Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.
5200 Southwestern Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21227

Established 1938

Station 350
Fire • Rescue • EMS

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for considering membership at the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department. In order for your application to be processed quickly and efficiently, please proceed as follows:

- ☐ The Application intake process has changed. Our application has moved online.
- ☐ Please DO NOT submit a handwritten application.
- ☐ Answer all questions completely and truthfully to the best of your ability.
- ☐ Carefully review the checklists provided at each step of the application and make sure to send us all the required supplemental forms.
- ☐ If you have any questions regarding the application or the commitments to joining Arbutus VFD, contact the Membership Committee prior to submitting your application. Email: volunteer@arbutusvfd.org
- ☐ Upon completion and receipt of the completed application, you will be contacted by the Membership Committee to schedule an in-person interview.
- ☐ After your interview, a favorable recommendation from the Membership Committee, and favorable results from a background investigation and drug testing, you will be eligible for a vote at the first regular business meeting for a 365-day probationary period. Attendance at this meeting is encouraged although not required.
- ☐ After a successful vote, all operational members must complete a Baltimore County Volunteer Firefighter's Association (BCVFA) Medical Questionnaire & physical fitness exam. Expenses are covered by the BCVFA if you use the Baltimore County Medical provider. Physicals are not required for non-riding members with "administrative only" duties.
- ☐ Employees who desire to transfer to volunteer status shall follow the following process:
    - Any employee in good standing may select the option to convert from paid employee status to volunteer status. A person may be either a volunteer member or paid employee but not at the same time.
    - To convert from paid status to volunteer status, an employee would be required to have a current physical, have a letter of recommendation from the current Captain and fill out a volunteer application. The employee would not be required to submit to a drug test or background investigation, as these would have previously been administered.
    - The employee would be required to pay any membership dues for the current year when submitting the volunteer application.
    - The employee would be required to attend a meeting with the membership committee and approved for membership by the committee before being submitted to the general membership for a vote as a probationary member.
    - If approved for membership, the member would be subject to all requirements as any other volunteer member.
    - If the paid employee is accepted as a volunteer member, they would be required to follow the process to become a paid employee if they choose to switch back to a paid employee status and be required to resign as a **volunteer** member of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department.

Thank you again for considering the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department. We look forward to working with you in service to the community of Arbutus and the citizens of Baltimore County.

Sincerely,

Membership Committee
Alex Attumalil, Committee Chair
volunteer@arbutusvfd.org
410.887.1471

Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, Station 35

5200 Southwestern Boulevard, Arbutus, MD 21227 Phone: (410) 887 – 1471 Emergency: 911

Prospective Member Information

History

- Arbutus VFD was founded in 1937
- Mission statement: To provide superior fire, rescue, and emergency medical services to the Arbutus and surrounding communities. We strive to protect life, property, and the environment through intervention, prevention, education, training, and community involvement.
- We provide fire, rescue, EMS, and Swiftwater Rescue to our community through the Baltimore County Fire Dept. We are a volunteer organization with some paid drivers. We respond to approximately 4,000 calls per year. We are one of the busiest and most successful volunteer firefighting organizations in Baltimore County and the state.
- We have an Administrative Side led by our President, who is responsible for the business aspects of the Department. We have a Fireline Side led by our Captain who handles day-to-day and emergency operations. We have an Auxiliary; men and women who do not wish to be active firefighters/EMT's, although wish to support the department through fundraisers, and direct support. The Board of Directors provides oversight to all of these.
- We have a proud tradition of service to the community. If you wish to join us, our expectations are that you will:
    - Serve the community with the integrity, honor, and respect that is part of our tradition.
    - Pay annual dues of $12.00. The $90.00 application fee includes 2 calendar years of dues.
    - Respect and maintain all AVFD property, including the building, grounds, equipment, and any property entrusted to you, which may include keys, pager, and turnout gear
    - Respect the other members, the chain of command, and officers
    - Be willing to learn and grow
    - Support the AVFD through you time and efforts in our fundraising activities.
    - Operate at emergency scenes as part of a team, not as an individual, with safety as your utmost concern

