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FIREFIGHTER SELECTION PROCESS

1. You are entering a very comprehensive and competitive process. The desire for this career is great and the competition is strong. Be prepared to put your best foot forward during each step of the process.

2. A competition open and close date will be posted indicating when applications will be accepted. Applications can only be submitted through an online system accessible from the web site during an active competition. We do not accept unsolicited emailed or faxed résumés or paper applications.

3. At the discretion of the Recruitment Section, processing and selection of applicants may occur in multiple phases.

4. You may be instructed to complete the steps in a different order or concurrent with others. However, you need to be successful at each step in the selection process in order to be hired.

5. You need to be successful at each step of the process or your application will be closed. Even if you are successful, we may choose to select only the most suitable candidates to progress further in the selection process.

6. If you are unsuccessful at any step in the process, your application will be closed. If you wish to re-apply and are eligible to do so, you will need to wait until the next competition opens.

7. In rare instances, your application file may be permanently closed. Permanent file closure means you will not be eligible to apply again during future competitions.

8. Successful candidates will be placed on a hiring list for consideration when there are available position openings. The hiring list may be held for 12 to 18 months or until fully utilized. Department staffing needs vary and as such it is not guaranteed that applicants selected for the hiring list will be offered employment within this timeframe.

9. Your demeanour and input throughout the selection process are taken into consideration as part of your final hiring decision.

10. At times, you may experience little advance warning to participate in tests; other times, you may experience lengthy delays with little feedback. Please ensure you actively monitor your email inbox to stay current with all requests.

11. Carefully read through all communication you receive from us to ensure you know what is expected and so you can act to meet deadlines. Always stay current with recruiting information by frequently visiting our web site.

IMPORTANT NOTE

- If you intentionally misrepresent yourself or your qualifications, knowingly withhold information or are purposely deceitful or dishonest at any stage in the process, your application file will be permanently closed. You will not be eligible to apply again during future competitions.
**STEPS IN THE FIREFIGHTER SELECTION PROCESS**

**STEP 1 – ONLINE APPLICATION / PRE-SCREEN**

The first step in the selection process requires the applicant to submit an online application during the open competition period. Once the application is submitted, preliminary screening to ensure the applicant meets the minimum qualifications will be conducted. All applicants will be advised by email if they have been selected to move to the next step.

**IMPORTANT APPLICATION NOTES**

- Before registering on the online system, print and read through the detailed Application Instructions PDF available on our website. You may also want to have a copy handy while you are completing and submitting your application.

- Do not submit your application until you meet the minimum qualifications.

- Applications will only be accepted through our online system. We do not accept emailed or faxed resumes or paper applications.

- An active email address will be required to create an online account and to file an application.

- Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

- You will need to dedicate approximately 45 minutes or longer to complete your online application. Full disclosure of information is expected including dates, contact names and information, and explanations for gaps in education or employment. Incomplete sections may prevent your application from proceeding. You are encouraged to have a current copy of your résumé and to gather all of your information before you begin.

**STEP 2 – FIRE SERVICE APTITUDE TEST**

The Fire Service Aptitude Test measures your skills and aptitude to become a firefighter. You do not require prior firefighter knowledge or experience to pass the aptitude test. The test covers a broad range of skills and abilities that have been identified as important to the fire service such as:

- Practical Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Emotional Outlook
- Basic Educational Skills
- Mechanical Aptitude
STEPS IN THE FIREFIGHTER SELECTION PROCESS ...CONTINUED

IMPORTANT NOTES RE: FIRE SERVICE APTITUDE TEST

- To help you prepare for the test, an Aptitude Test Preparation Guide is available on our website.
- Only candidates who were shortlisted during Step 1 will be asked to write the Fire Service aptitude test. If selected, you will be advised by email and will be provided instructions for booking your test session.
- Only specific test dates will be available as disclosed on the website. If you are unable to attend on the available test dates, you will have to withdraw your application and re-apply during a future competition.
- Neither a candidate’s aptitude test score nor the cut-off score will be released.
- If you do not pass the aptitude test, your application will be closed. If this happens, you will be eligible to re-apply on future competitions beginning once again at Step 1.
- If you are successful, your application will proceed to the next step in the selection process.

