professional atmosphere.

>how we are organized

Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Operations



Like many corporations, we have two distinct yet tightly integrated units of our organization — an administrative arm and an operations arm. The administrative unit is lead by a president, vice-president, recording secretary, treasurer, financial secretary and a board of directors.

The operations division of the Fire Company is lead by the Captain. He oversees what is called the "chain of command". This chain of command is very important in that it provides clear direction, lines of communications, and accountability for everyone involved in the chain.

On an incident scene, the chain of command provides for identifying areas of responsibility and accountability for the personal safety of every individual working within the incident command system.

Under this system, each level only reports to one supervisor. Firefighters report to a Lieutenant, who then reports to a Captain. The Captain reports to the Assistant Chiefs, who are responsible to the Fire Chief.



Teamwork is the foundation of our success - during an emergency and back at the station. Before you can become a good leader, you need to learn to be a good follower. Knowing and understanding how you fit into the chain of command will be one of the most important lessons you can learn. Know your position and play it well.

You will receive a copy of our current organizational chart - or chain of command - during your new recruit orientation.

>how we respond

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



Eagle-Matt Lee is dispatched through the 911 call center of Saratoga County. Dispatchers alert the volunteers via Motorola pagers with voice and tone capability.



Upon being dispatched, volunteers respond to the station, man the appropriate apparatus, and respond to the scene. Only chief officers respond directly to the scene. Fire Police members respond to the appropriate intersections to control traffic for responding apparatus.



As the ladder/rescue company within the department, we utilize a Hurst Hydraulic Rescue System. The department responds to many entanglements involving autos and trucks, not all of which need extraction.



Eagle-Matt Lee owns, and implements the use of, the Jaws of Life, Cardiac Monitoring, and a Thermal Imaging Camera. We have Water/ Ice Rescue capabilities. We have access to the Saratoga County Fire Training Center which is in Ballston Spa and recently improved with the addition of a new training tower.

>our mission

To provide the highest level of fire protection, fire prevention, rescue, and emergency medical services, to the residents, businesses, and visitors of the Village of Ballston Spa, Town of Milton, and the Town of Ballston

>our vision

-- To provide an acceptable level of emergency care and fire protection at the most affordable cost to our customers.

-- To be a community oriented service provider while maintaining focus on our core objectives

-- To treat our customers with the consideration and compassion they deserve in their time of need.

--To be good neighbors to the Ballston Spa 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.

-- To appreciate our members for their dedication, recognize them for their contributions, and reward them for their achievements.

-- To conduct ourselves in a professional manner deserving of the pride and praise of our community.

-- To continually monitor our operations, administration and service delivery, recognize our limitations, and swiftly implement effective change when necessary



>Opportunities

We offer the opportunity for you to volunteer in the area that you feel most comfortable with, where you feel you can contribute the most, and where you'll benefit the most from your volunteering experience. Our membership is split into the following divisions:

Fire/Rescue - If getting hot, dirty and physical is your game - this is for you. We offer virtually unlimited opportunities to explore the exciting world of firefighting and the training to do it safely. Whether you only assist on the outside - or run in to the fire as others are running out - there 's plenty for everyone to do on the fire ground. The training is free, but the rewards are priceless. We also have a Junior Firefighter program that allows people as young as 16 to find out if the fire service is for them.



Fire Police - As a member of our Fire Police team, you'll assist in traffic management, crowd control and general assistance at emergency scenes and non-emergency events. We'll train you as a NYS certified Fire Police Officer. This is a great opportunity for those who want to actively contribute but cannot meet the extreme physical challenge that structural firefighting entails. Fire Police Only members are not required to certify in firefighting courses but are required to receive basic scene support operations training and then initial and refresher training in Fire Police duties.



Associate - Associates provide administrative and fund-raising support to running the business of our busy fire department. There's plenty to do behind the scenes. Anyone who does not have the desire to participate directly in emergency services, or those who cannot meet the physical demands for active membership are encouraged to serve our department in this capacity. Associate members do not participate in any emergency responses nor are they required to attend the required training under our operations divisions. This is currently reserved for those members who have served in the above capacities for 5 years or more and desire or require a change



>join today and enjoy these benefits

Quality Training - You provide the commitment and we provide all of the training for FREE. From local and county training, NYS certified courses, to regional and national seminars and conferences - we offer you the opportunity to explore every avenue of emergency services and train you to be the best at what you do.

Flexible Memberships - As firm believers in the concept that volunteers should be "good at a few things instead of poor at a lot, " — we offer flexible membership opportunities. You can join Eagle-Matt Lee as an Interior or Exterior Firefighter as well as Fire Police. After just 5 years, you may switch to Social Membership and continue to help out in a non-firematic way. We even accept members from outside the district if they can be useful to, and meet the requirements of, the Fire Company.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - We protect our firefighters with the heat resistive coat, pants, boots, gloves, Nomex hood and helmets complete with a leather front proudly identifying the company.

Duty Uniforms - Look professional and show your Eagle-Matt Lee pride in your navy blue station uniform personalized with your name. Uniforms are provided after a minimum length of service. Other apparel is sometimes offered under a reduced or shared cost program.

Fire Station - Dedicated in 1980, our fire station stands as a hallmark to the dedication of our volunteers, past and present. It includes a social room for members that they can reserve for their private use. Exercise equipment is also available for the use of the membership.

Social Events - Members and their guest enjoy our annual installation banquet to recognize the past years accomplishments of the department and our volunteers, and to celebrate the dedication of our newly elected administrative and operations officers. Throughout the year we offer a variety of opportunities for you and your family to get to know the other members of your department in a relaxing atmosphere. From conventions to parades, parties, and fun fund-raisers - we not only work hard - we play hard too!

