

Brownsville Fire and Rescue
P.O. Box 138
Brownsville, MN 55919



Frequently Asked Questions

How much time will this take up?

This is probably the most common question or concern a potential member has when considering joining the department. Our department meets for regular training on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month. Our trainings start at 7pm and take a few hours. We also have an optional night on the 3rd Monday of each month starting at 7pm that is designed specifically for new members (more info on that later). There are other optional trainings that happen during the year that you may choose to take part in. At a minimum we are asking for about 6 - 9 hours a month of your time for training.

Will I be “on call”?

Yes and no. We are a small department of less than 20 volunteers. On average we get 40 – 45 calls a year. Bottom line is we don't have enough members or calls to justify a schedule of “on call” time. All we ask is that you attend any calls that you can. We understand everyone has a home and professional life. If you can't make a call because you are at work or taking care of your kids, that's OK. Just come when you can help.

What type of training will I need?

Let's take this question in two parts. Medical training and fire training. We will start with medical training. Our department is licensed as Emergency Medical Responders. This allows us to provide life saving care to people when they need it most. However, we do not transport patients. Our job is to get on scene and provide care to the patient until TriState Ambulance arrives. They will transport the patient. There are several options to help you get your EMR license and once you have it, attending department trainings will help you keep it up to date. All costs associated with getting and keeping your EMR license are paid for by the department. Firefighting training is a little different. Because we are a volunteer service there is no requirement for firefighting licenses to be part of the department. We do encourage, and offer to pay for, anyone who would like to attend firefighting certification training. As of August 2021, we have 6 state certified firefighters on the department.

How does training work?

We understand that there will be a lot of information to take in very quickly. We have designed a new member orientation program called “Basic Training”. This training takes place on the 3rd Monday of every month. The training is open to anyone on the department but geared towards our new members. We discuss things like, which truck would you take to a call first? What's in each truck and when would we use it? Department policies and procedures. How to drive the different vehicles. And how to keep you and everyone else safe on the scene of a call.

We also have our regular training nights. When the weather is nice outside, we are usually practicing our firefighting skills. This includes auto accidents, search and rescue and water rescue. In the winter, or when the weather doesn't cooperate, we meet at the community center and practice our medical skills.

What type of calls will I be involved in?

All types of calls. Brownsville Fire & Rescue responds to medical emergencies, fires, auto accidents, missing persons, water rescue, ice rescue, LP gas emergencies and any other time someone in our town needs help. Please, understand that we do show up when people call 911. Those typically aren't the best days for many people. But everyone is always thankful that we show up when they need us!

Do I get paid for this?

Technically yes. You will be compensated \$13 for every training and call you attend and are paid at the end of the year. It usually doesn't add up to much, but it does offset the cost of gas and vehicle maintenance. There is also a retirement pension program. For every year that you are in "good standing" (that means you attended enough trainings and calls) the state and city will put money into a pension account for you. Currently, a member with 20 years of service can withdraw a pension of about \$10,000 at the end of their career.

How many trainings and calls do I need to attend to be in "good standing"?

Our current department policies state that for a member to remain in good standing they must attend half of the regularly scheduled trainings on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. If a scheduled training night is missed occasionally, there are plenty of training options that can be used as a 'make up'. They are also required to attend 15% of the calls during the year. That one gets a bit trickier because we never know how many calls we will actually get but technically speaking we normally get between 40 – 45 calls a year. So, let's say 43 calls. 15% of 43 is 6.45. In order to be in good standing a member would be expected to attend at minimum 7 calls per year, on average.