STEP 3 – DOCUMENTATION REVIEW

Applicants who receive a successful score on the aptitude test will receive an email requesting that they send a documentation package to the CFD Recruitment Office. You will be asked to submit supporting documents to validate your qualifications, along with a paper copy of a questionnaire known as the Personal History Statement (PHS).

- The deadline for submitting the documentation package may be very quick. You will be encouraged to submit your documentation as soon as practical but before the deadline.
  - Late or incomplete documentation packages will not be considered.

Supporting Documentation

The documents you will be required to produce will include:

- Proof of Immunization History confirming immunity to:
  - Measles (Rubeola).
  - Mumps.
  - Rubella (German measles).
  - Tetanus (< 10 years).
  - Diphtheria (< 10 years).
  - Hepatitis-B.
- Proof of High School completion or recognized equivalency.
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION...CONTINUED

- Driver’s Licence Abstract – original document covering a minimum of a five year history.
- Criminal Records Check – original document. We will also accept a receipt for payment from the police agency as proof of having ordered one. You must submit the original document to our office when it is received by you.
  - You will also be required to provide proof of a pardon if you have had a criminal conviction.
- If applicable, proof of a valid Permanent Resident Card.

In addition, you should prepare to submit copies of the certifications and credentials you have reported to have which are over and above the minimum qualifications.

It is your responsibility to understand what types of documentation will be accepted. More information describing the accepted forms of documentation and their requirements can be found on our web site.

PERSONAL HISTORY STATEMENT

In prior competitions, copies of the Personal History Statement (PHS) form were available for printing directly from our web site. Beginning January 2011, the distribution of the PHS has been restricted and it will now only be circulated to applicants who are chosen to participate in Step 3 of the selection process.

A non-printable copy of the PHS remains available for viewing on our web site on the Minimum Qualifications page.

IMPORTANT PHS NOTES

- Distributed copies of the PHS will contain the Job Competition number and will be the only copies accepted.
  - Earlier versions of the PHS will not be considered. If you submit an earlier version of the PHS, this will prevent your application from continuing in the selection process.
- Completing a PHS is a mandatory requirement. Without your PHS, your application will not proceed.
- You will be required to print a copy of your PHS and hand-write your answers to the questions. The PHS is approximately 40 pages in length. Double-sided printing is encouraged whenever possible.
- Before writing your answers to the questions in the PHS, you are cautioned to carefully read through all instructions and information contained in the document.
- You are responsible for the accuracy of all statements made on your PHS.
- Full disclosure of information is required including dates, specifics, and pertinent details. Vague or incomplete statements will not be accepted. There is zero-tolerance for non-disclosure of information.
Personal History Statement…Continued

- You must be free from participating in any detected or undetected criminal activity for a minimum of three years prior to applying, although some exceptions may apply for minimal soft drug use.

- Any involvement in criminal activity beyond the three years prior to applying will be assessed on an individual basis; this includes drug use.

- You are expected to remain clear of criminal activity, including drug use, throughout the selection process.

- You are not to limit your answers on the PHS to report only activities that occurred in the three years leading up to the date of your application.

  - Unless instructed otherwise, you are to reflect back as far as you can remember and report all information you recall. Do not assume an incident is too minor to include, and do not minimize your involvement in an event.

- PHS responses will be verified by means of a pre-employment polygraph test during Step 5 of the process.

- It is your responsibility to understand what is required of you with the PHS.

Frequently Asked Questions – Personal History Statement

Q “Why is it necessary to disclose personal, private information for events that happened long ago?”

A We hire people who demonstrate respectful, ethical behaviour, who are accountable for their actions, and who pose minimal risk to the organization.

When assessing applicants for their job fit, we need to identify risks of behaviour reoccurrence based on the premise that “past behaviour predicts future performance”. In order to assess your suitability, we require your complete personal history to form an accurate representation of your experiences and actions.

Q “While filling out my PHS, I have answered “Yes” to some of the questions. Will this negatively impact or automatically exclude my application?”

