



Ararat Fire Brigade

Prospective Member Information

Volunteering with CFA

Volunteering with a CFA brigade opens up a world of opportunity for members as a vital means of community service. Membership is also a pathway to personal development, and leads to a greater understanding of what is required to respond effectively to all sorts of emergencies.

You can become a CFA member on your 16th birthday, but if you are a month or twenty older than that, it is never too late to add your contribution to the CFA mix.

For further details refer to the *Volunteering with CFA – Frequently Asked Questions* leaflet included with this Pack.

About the Brigade

Ararat Fire Brigade is a fully volunteer brigade and has been since September 1859, so our brigade has a long history of protecting and supporting the Ararat community by their service. The brigade also serves the broader Victorian community, and occasionally interstate when required.

Ararat FB also runs a junior brigade program for 11-17 year olds. For further details see overleaf.

The brigade responds to approximately 200 incidents per year and also has an active involvement with delivery of CFA community safety programs such as Brigades in Schools, Home Fire Safety Workshops, Industrial Fire Safety training, fire extinguisher servicing and is regularly involved in general community events.

Brigade roles

Today's CFA offers willing volunteers a number of opportunities to support their community in ways other than donning the yellows and getting on the back of a truck. All brigades have administrative type roles that need filling such as secretary and treasurer, as well as roles in Community Safety, Health and Safety, Community Education, Training, Junior Brigades, Fundraising etc. Further to those roles is the support that is needed in the event of a large fire or incident in the area, there are numerous opportunities for short duration involvement that may be needed for the duration of the fire/incident, such as transport, deliveries, purchasing, record keeping, radio operators and the list goes on.

Ararat Fire Brigade Values

In 2014 Ararat Fire Brigade reviewed its way of doing business and has adopted the following values:

- Equality
- Honesty
- Respect
- Trust
- Commitment
- Responsibility
- Teamwork



Applying

If you are interested in becoming a member of the brigade, complete the *Potential Volunteer Application Form* included in the *Information Pack* and return via the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

All adult members are required to complete a National Police Check (NPC) form and provide 100 points of identification. A Medical Referral Form may also be required if a medical condition is identified.

As part of the recruitment process you will be required to attend 4 brigade training sessions; we recommend that this is completed within 3 months. The brigade trains every Thursday night except for the second Thursday of each month (note that training is not always undertaken at the Fire Station).

Junior Program

The Ararat Fire Brigade runs a Junior Program which consists of young people aged 11 to 17 who meet from 5pm to 6.30pm on a Wednesday evening during school terms. The Junior Fire Brigade Program gives kids a taste of what volunteer firefighting is all about in a safe and fun environment and prepares them for future endeavours of being senior volunteer firefighters if they so choose.

The juniors also support Brigade fundraising activities and are involved in various community orientated events including collecting for the Good Friday Appeal, setting up chairs for Anzac Day ceremonies and marching in the Golden Gateway Festival Procession.



New Member Process

- 1 Obtain an *Information Pack*.
- 2 Complete *Potential Volunteer Application Form* and return it.
- 3 Brigade will arrange an informal meeting with at least two Brigade Management Team (BMT) members
- 4 BMT decides on application proceeding and communicates the decision to the applicant.
- 5 If proceeding, the applicant attends four regular brigade training sessions then has a *Formal Interview* with an Interview Panel.
- 6 The Interview Panel recommendation is considered by the BMT who decide on the application proceeding.
- 7 If proceeding, complete and submit documentation: brigade member registration form; NPC form with 100 points of identification; medical report form if required.
- 8 CFA confirms suitability and Brigade members vote on acceptance of the applicant as a Brigade member.