Administrative Operations, Application Process, LOSAP, and Dues

- The membership will vote on you for a 365-day probationary membership.
- To be considered for a vote for permanent membership after 1 year, you must accumulate 50 Length of Service Award Program Points. This is a Maryland state system to track your service time. Points accumulate for everything you do here, including emergency calls, meetings, fundraising, training, duty time, and sleep-ins. It is important that you document your time in Fire Rescue Reports (FRR) System. If you do not have 50 points, you cannot be voted on for permanent membership.
- After 3 years of service with at least 50 points per year, you become eligible for a MD state tax deduction of $7,000.00 (as of 2022 tax year), which will continue if you acquire 50 points per year. After 25 years of service, you become a life member and are eligible for a monthly stipend at age 60 (currently $300/month), along with a $5,000 burial benefit.
- Attendance for your probationary membership vote is not required. If you attend the next Business Meeting, you will be invited to attend the meeting, following a successful vote. You will sign the attendance book as a probationary member. The Financial Secretary will assign you a 6-digit LOSAP number and will confirm this with you via mail. You are encouraged to review the AVFD Bylaws and Membership Handbook which are online. A mentor will be assigned to you to explain the basics of membership and firehouse operations. You may also receive your key fob (deposit of $6.00 is included in the application fee. The key opens the dayroom door and the doors on the front ramp entering the engine bays.
- A portion of your application fee ($24) covers dues for 2 years, covering you to the last day of December for your 2nd calendar year. It is your responsibility to pay $12 dues for the next calendar year before the last day of December. If you fail to do this, you will be dropped from the membership roles and must reapply, which will be a significant inconvenience for you. Dues are payable at any regular business meeting, by deposit in the Treasurer's Office safe/mailbox, by certified regular/mail, or by PAYPAL. Dues may be paid in advance, and many members find it very advantageous to pay at least one additional year.

Fundraising

- The Arbutus VFD owns this property, land, building, apparatus, and equipment.
- We receive some subsidies and grant funds, but much of our income is from donations and fundraising.
- Operating a fire department is expensive. As a member, you will be expected to assist and participate in fundraising events to support this department.

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Prospective Member Information, continued

Emergency Operations

- The requirements to ride are outlined in the Membership Handbook. Initially, you will need Bloodbourne Pathogens Awareness, HAZMAT Operations, CPR, and Hepatitis B vaccine/waiver to ride as an observer on the engines/squad/ambulance.
- A physical fitness exam is required for all riding members. There is no cost to the applicant if they utilize the BCVFA approved provider.
- Your time availability, interest, and engagement will determine how rapidly you progress. If you introduce yourself to members and express interest in learning and training, you will progress more rapidly.
- After your vote, you are eligible to register for any Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI) class for which you meet the requirements. Be sure to follow MFRI cancellation procedures if you register for a class but cannot attend.
- We require applicants to commit to a duty crew. A duty crew is a group of members and officers who regularly attend the am/pm station shifts each day of the week. Any/all members are welcome to attend any crew at any time, regardless of their committed duty crew.
- New members desiring to become operational riding members will be issued a TRAINEE tee shirt that must be always worn while riding apparatus until the member is cleared as an operational FF or EMT. Additional/replacement shirts are available for purchase.
- Shorts shall not be worn on calls due to safety concerns, unless covered with turnout gear/coveralls. Navy blue Dickies or navy-blue EMS/tactical pants are encouraged.
- Open-toe shoes/sandals/flip-flops are not permitted for riding. Black leather safety boots are provided once a member is cleared and is actively riding apparatus.
- We encourage training and learning is a lifelong process.