A Not necessarily. Many people have made poor decisions in the past. Those who have chosen to distance themselves from destructive, unsuitable, or unlawful behaviours demonstrate an ability to learn from and overcome obstacles and to make better decisions. Restitution, making amends, and taking ownership for these past behaviours demonstrates positive traits reflective of the firefighting profession.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – PERSONAL HISTORY STATEMENT...CONTINUED

Q “What is your policy regarding illegal drug usage?”
A While the CFD does not condone the usage of any controlled drugs or substances as identified by Canadian law, some exceptions may be allowed for minimal soft drug usage.

Applications revealing soft drug usage of no more than one occurrence in the 12 months prior to applying, and no more than three occurrences total in the three years prior to applying may be considered.

- An occurrence is defined as one point of ingestion of a single substance.
- “Soft” drugs are defined as marijuana, hashish, hash oil, and mushrooms.
- All other illicit substances, including anabolic steroids, are defined as “hard” drugs and cannot be used any time in the three years leading up to the date of your application.
  - A complete listing of our hard drug definition can be found on the Drug Use questions in the PHS.
  - Drug usage outside of the three years prior to your application will be considered on an individual basis.

Q “What if I honestly forget to record something on my PHS, or I recall an incident after I have submitted it?”
A It is your responsibility to ensure your file is complete at every stage in the process. Additional information must be sent in writing to the Recruitment Office as soon as possible. We do not accept verbal PHS updates.

- If the new information would not have initially disqualified you, it is unlikely you will be eliminated from the process after you send in your update.
- If the information is disqualifying, your application will be closed. Depending on the nature of the activity, your file may be permanently closed, meaning you are no longer eligible to apply for a firefighter position with the CFD.
**STEP 4 – PANEL INTERVIEW**

The fourth step in the selection process is a formal Targeted Selection Interview with a panel of fire service personnel. This interview further assesses qualifications and suitability for a career with the CFD and will assist in validating the suitability of shortlisted candidates as the most competitive following the application review.

**IMPORTANT INTERVIEW NOTES**

- An Interview Preparation Guide is available on our website. Advance preparation is key to your success.

- The interviewers will be rating you based on the responses you provide; they have been trained to objectively capture data for this purpose. It is your responsibility to provide the information in a clear and concise manner.

- The interview is approximately one to two hours in length.

- You will not be advised at the conclusion of your interview of your results. You will receive formal notification by email.

- Your answers to behavioural questions will be measured to determine if you meet the criteria for successful job performance. Your scores will not be used to determine a ranking order.

- You must meet the minimum criteria for the interview dimensions to be eligible to proceed to Step 5, Pre-employment Polygraph / Data Verification.
  - If you fail to demonstrate suitability in the required competencies, your application will not proceed.
    - If this occurs, you will be eligible to re-apply during the next intake, beginning again at Step 1.

- If you have a successful interview, it is at this point where you will likely be asked to attain (at your expense) the following certifications:
  - Standard First Aid certification (or equivalent level of certification in your jurisdiction)
  - Health Care Provider (HCP) level CPR certification

- A higher level of certification will be accepted (i.e. EMR in place of Standard First Aid).
- Proof of certification must be submitted to the CFD Recruitment Office prior to your placement on the eligibility list.
- Your certifications must remain current up to the point of recruit class start date. It is your responsibility to re-certify when they expire.
STEPS IN THE FIREFIGHTER SELECTION PROCESS ...

STEP 5 – PRE-EMPLOYMENT POLYGRAPH / DATA VERIFICATION

The fifth step in the selection process is the verification of all data collected for your application. While you are waiting for this step to be completed, you may be given access to, and expected to begin, online threshold learning modules. The online courses are composed of theoretical firefighter knowledge that will be required prior to entry to Fire Recruit training.

IMPORTANT DATA VERIFICATION NOTES

❖ A non-refundable administrative fee ($300.00 + GST) will be required to begin this step.
  ➢ This fee will be collected from you when you book your pre-employment polygraph appointment.
❖ You are expected to disclose all information before, during, and after you reach this step in the process.
❖ Full participation in this step is required. Honesty and truthfulness are fundamental to your success.
❖ You must complete this step in order to continue in the selection process.
❖ There is zero-tolerance for persons who are deceitful, untruthful or who intentionally or purposefully withhold information. If this is found to be the case, the application is permanently closed and no future applications will be considered for this person.
❖ You will be asked to contact your work experience references to solicit their involvement in completing a reference form and to ensure they submit this item directly to the Recruitment Office.
  ➢ You may be asked to provide this information earlier in the process.
  ➢ You may be asked to seek out additional references if the data received is insufficient.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – POLYGRAPH / DATA VERIFICATION

Q “How can I prepare for my polygraph test?”
A Please visit our web site and navigate your way to the Firefighter Selection Process page to download our Pre-Employment Polygraph FAQs.

