

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

Terms of Engagement of Retained Fire-fighters

POSITION

The position is on a retained basis and membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme is compulsory. The Single Pension Scheme is not service based, but rather based on pensionable earnings in each year served in accordance with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government guidelines.

CHARACTER:

A firefighter must be of good character. The County Council may make whatever enquiries it considers necessary to satisfy this condition.

AGE:

A fire-fighter must submit a birth certificate to the County Council as proof of age before they are engaged as a recruit.

RETIREMENT:

On reaching 55 years of age or sooner if found to be medically unfit, a firefighter shall cease to be a firefighter. The maximum age limit of 55 years may be lowered by the County Council should the normal age for retirement in employment generally be lowered and in such case, the age lower than 55 years shall apply.

Firefighters who would be physically capable of working beyond age 55 have the option to continue working for a defined limited period subject to compulsory medical assessment, on an annual basis. The extended optional period would be to age 58. No Retained Fire-fighter shall be employed beyond age 58, in accordance with the Report of the Expert Group on retirement age for Retained Firefighters (April 2003).

ROSTERING

Firefighters shall participate in any rostering arrangements as agreed.

HEALTH:

A firefighter shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Medical Examination etc.

Under the terms of the agreed Occupational Health Scheme for members of the retained fire service, you will be required to undergo a regular medical examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the Council.

Retention as a firefighter will depend upon receipt of satisfactory reports by medical examiner(s) and to the general condition above as to health. An operational Firefighter must maintain a good level of physical fitness through regular strenuous exercise.

ANNUAL LEAVE

Your annual leave entitlement will be calculated in accordance with the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 and the Organisation of Working Time Act (Regulations) 2001. The present annual leave entitlement is 20 days per annum.

You will be required to participate in the rostering of holidays at the commencement of each quarter to ensure that the appropriate number of personnel approved by the Station Officer will be available for duty.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

A recruit firefighter shall be on probation for a period of two years from the date of commencement as a retained firefighter. Such period of two years may be extended at the absolute discretion of the County Council. The recruit shall not become an operational firefighter at the end of the period of probation unless the County Council is satisfied that the firefighter has been satisfactory in all respects.

Recruit firefighters will be required to undergo the following recruit training programme during their probationary period:

- 1) A Recruits Course
- 2) A Breathing Apparatus Wearers' Course;
- 3) Any other course that the County Council may consider necessary.

Drill fees will be paid at the current hourly rate for firefighters during training.

Failure to successfully complete such courses will result in the termination of the fire-fighter's employment.

Some or all of the above courses will be held at a recognised training centre which may or may not be situated locally.

DRILLS AND FURTHER TRAINING

A firefighter shall attend and participate in drills and shall undergo from time to time, courses and further training as required or deemed appropriate by the County Council. The County Council shall decide the location(s) of the training. Adequate advance notice shall be given to firefighters.

Drills shall be held at such frequency as decided by the Chief Fire Officer. The level of training to be successfully undertaken by a firefighter shall be such as to enable them to carry out competently and effectively the various operations required in the fire service. These include the operation of communications systems, driving appliances and vehicles, and the operation of pumps, lifts, escapes, rescue and emergency equipment, hydrant testing etc., and such other matters and requirements as may arise from time to time. A firefighter shall be expected to acquire a level of training and knowledge as to enable them to interchange with and act as substitute for all personnel at operational level in the fire service of the County Council.

You will be requested to obtain a Class C driving licence so as to be capable of driving emergency vehicles if required within 2 years of your appointment, and successfully complete an appropriate Emergency Services Driving Standard (ESDS) level assessment. The Assessment will consist of a theoretical and practical examination. The assessment will be carried out by a registered ESDS assessors.

A fire-fighter shall submit a driving licence to the County Council before being allowed to drive any Council vehicle.

ATTENDANCE AT DRILLS AND INCIDENTS

There is an obligation on firefighters to attend at alert/fire calls and at drills. This is the basis on which a retainer is paid. The onus on arranging to receive an alert/fire call shall rest with the firefighter.