Safety and Wellness

- There are responsibilities, stresses, and potential hazards associated with training and fireground operations. We have highest safety standards, but the potential for injury is a part of the fire service. If you are injured in the firehouse or on the fireground, you need to inform an officer immediately.
- Fireground operations are physically and mentally demanding. It is important that you discuss these activities with your doctor. If you have any health issues, (e.g., injuries, medications) either permanent or temporary that could interfere with your well-being on an emergency scene, you need to be honest about your capabilities and should talk with an officer.
- There is potential for you to witness scenes of tragedy on the fireground that may be disturbing to you. This is especially true of incidents involving children, abuse, mass casualty, or dismemberment of a victim. Baltimore County Fire Department has Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) resources available to address such cases. If you are disturbed by something you experience, please inform your officer so that appropriate resources can be activated. CISD is most effective when implemented within 24 hours of the incident.
- The Arbutus VFD lifestyle needs to be balanced with your family, spouse, children, job/school, and your personal responsibilities. The firehouse is not an escape from responsibilities and problems. We encourage you to talk with your family/friends/employers about your involvement with the AVFD and discuss schedules and expectations.
- We have no tolerance for horseplay, reckless, dangerous, or careless action.
- We do not discriminate against age, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. We take these issues seriously and require all our members to take fair practices training. Arbutus VFD does not participate or tolerate "hazing."
- There is a security system throughout this building. We have no tolerance for behavior that is criminal or detrimental to this department.
- We take vehicle safety very seriously. Your personal vehicle is not an emergency vehicle. You are expected to obey all traffic and safety laws when you are responding to the department. You may not flash your lights or honk your horn to move through traffic. You may not install unauthorized flashing lights and sirens on your vehicle. There is no freelancing (e.g., you do not bypass the department to respond directly to a scene and act alone)

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Prospective Member Information, continued

For members 16-18 with their parent/guardian present

- The fire department demands a high degree of professionalism and maturity. This is an exciting but demanding environment. It is vital that you keep a healthy perspective on priorities.
- We have some specific rules pertaining to members under 18:
    - Cannot be at the firehouse during times when scheduled for school, out by 10:00 pm on nights where there is school the next day.
    - Must have permission to sleep in, cannot sleep in on school nights, max 2 consecutive nights/week when school is not in session
    - Must maintain a C average in all subjects in school to be at the firehouse and submit quarterly report cards
- Academic success is more important than the firehouse. We value your interest and efforts, but your education must be your higher priority. The captain will maintain contact with you parents/guardian. If the Captain and/or your parents believe that the firehouse is interfering with your academic success, you will be asked to take a break from the firehouse and concentrate on your schoolwork until you improve your grades.

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Application for Regular Membership

STATEMENT OF APPLICATION AND AUTHORIZATION

I, the undersigned, am applying to become a member of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department.

I, the undersigned, do promise to abide by all the laws and rules regulating the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, either in effect, or to become effective by the vote of the membership.

I, the undersigned, understand that the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department shall undertake an investigation into my background and that I will be required to appear before the Membership Committee of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department. Furthermore, if I am under the age of 18 at the time of application, my parent/s or legal guardian/s must also agree to this application, and they will be required to meet with the Membership Committee of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department.

I, the undersigned, understand that should my application for membership be accepted by the membership of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, I shall be on a probationary period of at least 365 days, or until I am 18 years of age, whichever period is greater. I understand that at the end of my probationary period, I will be voted on by the regular members present at the next regularly scheduled business meeting of the department following the expiration of my probationary period. I understand that to be voted upon, I must have met all the requirements for regular membership by the time of the vote. I understand that the vote will determine my membership status.

I, the undersigned, understand that false, misleading, or incomplete statements to any part of this application, or forthcoming interview with the Membership Committee, constitutes perjury under the law, and that the detection of such falsity will result in immediate rejection of this application for membership or immediate dismissal from the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department. I further certify that all the answers to all the questions on this application are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and ability.

As an express condition of membership, I, the undersigned, hereby freely and voluntarily consent to examination by polygraph, at the expense of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, at anytime while a member of same, when required by the Membership Committee or Board of Directors and approved by the membership.