Q “Who should I ask to complete my reference forms?”
A Current and recent employment supervisors and managers. References should all be people to whom you were accountable, reported to, and who had the authority to discipline you. You will be required to follow-up with your references to ensure they have remitted their documentation to our office.
**STEP 6 – CANDIDATE PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST (CPAT)**

The sixth step in the selection process is the Candidate Physical Ability Test.

**IMPORTANT CPAT NOTES**

- Applicants may be asked to participate in CPAT events concurrent with other steps in the selection process.
- Before you participate in any timed CPAT events, you must obtain a written medical clearance from your physician. CFD-specific medical forms will be provided to you when your events are booked.
  - You will be responsible for any doctor’s fees associated with completing these forms.
- You may choose to participate in up to two walk-through orientations and two time trials, up to eight weeks before your final test.
  - If you waive any or all of the orientations or time trials, you will not be offered future opportunities.
- A non-refundable fee ($200.00 + GST) will be collected on the date of your first time trial.
  - If you waive your time trials, payment will be required on the date of your test.
- If you do not pass your first time trial, you have 30 calendar days to attempt another time trial and final test.
- If you cannot pass CPAT after 30-days, your application will not proceed.
  - You will be eligible to re-apply during the next application intake, beginning again at Step 1.

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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – CPAT**

Q  “I have CPAT certification from another agency. Can I use this certificate in Calgary’s process?”

A The CFD recognizes CPAT certification from other fully licensed IAFF jurisdictions. However, if you receive a conditional job offer, you will need to complete a Calgary CPAT test. In this instance, no payment will be required provided you can produce a copy of your valid CPAT certificate.

Q  “Is there a physical fitness training program available?”

A Yes, you can access this information from our web site on the Pre-employment fitness assessments page.
**STEP 7 – SELECTION COMMITTEE**

Once you successfully advance to this step, your file has reached the point where a hiring decision is made. All data is compiled and your file is presented to a Selection Committee.

The purpose of the Selection Committee is to offer an objective perspective on your suitability for this position to determine if you are to receive a job offer. Our hiring decision is based on consideration of all of your competencies, skills, experiences, physical abilities, and job fit.

**IMPORTANT SELECTION COMMITTEE NOTES**

- Selection Committee sessions are held in conjunction with the department’s hiring needs and will occur when a Fire Recruit class has been scheduled.

- The committee will determine if you will continue in the selection process; if chosen, your name will be placed on an eligibility list pending future job openings and a start date for the next Fire Recruit class. The eligibility list may be held for 12 to 18 months or until fully depleted. Department staffing needs vary and as such, it is not guaranteed that applicants selected for the eligibility list will be offered employment within the 12 to 18 month timeframe.

- If the committee is unable to reach a hiring decision, you may be required to attend a panel review to speak to the committee’s concerns.

- If the committee decides you are not to receive a job offer, you will be advised of your eligibility to re-apply.

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**STEP 8 – ELIGIBILITY LIST / CONDITIONAL JOB OFFER**

The CFD’s hiring needs are difficult to predict and fluctuate as a result of a number of factors including retirements, city growth, and funding/resource availability. Although you may successfully advance through the selection process, you may have to wait until there are enough open positions to be chosen for employment.

When the department requires additional personnel, a Fire Recruit training class is scheduled. A selection of successful applicants from the eligibility list is contacted and given conditional job offers. Stated within the terms of the conditional job offer is time-sensitive information to ensure applicants are ready to begin Fire Recruit training. If you are from out-of-city/province, you will be required to travel to Calgary to complete some of the required tasks; multiple trips may be required over a short period of time.
CONDITIONAL JOB OFFER ... CONTINUED

IMPORTANT JOB OFFER NOTES

- All tasks identified in your conditional job offer must be completed according to their deadlines in order to begin employment.
- Failure to meet Alberta Commercial Driver’s Licence standards will directly impact your ability to begin employment.
- You must be prepared for medical and fitness testing on receipt of a job offer; this testing will be conducted at the CFD Wellness Centre under the guidance of an Occupational Physician.