Ararat Fire Brigade

Potential Volunteer Application Form

Name: Email:

Residential Address: State: Postcode:

Postal Address: State: Postcode:
(if different from residential address)

Phone (a/h): Phone (b/h): Mobile:

Most suitable time to contact you *(please circle)*: Business Hours Evenings Weekends

Age: 16 - 17 18 - 24 25 - 34 35 - 44 45 - 54 55 - 64 65+

Gender: Male Female

Volunteer role

- I'm interested in becoming a volunteer firefighter
- I'm interested in becoming a brigade member (not fighting fires): *read below for more information on non-firefighting roles*

Brigade roles

Today's CFA offers willing volunteers a number of opportunities to support their community in ways other than donning the yellows and getting on the back of a truck. All brigades have administrative type roles that need filling such as secretaries and treasurers, as well as new roles in Community Safety, Health and Safety, Community Education, Training, Junior Brigades, Fundraising etc. Further to those roles are those that are needed if the local brigade has a large fire or incident in their area, there are numerous support roles that may be needed for the duration of the fire/incident, transport, deliveries, purchasing, record keeping, radio operators and the list goes on.

I am available to volunteer: Weekdays (daytime) Evenings Weekends

How did you find out about volunteering with CFA?

- Local paper TV advertisement Friend/relative Other media (newspapers etc.)
- CFA website New to area Other *(please state)*

Reasons for wanting to volunteer:

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Existing Skills and/or Qualifications

<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid L1 <i>Please circle</i> L2 L3	<input type="checkbox"/> Cert IV Training & Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Working with Children Check	<input type="checkbox"/> Food Handling
<input type="checkbox"/> Language Other Than English LOTE		<input type="checkbox"/> Computing/Online skills (eg HTML, Web Design)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional/Trade qualification:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Driving License endorsements:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:			

Your Details:

Is there any other matter that you believe may preclude you from becoming a member of the Ararat Fire Brigade?

Yes/No (please circle)

Notes:

- **Brigade membership requires completion of a National Police Check (NPC) form with 100 points of identification**
- **A Medical Referral form may also be required if a medical condition is identified.**

Confidentiality:

The information you provide on this form will only be used to process your request for more information about becoming a CFA volunteer. It will not be used for any other purpose or provided to any other party, and will be stored securely by CFA.

I have read and understand the above confidentiality statement and am providing my details according to these terms.

Name Signature

Date

Submitting this form:

This form is to be completed and returned at time of enquiry.

Alternatively, it can be returned in the self-addressed envelope to:

**Secretary
Ararat Fire Brigade
PO Box 501
Ararat 3377**



Volunteering With CFA: Frequently Asked Questions

- What areas does CFA cover?
- Who can join?
- What do volunteers do?
- Do I have to live in a CFA area to volunteer?
- What will it cost to become a CFA volunteer?
- What benefits will there be for me?
- How many hours a week will I have to commit to?
- What will training involve?
- How long will training last for?
- Are there any fitness/skill requirements?
- Can I still volunteer if I have a full time job or kids at home?
- Will being a volunteer give me an advantage when applying for a career firefighting position?
- What is the process for joining?
- Can I be a volunteer only for major bushfires?
- Are there any health restrictions?
- What compensation is payable to CFA volunteers who are injured?

What areas does CFA cover?

CFA covers all of country and regional Victoria, including 60% of metropolitan Melbourne, generally bordering the inner suburbs. Areas included in CFA's area are Dandenong, Eltham, Bayswater, Caroline Springs and Greenvale.

Who can join?

The minimum age to become a CFA member is 16 years (those aged 16 and 17 will need parental consent), and some brigades also run a Junior Program for those aged 11 to 15.

People from all walks of life become CFA volunteers, including young people, women of all ages, active retirees and people from culturally diverse communities.

What do volunteers do?

CFA volunteers can either be firefighters or undertake support roles.

Firefighting and emergency roles include:

- attending emergency call-outs: bushfires and structural fires, road accident rescues, incidents involving hazardous materials, other emergencies including flood assistance and other types of rescue
- conducting fuel reduction burns.

Support roles include:

- community education programs and events
- fundraising activities
- brigade training
- brigade equipment maintenance
- media and public relations
- multicultural liaison
- brigade administration
- junior members program.

Do I have to live in a CFA area to volunteer?

If you are interested in attending emergency calls, then you need to live reasonably close to your local brigade.

However, if you are interested in other volunteer roles in the brigade that do not require you to get on a truck, then you can live further away. Roles could include administration, fundraising, recruitment, community education, media liaison, community events, just to name a few. The type of roles available will depend on the individual brigade and the vacancies available at the time you enquire.