I, the undersigned, enclose a $90.00 application fee, ($24.00 annual dues/2 years, $6.00 department key deposit, $25.00 criminal background check, $35.00 drug test). I understand that the initiation, Drug Test, and background check fees are non-refundable. I understand that any dues paid once I have been accepted for probationary membership are non-refundable. I further understand that annual dues shall be paid by December 31st each calendar year and that the dues I am enclosing with this application only cover through December 31st of the current year and the following calendar year.

I, the undersigned, further enclose a certified copy of my driving record, a signed release for HR FIRST CONTACT to perform a criminal background check and three (3) letters of reference from persons outside of my immediate family and the membership of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department. If applicable, a letter of permission from the chief officer of any affiliated emergency service organization/s in Maryland is also enclosed.
Please sign and print:

Applicant's Name (Print)	**Applicant Signature**	**Date**
Parent/Guardian Name if Applicant Under 18 (Print)	**Parent/Guardian Signature**	**Date**

Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, Station 35

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Application for Regular Membership

Rules for Members of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department Between the Age of 16 and 18

Membership in a volunteer fire department requires a tremendous commitment of responsibility, maturity, time, and effort. While the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department welcomes members aged 16 to 18 years of age, we believe it is vital that the duties of this volunteer service do not interfere with this critical stage of development. Therefore, these rules have been established for the well-being of all members in this age group.

1. The applicant must provide the Captain with a copy of their most recently issued report card from the school where they are currently enrolled. The applicant must have a "C" average or better in all subjects to be eligible for probationary membership. Should an applicant not be presently enrolled in a daily school program, they must possess an official high school diploma (e.g., graduated "early"), or they must possess an official GED, or they must be enrolled in a certified GED program. If they are enrolled in a GED program, the instructor of the program must provide a signed and dated letter advising that the student is maintaining a satisfactory progress level. If home-schooled, adequate quarterly progress and activity must be maintained to an acceptable degree to be determined by the captain and the parent/guardian/instructor.
   All probationary members enrolled in school must present a copy of each quarterly report card they receive to the Captain within five (5) days after receiving it from school. Students who are enrolled in a GED program must present either a report card or a signed and dated letter from the instructor each quarter indicating satisfactory progress. Failure to maintain a "C" average or satisfactory performance level in school, home-school, or a GED program shall result in immediate suspension from all activity related to the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department. If this happens, the probationary member shall not be permitted on the property, nor may they participate in any activities related to the department without expressed permission of the Captain or President. This suspension will remain until the student again achieves at least a "C" average and his/her parents or legal guardians agree that fire department activities may resume.
   These regulations also apply to summer school, evening school, and alternative school programs.
2. All probationary members under the age of 18 shall leave the fire department premises before 10:00 pm (2200 hours) on any evening school is scheduled for the following day. In general, this involves Sunday night through Thursday night. In addition, all probationary members under the age of 18 shall provide the captain a copy of their class schedule at the beginning of each semester. Probationary members under the age of 18 may not be present on the property during times when they are scheduled for classes, study periods, work/study periods, or school lunch periods.
3. When school is not scheduled the next day, probationary members under the age of 18 may remain until 11:00 pm (2300 hours), unless permission to spend the night is granted (see below).
4. Probationary members under the age of 18 may only spend duty nights at the department if they fulfill all the following: A.) they have permission from the Captain, B.) they have permission from their parent/legal guardian, and C.) they are cleared to ride an ambulance, engine, or rescue squad in at least TRAINEE capacity.
5. During the summer when regular school is not in session, probationary members under the age of 18 may spend a maximum of two (2) duty nights per week if they meet all requirements of Rule #4.
6. At least one (1) parent or legal guardian shall join applicants under the age of 18 for their interview with the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee may require additional meetings with applicants under the age of 18 and their parents/legal guardians in addition to the standard interview.
7. The probationary period for members under the age of 18 lasts from the time they are approved for probationary status by the membership until either A.) they reach the age of 18, or B.) a 365-day period has elapsed. The longer of these two conditions shall apply, after which the member shall be eligible for vote for regular membership at the next regular business meeting.