Notwithstanding any other disciplinary action that the County Council may apply, failure to attend or participate in 85% of drills or at 75% of calls in any quarter of a year, without good reason, shall result in withholding the retainer in accordance with the terms of the Retained firefighters Agreement of 1999.

In the case of an alert/fire call, the fire fighter shall attend within 5 minutes to the Carrickmacross Fire Station in accordance with the terms of the "Retained Firefighters Agreement of 1999" and firefighters shall be paid accordingly for alerts/fire calls.

Where the Chief Fire Officer considers that a fire fighter is not fulfilling the above attendance standards which he considers reasonable in all the circumstances, the Chief Fire Officer will have the right to withhold payment of the retainer.

Subsequent continuing failure to meet the above attendance standards, without good reason, shall be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure and may result in termination of service at the absolute discretion of the County Council.

A Firefighter reporting for drill 8 minutes late shall not be entitled to credit for attendance at the drill.

Stand-by Firefighters answering an alert within eight (8) minutes shall be paid one hour flat time and will be at the Station unless required at an incident.

RESIDENCE:

Persons appointed shall reside and work close to their fire station. On receipt of an alert a firefighter must be able to attend at the fire station within five minutes. A firefighter shall notify the fire authority in writing of any subsequent changes of residence or place of employment.

A change of residence or place of employment that would place the firefighter outside these limits will mean automatic termination of employment.

A firefighter shall be required to report for duty to the fire station in its present location, or in the event of change of location to such new location as may be decided by the Fire Authority. Changes in the location of the fire station will not result in payment of disturbance money or other compensation.

AVAILABILITY:

Written evidence must be provided from the employer as to your availability to turn up to all call-outs of the Fire Brigade and to attend any courses arranged by the Fire Service prior to appointment, and the County Council in its sole discretion, shall decide as to whether the availability as so provided is acceptable. If the fire-fighter's employer subsequently changes his/her conditions of employment and does not allow the firefighter to attend fire calls/drills during working hours, employment will be terminated. Self-employed must also provide written evidence as to availability prior to appointment. Such written evidence must cover a candidate's availability for initial training and for fire and other calls, drills, training and such other duties which the firefighter may be required by the County Council to perform.

A firefighter on duty may only be relieved of his/her obligation to respond to and answer fire and other calls etc., provided that: He/she signs the 'Leave of absence' book in the station, and notifies and gets consent from the Station Officer or in his /her absence the Sub-Officer in advance.

Where a roster is in place, a firefighter rostered on duty may only be relieved of his / her obligation to respond to and answer fire and other calls etc., provided that:

He / she has made arrangements with a firefighter rostered off duty to act as substitute in his / her place; notifies the Station Officer or in his / her absence the Sub-Officer in advance; and the Station Officer or Sub Officer has consented to the substitution.

If the County Council deems a fire-fighter's attendance to be unsatisfactory, it may terminate the fire-fighter's service.

DUTIES

A firefighter, as and when required, shall perform such duties as are assigned to him / her from time to time by the Chief Fire Officer and/or other designated person by the Council and without prejudice to the generality of this requirement, driving duties and general firemanship duties such as the wearing of breathing apparatus, the operation of pumps, lifts, hoists, rescue and cutting equipment, hydrant testing etc. All activities shall be conducted in accordance with Monaghan County Council's Safety Management System and comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

You will report to the Chief Fire Officer or the person designated by the Chief Fire Office to be your supervisor.

A firefighter rostered on duty must remain within convenient proximity of the fire station. Failure to respond promptly to fire or other calls shall, at the discretion of the County Council, result in termination of service.

A firefighter shall report for duty in a sober manner in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

CLOTHING etc.

Each firefighter shall be issued with -

- 1 Fire-fighter's Helmet
- 1 Fire-fighter's Tunic
- 1 Fire-fighter's Overtrousers
- 1 Pair of firefighter gloves
- 1 Flash Hood
- 1 Pair Rubber Boots

The above equipment shall be maintained in a clean and serviceable manner at all times.

REMUNERATION:

Training & Courses etc.
(Other than Fire Drills).

During recruit training consisting of two weeks and courses lasting one day and upwards, the County Council shall pay drill fees.

FIREFIGHTERS

A firefighter shall be paid at the appropriate approved national rates of Fire and Drill Fees and Retainer Fees.