If one brigade does not have a role available that you are interested in, another in the area might, so consider enquiring with more than one brigade about their volunteering roles and options.

What will it cost to become a CFA volunteer?

The only cost to become a CFA volunteer is your time. All training and equipment is provided by CFA as required.

What benefits will there be for me?

CFA volunteers develop leadership and management capabilities, meet new friends, learn new skills, achieve personal goals, put something back into the community and often involve their whole family in CFA activities.

Other benefits include:

- valuable work and personal experience in the community
- a sense of achievement
- skill development that can be used in other areas of your life
- access to member support services, including counselling and a rewards/benefits program.

How many hours a week will I have to commit to?

The time commitment will depend on the individual brigade and the type of role that you choose.

Generally a brigade will train weekly and hold meetings monthly, plus any incidents that occur. You will be able to talk with your local brigade to determine:

- the time and attendance commitments required for certain roles
- whether certain roles can be undertaken off-site to the fire station
- how flexible the available roles are to be undertaken around your other commitments.

What will training involve?

There are many different skills you can learn and courses you can do through CFA. The particular courses you participate in will be relevant to the role you choose. They could include, but are not limited to:

- basic firefighting
- fire safety awareness
- endorsed truck licence
- first aid
- leadership training
- wildfire behaviour and suppression
- map reading
- radio communications
- fireground safety
- community education/liaison
- media liaison
- managing conflict
- occupational health and safety.

Training is conducted at the local brigade, and at various training grounds around the state. Training times will differ between each brigade, but are generally held on a weeknight or weekend.

There is also a calendar of training courses available to CFA members on a variety of topics and interest areas, all of which are recognised around Australia. CFA is a registered training organisation, so any skills or qualifications gained are transferable to other organisations and workplaces.

How long will training last for?

On average it takes three to six months to complete a recruit course. Recruit courses vary from two to six hours a week depending on the brigade you join. In your initial training you will learn all the basic skills and safety requirements to be able to start attending emergency calls. Once you have completed this, you will have the opportunity to attend regular training with the brigade, to maintain your skills and learn new ones. The first six months with CFA is a probationary period.

Training for other roles will depend on the type of role, whether there are any CFA courses to complete and the amount of on-the-job training required.

Are there any fitness/skill requirements?

You do not need any prior skills before you join CFA, as all training is provided. Firefighting will involve strenuous and physically challenging activities, so a certain level of fitness is required to undertake this role. You can discuss this with your local brigade to determine your suitability for this role and any others available.

Can I still volunteer if I have a full time job or kids at home?

Yes, most brigade meetings, training and other activities are conducted on weeknights or weekends and you can discuss with your local brigade when you would be able to attend incidents. Other roles can usually be fitted around member availability and commitments.

Will being a volunteer give me an advantage when applying for a career firefighting position?

Both volunteers and non-volunteers are required to go through the same application process. If you are successful in obtaining a firefighter position, you will still need to complete the entire recruit training course. More information about career firefighting can be found at <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/volunteer-careers/career-firefighting>.

What is the process for joining?

The process for joining may begin with an information session at the brigade to find out more about what's involved and see if there is a role suited for you; alternatively, it may involve an individual meet and greet session with officers of the brigade.

It is then necessary to fill out an application form and consent for police record check (these are not seen by the brigade, rather managed corporately). Applications are then approved by an Operations Manager.

Can I be a volunteer only for major bushfires?

Brigades need members who are able to provide support and respond to incidents throughout the year, not just in times of major fires. Members are also required to be fully trained before attending any incidents.

Are there any health restrictions?

CFA's primary concern is for the safety and health of its volunteers. Brigades are responsible for ensuring that volunteers perform their role in a safe manner. CFA needs to know if a prospective volunteer has a condition which may place limitations on their role in the brigade. When CFA is aware of any limitations or restrictions that a person has, the brigade can then avoid placing the volunteer in an environment that is unsuited to their health. As such, you may have to undertake a medical assessment.

What compensation is payable to CFA volunteers who are injured?

CFA provides comprehensive insurance cover for medical costs, loss of wages and property damage.

For more information, visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call 1800 232 636. Alternatively, we encourage you to approach your local brigade.