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Application for Regular Membership

Agreement for Applicants and Members of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department Who Are Between the Ages of 16 and 18

I understand that I am undertaking a large commitment of responsibility, maturity, and public trust. I understand that my commitment to the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department is second to my commitment to success in my education and my responsibilities to my parent/s or legal guardian/s. I understand that to continue activities at the fire department, I must succeed in my education.

I understand that there are risks associated with emergency service, including such potential exposure to environments containing immediate dangers to life and health (e.g., fire, hazardous materials, and body substances), encountering persons who are traumatically injured or deceased, and the emotional stress that is a natural result of these situations. I promise to talk to my parents/guardians and my officers about anything of this nature that is troubling to me.

I understand that I must comply with all rules and regulations of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, including the abovementioned rules applying to members under the age of 18. I understand that to remain a member during my probationary period, I must comply with all rules. I understand that if I violate any rule, I may be suspended from the premises and all activities, or my membership may be terminated.

_____	_____	_____
Applicant's Name (Print)	Applicant Signature	Date

Agreement for Parent/s or Legal Guardian/s of Applicants and Members of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department Who Are Between the Ages of 16 and 18

I understand all the rules and regulations governing the probationary membership regarding the applicant for which I am responsible. I understand that to continue membership, the applicant must comply with all rules of the department, as well as all rules pertaining to members under the age of 18. I further understand the risks, and the graphic and emotional situations to which the applicant may be exposed.

I authorize my child/legal ward to pursue membership with the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department of Baltimore County, Maryland, which may include training and response to emergency calls when sufficient training is complete.

I agree to hold harmless the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department of Baltimore County, Maryland, and all its Officers and Members for any injuries and/or damages, both physical and mental, sustained by my child/legal ward in the course of training, emergency response, or other activities related to or sponsored by the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department.

_____	_____	_____
Parent/Legal Guardian of above (Print)	Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian	Date
_____	_____	_____
Membership Committee witness (Print)	Signature of Membership Committee	Date

Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, Station 35

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Application for Regular Membership

Self-Assessment for Potential Members of the Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department

Prior to submitting your application, we recommend completion of this self-assessment to determine your readiness to commit to the Arbutus VFD. This is a commitment that should not be taken lightly. Please take some time to consider how each statement applies to you and respond honestly. Place an "X" in your interest and comfort level for each skill/statement.

	INTEREST IN SKILL		COMFORT IN SKILL		
For each statement below, select the level that best applies to you.	I am not interested	I am interested	Below Average	Average	Above Average
Academic					
My reading skills are…					
My writing skills are…					
My spoken communication skills are…					
My ability to study for and pass a practical/skills exam is…					
My ability to study for and pass a practical/skills exam is…					
My knowledge/comfort with math and numbers is…					
My knowledge/comfort with biology and anatomy is…					
My knowledge/comfort with chemistry is…					
My knowledge/comfort with physics is…					
Fitness					
My upper body fitness (arms, chest, back muscles, lifting capability) is …					
My lower body fitness (hips, legs, knees, feet) is…					
My overall cardiovascular fitness is (heart, lungs, circulation) is…					
My level of physical agility (mobility, flexibility) is…					
My swimming ability is…					
My mental fitness level (stress management, emotional stability) is…					
Experience/Knowledge/Skills/Abilities					
My comfort level with small hand tools (hammers, wrenches, screwdrivers) is…					
My comfort level with large hand tools (axes, shovels, sledgehammers) is…					
My comfort level with power tools (chainsaws, drills, power saws) is…					
My comfort level with ropes, knots, and rope equipment is…					
My motor vehicle driving skills (normal, non-emergency driving) are…					
My knowledge of electricity and electrical systems is…					
My knowledge of radios and electronic communications systems is…					
My knowledge of plumbing, pumps, and water distribution systems is…					
My knowledge of motor vehicles/automobiles is…					
My knowledge of building/home construction is…					
My knowledge of heating/ventilation/air handling systems is…					
My knowledge of home appliances (stoves, ovens, dryers) is…					
My knowledge of computers, email, and the internet is…					
My knowledge of outdoor/camping/survival skills are…					
My knowledge of small boats and water-related activities is…					
My comfort level with map reading and navigation (without a GPS) is…					
My comfort level working at heights is…					
My comfort level working in darkness is…					
My comfort level working in confined spaces is…					