MEETING THE CONDITIONS OF YOUR JOB OFFER

Before your employment can begin, a number of steps must occur to prepare you for Fire Recruit training, including:

COMMERCIAL DRIVER’S LICENCE

Prior to their start-date, Fire Recruits must be legally authorized to operate both ambulances and fire apparatus in the province of Alberta.

- You will need to provide proof of a valid Alberta Commercial Operator’s Licence and Air Brake endorsement.
  - CFD accepted licences include: Class 1, Class 2/Q, and Class 3&4/Q.
  - If you are from out-of-province, you must ensure you appropriately transfer your licence to meet Alberta’s standards prior to your start-date.
- You will need to provide a recent driver’s abstract from the province where you currently reside.
  - You can have no more than six demerits/points and no active suspensions or charges pending.

MEDICAL / FITNESS EVALUATION

You will need to attend a comprehensive medical and fitness evaluation with CFD Wellness personnel to be assessed in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association 1582 medical standard. You must be cleared as medically “fit-for-duty” by a CFD Occupational Physician in order to begin employment.

- Your fitness assessment will include a direct gas analysis treadmill test where you must complete a minimum of 12 minutes, 30 seconds; this is part of the CFD Wellness Fitness Initiative (WFI).
  - Your job offer may be deferred or rescinded at the discretion of the CFD physician.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – CONDITIONAL JOB OFFER

Q  “I live out-of-province and must wait until I become an Alberta resident before I can transfer my driver’s licence. Will you accept my out-of-province licence until I have this done?”

A  Unfortunately, not. When you receive your conditional job offer, you will have approximately six weeks to allow you to meet this standard.

Q  “Where can I obtain more information to prepare for Fire Recruit training?”

A  The following comprehensive approach has been outlined for you.

PREPARING FOR FIRE RECRUIT TRAINING

As you are expected to maintain standards throughout your career as a Calgary firefighter, you must physically and mentally prepare yourself to begin a rigorous Fire Recruit training program. Your abilities, attitude, and demeanour will be assessed throughout your career.

JOB DETAILS

On your first day of employment, you will become a member of the International Association of Firefighters Local 255 and begin earning wages based on the current Collective Agreement. All required study materials, firefighter clothing, personal protective equipment, and training will be provided to you throughout your employment with the CFD.

Your probationary period is at minimum 12 months beginning with 12 – 14 weeks of paid Recruit classes at the CFD Training Academy. Recruit classes consist of both emergency medical responder and fire training. CFD training programs are designed to give firefighters the knowledge and skill to cope with the hostile environments they face. The training curriculum incorporates in-class theory, practical, hands-on training on a simulated training ground, and daily fitness conditioning (running, weight training) and evaluations.

After successful completion of Recruit classes, you will be assigned to a platoon to continue your probationary period; this assignment will consist of a rotation of in-station Recruit training. While on probation, you can expect frequent performance reviews, exams, and practical evaluations.

On successful completion of your probationary period, and with satisfactory performance throughout, your probationary status will be changed to permanent. Your employment may be terminated at any time during the probationary period if your performance fails to meet expectations, including during Fire Recruit classes or in-station rotation training.

The hours of work during Recruit training are Monday to Friday and at the discretion of the Dean of Training. The in-station hours of work will be on a rotating schedule of four shifts on and four days off and consist of:

- Two, 10 hour day shifts (0730 – 1730);
- Two, 14 hour night shifts (1730 – 0730).
PREPARING FOR FIRE RECRUIT TRAINING...CONTINUED

**PHYSICAL PREPARATION**

To enhance the likelihood of success during Recruit training, and to reduce the risk of personal injury, you must report to the CFD Training Academy in top physical shape. It is imperative that you are prepared for a high volume of fitness activity.

Fire ground training conditions (i.e., breathing compressed air, extreme heat/temperature changes, and constant physical activity during inclement weather conditions, etc.) will tax you physically. Daily recruit fitness conditioning includes outdoor running, circuit training with weights and aerobic, plyometric, and isometric training. Additionally, there is a scheduled 60-minute fitness period each morning. Fitness activities involving running will be performed, at a minimum, twice per week.