Cool Web Site - Our site: www.emlbsfd.com, was recently re-launched with a new look and a determination to make it worthy of the company and it's traditions.

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. A village provided insurance policy provides financial security to you and your family should you be injured or fatally wounded in the line of duty.

We care about your health, safety and well being. That's why we insist on a medical physical examination completed every year of active duty. Interior Firefighters are also required to be fit-tested every year.

>FIRE/RESCUE PERSONNEL:

-- New Firefighters must complete a 27-hour NYS Scene Support Operations course (designed to be an introduction to firefighting) or a 78-hour Firefighter 1 course (within one year of acceptance into membership). Probationary firefighters will not be allowed to attend any other courses prior to completion of the appropriate basic training course.

-- All Active Firefighters must attend at least 12 regularly scheduled or special drills (Training) during the year. OSHA training drills are mandatory and must be made up if missed. Each session lasts approximately 3 hours. Regular drills are scheduled on every Monday except holidays and meeting nights. Extra training sessions are scheduled as needed. Different nights can be accepted for a member based on availability.

-- Active Firefighters must meet the points required by their classification in order to be credited for a year of service.

>FIRE POLICE:

-- New Fire Police Personnel must complete a 27-hour NYS Scene Support Operations course and a NYS Certified Fire Police course within the one-year probationary period and be duly sworn as a NYS Fire Police Officer.

-- New Fire Police members must attend meetings and drills as dictated by the Fire Police Captain and their by-laws.

-- Active Fire Police must meet the points required by their classification in order to be credited for a year of service.

>SOCIAL:

-- Associate Members must make attempts to attend non-firematic functions, and help out on committees.

-- Associate Members have the right to vote at meetings.

-- Associate Members may run for and hold the office of President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Steward, or Sergeant-at-Arms.

-- Associate Members must meet the points required by their classification in order to be credited for a year of service



>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, and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. 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 able to work on-call and to deal with occasional interruptions to your lifestyle, dropping what you're doing at the 'sound of the bell' to respond to the emergency needs of your fellow citizen.

A new recruit can expect to spend between 5-10 hours each week on fire company business. This entails meetings, training, emergency responses and other miscellaneous activities. Some weeks will be more and other weeks much less. The days of the week or times may vary depending on the level of activity. However, most regularly scheduled events occur on Monday evenings.

We've listed a lot of the benefits you can expect from us, and in return there are certain objectives we expect you to meet.

>TO APPLY:

- You must be at least 18 years of age to apply. (16 for Junior Firefighter program)
- You must be a citizen of the United States.
- You must be physically, intellectually and emotionally capable of performing the duties according to your area of assignment.
- You must reside within the district served by the Ballston Spa Fire Department. An exemption to this rule can be made, per the by-laws, based on the ability of the applicant to contribute to the company.
- You must have no record of felony convictions.

>UPON ACCEPTANCE:

- New members must be voted on, and accepted by, the Village Board before responding to emergency incidents .
- New members will be considered on probation for a period of one year. Their probationary activities will be reviewed within thirty days following one (1) year of active service and the probationary member will be recommended for continued service or termination at that time.
- Removal from probationary status requires that the aforementioned requirements be fulfilled along with the probationary requirements of their membership classification.
- All members must attend a minimum of 12 drills per year, which are held on Monday nights.
- All personnel are responsible for assisting in the fund-raising efforts of the organization.
- Probationary members must have completed six (6) months of active service in order to vote in the election of officers.
- Failure to complete the minimum requirements can result in termination of membership as prescribed in the by-laws of the organization.

> The Process

1. Each prospective member must complete and submit a standard fire department application along with a ten-dollar (\$10) filing fee.

The application includes personal information, lists of personal references and fire department acquaintances; and authorizations for license, criminal and arson background checks.

We are required by NYS Law to file a request for an arson background investigation. If you have been convicted of an arson related crime, you cannot be accepted as a member of any fire company.

2. The application for membership will be read for the first time at the next general business meeting after the application is received.

3. The applicant will be contacted to schedule an interview with the Membership Committee.

In the interview, you will be asked questions like:

- What attracted you to our agency?
- What work experience do you have?
- What skills, experience or knowledge do you feel you have to contribute?
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- Do you have previous volunteer experience?
- What would you like to get out of volunteering here?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- Do you like to work on your own, with a group or with a partner? Why?

While we are not looking for ‘canned answers,’ we hope that you will give these questions some thought and be prepared with your responses.

Based on information from the interview and application process, reference investigations and the outcome of background checks, the Membership Committee will make its recommendation to the general membership at the next business meeting following the applicant interview.

4. A majority vote by the general membership will decide if the applicant is accepted or declined.

- If accepted, the new member will be notified to report to the meeting room to be sworn in and complete follow-up processing.
- If declined, the applicant will be notified of such details and five dollars (\$5) of the filing fee will be returned. If an applicant is declined membership, he/she may not reapply for one year.

5. Unless otherwise documented, new members must be voted on, and accepted by, the Village Board prior to responding to emergency incidents.

6. Upon acceptance into membership, a new recruit will begin a one-year probationary period subject to the terms and conditions described above and in the by-laws of the corporation.



> To Contact Us

To obtain an application, or to ask any questions regarding this guide or the application process - contact a member of the Membership Committee by clicking: emlinfo@nycap.rr.com or calling: 885-6261.

The Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Company does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, creed, religion, or marital status. If an applicant is approved for membership, such approval is conditional upon final receipt of references and background information consistent with the standards of the Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Company. A conditionally approved member may be dismissed at any time and for any reason within six (6) months of his or her acceptance as a conditional member..

This guide prepared using a template from the Evans Center VFC - Thank You!