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Application for Regular Membership

Self-Assessment, Continued

For each statement below, select the level that best applies to you.	INTEREST IN SKILL		COMFORT IN SKILL		
	I am not interested	I am interested	Below Average	Average	Above Average
Leadership/Attitude/Emotion					
My comfort level speaking/presenting in front of a group is…					
My comfort level in being a member of a team completing a task is…					
My comfort level leading a team to complete a task is…					
My comfort level speaking to children is…					
My comfort level in dealing with blood and bodily substances is…					
My comfort level dealing with people who are stressed/upset is…					
My ability to respect different opinions and viewpoints other than my own is…					
My patience in dealing with difficult/uncooperative people is…					
My self-confidence level is…					
My self-motivation and willingness to take initiative is …					

The Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department is a professional organization, and membership requires a significant commitment of personal time. This decision should consider commitments and priorities you have already established, including work, school, and family obligations. Consider that initial training as an EMT-B requires 165+ hours of training. These classes typically meet two evenings a week at a volunteer station for four to five months, including some weekends.

Given your current schedule and obligations, please complete the chart below and indicate your current availability for training and participation in activities at Arbutus VFD.

Based on your current schedule, indicate your availability for volunteering in the table below. Also indicate your top 3 preferred choices for duty crew preference:

	Monday	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**	**Saturday**	**Sunday**
AM							
PM							
Overnight							

Please complete this table using: X=unavailable, S=sometimes available, A=often available

①②③ Indicate top three preferred choices for duty crew.

☐ **Check here if you work rotating shifts or have a varied work schedule**

Hobbies/interests that you enjoy in your free time include:

_____

There are no right or wrong answers in this assessment. However, if you answered, "Not Interested" and/or "Below Average" to a significant number of questions, or if you have any hesitations or reservations about making this commitment, you should speak to a Membership Committee representative prior to submitting your application.

Name_____ Signature_____ Date_____

Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.
5200 Southwestern Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21227

Established 1938

Station 350
Fire • Rescue • EMS

To: President or Chief Officer of _____

Greetings,

A member or former member of your department has applied for membership at Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department in Baltimore, MD. If an applicant has prior membership with another volunteer fire/rescue organization within the state of Maryland, our bylaws require letter of permission from the applicant's company prior to joining Arbutus VFD. Please assist us by completing the form below, signing and dating, and returning to us.

Applicant's Name: _____

President or Chief Officer Name (Printed)_____

Position/Title_____

Please check all that apply:
☐ This applicant is a CURRENT member in good standing with this department.
☐ This applicant is a PAST member of this department:

☐ **RESIGNED** ☐ **DROPPED** ☐ **EXPELLED**

☐ Our company has no knowledge or record of this applicant.
☐ This applicant MAY pursue membership with Arbutus VFD
☐ This applicant MAY NOT pursue membership with Arbutus VFD, due to obligations or conflicts with our rules/bylaws.

Any comments, commendations, or concerns regarding this applicant?

_____

_____

_____

Signature_____ Date_____

Thank you for your time. Please respond through one of the following:

- Mail: Address above
- Attn: Membership Committee
- FAX: 410.242.6962
- Scan and email: cao350@bcvfa.org

Sincerely,
Arbutus Volunteer Fire Department, Membership Committee