

CERN Professional Firefighter FAQ

What does the recruitment process for Firefighters look like?

After you've submitted your application, it will then be screened. Successful candidates will be invited to complete a video interview to learn more about them and their experience. The next step for successful candidates will be a test that evaluates a person's practical experience and understanding as a Professional Firefighter. As a last step, the final selected candidates will be invited to an onsite visit at CERN to learn more about CERN's Fire and Rescue Service as well as further evaluate their skills and ability as a Firefighter. After this, offers will be made to the selected candidates.

What would an average day look like? How are the shift schedules organized?

You arrive at approximately 07h00 or 19h00, to take over shift from the previous team. As in every fire station the specifics of the last 12 to 24 hrs. are exchanged. Then the roles for the shift are distributed by the watch manager (e.g. who drives the fire engine, who is in the control room and who on the ambulance). Also, specific tasks and visits are planned in the day. Of course, every shift (day, night, and weekend) there is time destined to exercises as well as coffee and lunch breaks. Specific to our fire service is that we maintain the thousands of fire extinguishers, AED's and other firefighting equipment on different locations at CERN. For this, specific visits and logistical activities are planned. At the CFRS, station and equipment maintenance (e.g. vehicles, breathing apparatus) are carried out during the shift. During the night shift, if the operational situation allows it, there is time to rest after midnight.

A cycle of two 12-hour dayshifts and two 12-hour night shifts is followed by a period of four days. However, some specific training days (on-site or off-site) or extra operational duties can be planned in these 4-day period.

Next to your 12-hour shift patterns. In addition, they are also on call 24/7. This means that you must be operational ready and able to respond within one hour in case of a major or specific incident when you are called. This is the reason that you must 'live and reside in the vicinity of the Laboratory'.

What is the current team structure?

The Fire and Rescue service is a group within HSE and is made up of 48 firefighters and watch managers, 7 fire officers, and 3 management support staff. The 48 firefighters and watch managers are divided into 4 teams of 12:2 watch managers, some control room specialists, ambulance technicians and technical specialists (hazardous materials, radiation protection, rope rescue, etc.) Some firefighters have multiple specialisms. These teams are a mix of nationalities, experience, and specialisms. We recognize the advantages of stability in a team, but sometimes we have to transfer individual firefighters between teams to enhance the overall composition of all teams.

I would need to relocate to the region. How would I be supported?

For eligible candidates, CERN supports individuals and families in relocating to their area with financial installation and travel allowances, as well what's called international indemnity. CERN has a marketplace that is a great resource when relocating. It should be noted that CERN does not support individuals and families in finding accommodation in the area nor work opportunities for the rest of family. However, given the international environment of CERN, there are often individuals who are willing to offer advice and tips and tricks.

What kind of salary can I expect (outside of any additional benefits)?

Each vacancy at CERN is allocated a grade. For our Firefighters, the minimum grade is 2. Your salary will be calculated depending on your relevant experience. Additionally, all salaries at CERN are displayed as a net of tax amount. For more information, head on over to <https://careers.cern/salary-conditions>.

What are the other benefits that CERN offers?

CERN offers a wide variety of benefits that you could be eligible for, from family and child allowances to educational allowances as well as generous leave allowance (30 paid days a year). Firefighters are also eligible for what we call shift allowance. For further details about the benefits that CERN can offer you, check out <https://careers.cern/benefits>.

What could I expect from the first few weeks as a CERN Firefighter?

The start date is planned for 01 March 2024. Together with your fellow firefighters, you will embark on a 10-week on-the-job training that covers a wide range of introductory trainings and exercises. You will focus on the infrastructure of CERN: where is everything located and what are the specifics.

How easy is it to get around the region?

As a Firefighter at CERN, you would be required to stay within close proximity to the CERN sites. The public transport system in Geneva and France is well supported with many bus, tram, and train lines. For transport in Geneva, [TPG](#) and surrounding Swiss areas, [SBB](#). For more information, you can check out the [UNIRESCO](#) website.

I have a question that isn't listed here. What do I do?

For any questions, you can contact recruitment.service@cern.ch for further information.

There will also be a Q&A session in August in which you ask questions directly to HR-specialists and CFRS management.