The current rates of remuneration are in accordance with Circular EL 04/17

Retaining Allowance - Firefighter

- €7,817 p.a. (0 - 2 years);
- €8,686 p.a. (2 - 5years);
- €9,741 p.a. (5 - 10 years);
- €10,705 p.a. (10 + years).

Drills	Fires			
	Day		Night/Weekend	
Rate per hr	1 st Hour	Subsequent hr	1 st Hour	Subsequent Hr.
€20.62	€41.24	€20.62	€82.48	€41.24

These rates are subject to review on an ongoing basis.

INCREMENTS

The increments will be paid after 2, 5 and 10 years service on completion of an increment form and recommendation of Chief Fire Officer.

SICK LEAVE

Any absence on sick leave must be reported to the Station Officer or Sub Station Officer on the first morning of illness.

Where a fire-fighter is absent due to sickness, a certificate from a qualified Medical Practitioner must be submitted on the third day of a continuous absence and on a weekly basis thereafter.

Return to Work Form must be completed by any staff member absent on **uncertified** and certified sick leave. The form must be countersigned by the station Officer and forwarded to a Senior Fire Officer prior to submission to Human Resources. The medical certificate should state the general nature of the illness. This information will be treated in confidence. The local authority reserves the right to refer you for an independent medical examination. A certificate of fitness will be required before resuming work.

Where a firefighter becomes incapacitated for an extended period as a result of serious illness or injury, payment of the quarterly retainer will be subject to (a) the Station Officer having received notification as soon as possible concerning the circumstances of the absence and (b) a medical certificate being submitted within three days of the absence. Payment of the quarterly retainer may be extended to six months depending on the merits of each case and the applicant's attendance records. Extended sick leave would normally only be granted to a firefighter on one occasion only. A medical certificate of fitness must be submitted prior to resuming duties.

**GRIEVANCE AND
DISCIPLINARY
PROCEDURE**

Monaghan County Council and the main negotiating unions have agreed a procedure for dealing with grievance and disciplinary matters.

**STAFF
REPRESENTATION**

Monaghan County Council recognises the trade union SIPTU as having negotiating rights for firefighters. Firefighters are bound by agreements made on their behalf through the industrial relations system.

HEALTH POLICY

Monaghan County Council is a no smoking organisation and staff are required to abide by this policy.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY
REGULATIONS**

Monaghan County Council acknowledges its role in protecting the safety, health and welfare of firefighters. (The authority is committed to implementing, controlling and maintaining a programme that ensures where possible, that all risks and hazards are eliminated or otherwise controlled to an acceptable level. The authority will implement safe work systems and methods to protect the safety, health and welfare of firefighters). Monaghan County Council understands the legal obligations and its commitment to comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 2005. You have a legal obligation in relation to health, safety and welfare at work and are required to follow guidelines contained in the Council's safety regulations/safety statement. You are obliged to familiarise yourself with the contents of the Council's Safety Regulations/Safety Statement.

EQUALITY

Monaghan County Council is committed to a policy of Equality of Opportunity in its employment practices and has a positive action programme in place as part of realising this policy. Monaghan County Council is also committed to the maintenance of a working environment free of all forms of harassment including sexual harassment.

Monaghan County Council will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, age, religion, sexual orientation, race or nationality, disability or membership of the traveller community.

USE OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

The Authority provides many telecommunications, computing and network resources for use by you in the pursuance of your duties. You are entitled to use telephones, the internet, electronic mail, fax machines, photocopiers and other equipment for work-related activities as appropriate and to facilitate the efficient exchange of useful information. You will be obliged to fully comply with the organisational policy governing the use of all electronic equipment.

Please note that statutory instruments governing employment legislation and any changes made therein may supersede the terms of these terms of engagement.

DATA PROTECTION

You are required to abide by the provisions of the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 and any regulations made there-under or amending or superseding legislation in respect of computerised or manual records. You must obtain the consent of the Data Controller before processing any such records.

VOLUNTARY HEALTH INSURANCE

A Group Scheme operates in Monaghan County Council and contributions are deducted on a fortnightly basis from salary.