DOI Standard Position Description
PD# DX03900

OPM Official Classification: Wildland Firefighter, GS-0456-03

Organization Classification: Wildland Firefighter Apprentice, GS-0456-03

Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program

INTRODUCTION

This is a standard wildland fire management position description intended for use in the Department of Interior (DOI). The standard position description (SPD) is only to be used for positions enrolled as a Department of Labor registered apprentice in the Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program (WFAP). The position is located on a wildland fire module or crew within the fire management organization. The position serves in a developmental trainee capacity at the GS-03 level as a wildland fire apprentice firefighter on one or more of the following module types: dispatch, engine, handcrew (suppression, fuels, or wildland fire module) or helitack.

Under the guidance and direction of a journey-level firefighter, the position performs developmental wildland fire related duties which involve fire prevention, dispatch, planning, and fuels management. The incumbent receives instructions from journey-level firefighter on the proper maintenance and repair of firefighting tools, equipment, and facilities. As part of the apprenticeship program, the trainee apprentice attends compulsory training in a residential academy setting.

This developmental-trainee apprentice position functions within a training capacity and environment which affords the incumbent to obtain the wildland fire qualifications for transition and placement into the next developmental trainee apprentice level position of Wildland Firefighter, GS-0456-04, DOI SPD#04000 Apprentice position.

MAJOR DUTIES

Wildland Fire Apprentice Work (100%)

Serves as a developmental trainee Apprentice on a fire crew, performing recurring fire suppression duties under the direction and instruction of others. Performs entry level trainee assignments as a wildland firefighter while developing a working knowledge of fire suppression and fuels management techniques, practices, and terminology by serving on the various wildland fire crew/module types. The incumbent serves on a handcrew and/or engine prior to completion of the program and may serve on multiple module types.

Operates, moves, inspects, and performs preventative maintenance on vehicles and equipment to include crew carriers, fire engines, command vehicles, pickups, and other specialized equipment. Safely operates, maneuvers, and set ups vehicles and equipment in a variety of environments including urban, grassland, and mountainous terrain. Adheres to vehicle safety procedures when

transporting personnel, fuel, and equipment, considering bridge and road limits, equipment weight and length, and weather effects.

Works closely with higher-graded wildland firefighters and receives on-the-job training, instruction, and orientation in prevention and preparedness activities such as maintenance of fire tools, equipment, and fire caches; uses radios and telecommunications equipment; stays of abreast of records on firefighting equipment, orientation of dispatching procedures, inspecting campgrounds and public use areas; explaining basic fire prevention measures to visitors; and documents reports of lost or damaged articles.

Participates in fuels management, fire suppression, monitoring, and post-fire activities under the direction of higher-graded wildland firefighters by attacking, controlling, or mopping up fires, building or patrolling firelines, cleaning up burned areas within firelines, suppressing spot fires, felling snags or trees, and cutting brush. On natural caused fires when applying a strategy other than full suppression, may be tasked to observe, collect, and record fire-related data with regards to fuels, topography, weather, fire behavior, fire effects, smoke, and fire location. Uses standard firefighting tools such as Pulaskis, shovels, McLeods, chainsaws, fire hose, backpack pumps, drip torches, and fusees. May receive training in use of specialized equipment, such as chainsaws and portable pumps.

Participates in physical fitness programs.

Training may include serving in other wildland fire program areas such as fire dispatch, cache warehouse, incident business, and administrative support.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

FACTORS

Guidelines

A large body of specialized technical firefighting, safety, fire prevention, and fire organization guides exist and must be thoroughly understood and applied. These guides include manuals, handbooks, training aids, maps and charts, and special instructions and practices pertaining to the use of mechanized equipment, aerial techniques, and other procedures related to fire management work. Incumbent will learn and be aware of the guidance, as well as the constantly changing nature of guidelines as new or modified techniques emerge.

As a GS-03 level Wildland Firefighter Apprentice, performs day to day work assignments in accordance with standard orders and established operating procedures furnished by supervisors, crew leaders, and higher-graded wildland firefighters at the beginning of and while performing assignments. The incumbent will receive supplemental instructions and guidance as necessary due to changing conditions.

Complexity

The Wildland firefighter Apprentice uses basic knowledge to perform work assignment individually and/or as a member of a module/crew in a variety of closely related assignments. The approach exercised while performing work assignments taken by the module/crew may vary based upon the fire terrain, intensity of fire, fuels availability, wind velocity, and resource values. Specific tasks, use of tools and methods, and the sequence in which tasks are to be done are determined by evaluation of the situation and issues involved. Consideration must also be given to slope, weather conditions, fuels, smoke, and other fire behavior factors while performing wildland fire management.

Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts

Contacts include members of the module and crew, including leaders, supervisors, fire management officers, and dispatch. Contacts are to receive instruction, training, and mentorship and to communicate details related to the assignment.

Supervision Received

Wildland Firefighters at this level receive specific instructions and detailed work assignments from supervisors or higher-graded wildland firefighters/crew leaders who outline procedures to follow and the results desired. Supervisors are available to answer questions regarding methods, practices, and procedures and frequently review the firefighters' work for compliance with instructions.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

The duties of this position are so rigorous that employment is limited physically vigorous individuals who must meet established maximum age and physical qualification requirements.

Physical Demands: Arduous exertion for protracted periods of time such as, but not limited to, extensive running, walking, climbing, kneeling, stooping, pulling hoses, jumping and twisting, prolonged standing, walking over uneven ground, and recurring bending, reaching, lifting, and carrying of items weighing over 50 pounds and shared lifting and carrying of heavier items, and similar activities requiring at least average agility and dexterity.

Work Environment: Forest, range, and desert environments in steep terrain where surfaces may be extremely uneven, rocky, covered with thick tangled vegetation, smoky conditions, etc. Temperatures commonly exceed 100 degrees F and may fall below freezing. Risks include smoke inhalation, fire entrapment, snake or insect bites and stings, exposure to excessive machinery noise, and falling and rolling material. Employee must adjust and cope with exposure to weather elements, dust and smoke, poor bivouac and eating situations under an unpredictable set of circumstances. Firefighters may be required to live in backcountry camps for extended periods of time. The hazardous nature of the work requires that personal protective equipment be

worn (e.g., boots, hard hat, gloves, flame resistant clothing). Work may require travel by fixed-wing or rotor-wing aircraft.

Incumbents are required to sign the apprentice agreement and adhere to the standards established by the National Interagency Joint Apprentice Agreement.

This is a testing designated position (TDP) under the Department of the Interior Drug-Free Workplace Program.

Incumbent is subject to medical examination and must pass the work capacity test for arduous positions.

Position may require a valid state driver's license to operate light vehicles and 4X4 vehicles.

When this position description is used in helitack, wildland fire module, or hotshot operations, specific qualification requirements apply (e.g., Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations, National Wildfire Coordinating Group Guidance).