During Recruit class, you will undergo fitness evaluation tests to assess your cardiovascular conditioning levels and to measure your ability to independently manage large, unwieldy, and heavy equipment. The intensity levels required to pass these tests best reflect the level of intensity that firefighters exert during routine fire suppression operations.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – SELECTION PROCESS**

Q **“How can I be sure you’ve received my application?”**

A You will receive a confirmation email. If our message does not appear in your inbox within 24-hours, check your Junk Folder. If it still hasn’t appeared, contact our office at 403-974-4850.

Q **“When should I expect to hear back about my application?”**

A We may begin contacting candidates prior to the closing date of the competition. However, given the volume of applications we expect to receive, you may also not hear from us until after the competition closes.

Q **“What happens after you’ve received my application?”**

A A review of your application will be conducted to ensure the minimum qualifications have been met. Selected applicants will be invited by email to participate in the Fire Service Aptitude Test.

Q **“If I haven’t heard anything, does this mean I am not being considered?”**

A Not necessarily. All candidates will be advised of their status by email in due course. If you have not been contacted within two days of the first aptitude test date, contact our office for a status update.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – SELECTION PROCESS...CONTINUED

Q “How long is the selection process?”
A When a competition is announced, a timeline will be posted on our web site indicating when the process stages are expected to occur. We may choose to process and select candidates in phases; if so, only timelines for Phase 1 will be posted on the website.

Q “Do you accept out-of-province or out-of-country applicants?”
A Yes, as long as you are eligible for a permanent work assignment in Canada on the date of your application. You will need to conduct independent research to ensure your certifications meet Alberta’s requirements prior to applying. You will also be required to travel to Calgary to participate in the different tests, sometimes with little notice.

• Any costs associated with travel and/or relocation expenses are your own responsibility.
• We may be unable to offer you the opportunity to complete multiple testing activities during the same trip. You should be prepared to return to Calgary several times throughout the selection process.

Q “I am currently a full-time firefighter elsewhere. Do you have an experienced firefighter transfer program?”
A No, we don’t. If you would like to work for the CFD, you would need to apply for an entry-level position. However, your experiences and skills will be considered over and above the basic requirements and given full acknowledgment.

Q “I currently meet your minimum qualifications. Do I need to complete professional firefighter certification to have an advantage?”
A We accept applications from all qualified people who meet our minimum standard. Individual skills, experiences, and attributes as they relate to this job will be given consideration over and above our minimum standards.

Q “Can you recommend courses or actions I can to take to better my chances of being selected?”
A Due to the competitive nature of the selection process, we cannot counsel or provide specific recommendations to individual applicants on how to increase their competitiveness. However, the CFD actively seeks candidates who possess skills and education that are over and above the minimum requirements. Attributes transferable to the fire service that may add value to your application are listed on our web site. Please navigate your way to the Minimum Qualifications page and download the Desired Attributes PDF.

Q “Why do candidates pay fees to participate in the selection process?”
A As a municipal organization, we are fiscally responsible for managing funds we receive through taxes. To ensure there are enough resources to provide emergency response services, certain stages in the applicant testing procedures must run on a cost-recovery basis.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – SELECTION PROCESS...CONTINUED

Q “If I am unsuccessful at any step in the selection process, what feedback can I expect?”

A Appropriate feedback will be provided, which will outline your eligibility to re-apply and if applicable, the length of time that must elapse before a future application can be accepted.

Q “If I had applied to the CFD previously and was unsuccessful, how do I re-apply?”

A You can re-apply by following the application protocols outlined in this document and on our web site.

- You must meet the minimum qualifications at the time of your re-application.
- A new application is required each time you re-apply.
- If your application was closed permanently, you are not eligible to re-apply.

Q “Why wouldn’t you accept another application if you’ve closed an applicant’s file permanently?”

A Organizational and job fit are vital to success in this profession. When it is determined an applicant is unable to meet our standards in the future, the applicant is considered unsuitable. Continuing to assess an unsuitable individual is neither cost-effective nor a respectful practice.

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