

SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

FEMALE PRE-RECRUIT FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

*File*

[n.d.]

RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY:

The responsibility and authority for managing the "Female Pre-Recruit Firefighter Program" lies with the Seattle Fire Department. The office of Personnel/Civil Service will provide assistance such as some training programs, instructors, and assistance in writing of personal service contracts. In addition, they will monitor the program to insure that all E.E.O.C. requirements are met. It is the intent that the Fire Department avail themselves of the expertise of Personnel/Civil Service to help insure that the program is successful. Communication between the Fire Department and Personnel/Civil Service will be ongoing regarding all facets of the program.

PURPOSE:

To provide female candidates with an opportunity to acquire some of the knowledge, skills and abilities of the entry level Recruit Firefighter.

SCOPE:

The program will involve two basic areas: 1) physical strength training and 2) training which is designed to upgrade their mechanical knowledge and manipulative skills.

This program is designed to prepare these women for the third recruit class this year. That class is scheduled to start on approximately September 1, 1977. This will allow sufficient time for the women to demonstrate whether or not they can improve their physical strength enough to perform the job of a Firefighter. The physical strength program outlined for the women by Dr. T. Lee Doolittle established a maximum time of 35 weeks for the one candidate requiring the most improvement. It must be understood that this program cannot continue

SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

FEMALE PRE-RECRUIT FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

PAGE 2

forever, and that any Pre-Recruits unable to enter the third recruit class will be terminated without prejudice from the program. It should also be recognized that if any of the Pre-Recruits improve sufficiently enough to enter a recruit class prior to the third class, they will be allowed to do so.

RECRUITING STANDARDS:

Personnel taking part in this program will be those people presently on the Firefighter eligible register. In the event that it is required that additional women be brought into the program, they will be required to pass a regular Firefighter entrance examination, and be placed on an eligible register. In addition, prior to being hired, they will be required to pass the L.E.O.F.F. Pension physical.

WORK PROGRAM:

Physical Endurance and Strength Conditioning

Dr. T. Lee Doolittle, a professor of Physical Education at the University of Washington, has completed an extensive report to determine the reasons for the failure of three specific women and has concluded, "In general terms, the women were found to be over-all, muscularly weak, in terms of the demands placed upon them by evolutions performed by Firefighters...comparisons were in terms of the lifts that were similar to the evolutions and the weights encountered in those evolutions...The women subjectively indicated they felt they were weak in upper body strength, (and) this weakness was objectively verified. Further, it would appear that the weakness prevails in the leg muscles, albeit to a lesser degree, as well as in the upper body". Dr. Doolittle has provided a strength development program which is being conducted at the YMCA. (See Attachment B.) Supervision is provided by YMCA staff. The routine requires two hours daily.

SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

FEMALE PRE-RECRUIT FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

PAGE 3

WORK PROGRAM (Continued)

Mechanical Skill Development:

It has been generally conceded by all that the lack of training in the industrial arts and basic mechanical skills area has kept the female from competing on a fair basis with her male counterpart. Through cooperation with the Seattle Fire Department Training Division and Personnel/Civil Service there is a program presently underway which speaks to these needs both on an industrial arts and Fire Department level.

During the month of January, the women participated in 128 hours of training:

- 32 hours of physical training
- 30 hours of industrial arts
- 54 hours of Fire Department related subjects
- 12 hours in a Community College class

In the industrial arts field, Mr. Dan Donham (Personnel/Civil Service) covered the basics of:

- Plumbing
- Electricity
- Lumber
- Fasteners
- Some automotive parts

The Fire Department training, under the direction of Lt. Carnegie, was aimed at some of the more mundane tasks of the Firefighter, namely:

- Ropes and knots and their usage
- Hose couplings - recognition and usage
- Handling ladders and related terminology
- Basic concepts of the internal combustion engine

The course at the Community College proved to be too advanced for the lay person and was dropped.

SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

FEMALE PRE-RECRUIT FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

PAGE 4

Through the month of February, the three women are to spend approximately 100 hours learning the basics of house construction, along with the basic knowledge of, and hands-on training involving, the tools used in the construction of the house. An ongoing driver training program has been set up to teach each of the women to not only have the knowledge to drive a 12-ton fire apparatus, but the confidence to handle it.

Future Work Program:

During the last week of February both phases of the mechanical skill training will be reviewed. At that time the March program will be firmed up, along with the actual commitment to the instructors. There is a commitment with the construction instructor to provide training through the month of May, 1977, subject to monthly planning. A review will be held during the last week of each month of the program, so that the program will proceed only as fast as the women are able to absorb the material.

During the course of the program, the following subjects will be covered:

- Fire Department terminology
- Fire Department power and hand tools
- Function of the fire pump
- Ladder handling and nomenclature
- First aid and anatomy
- Hydraulic calculation for fire pumps
- Ropes and knots
- Hose handling
- Basic internal combustion engine
- Couplings

The physical conditioning training is to be reviewed monthly by Dr. T. Lee Doolittle, and modified as the need arises.

Each participant has been given a copy of this report and a set of Rules and Regulations governing their responsibilities and actions in this program.  
(See attached.)