

# THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS

## OFFICIAL GUIDELINES FOR THE FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR

Pursuant to action by The American Legion, Department of Texas, Department Executive Committee, there was established The Department of Texas Firefighter of the Year Award. This is a yearly award established to recognize an outstanding Firefighter within the State of Texas. This award will be presented at the succeeding Department Midwinter Conference.

To determine the winner of the Firefighter of the Year:

1. Each Post should select a candidate from their community for this award
2. In making a recommendation, Posts should bear in mind that the firefighter recommended need not have performed as outstanding feat during the year in order to be eligible. The award should go to that firefighter who, for a number of years, has turned in an outstanding performance of his/her duties. This does not rule out the possibility that this same firefighter might, during the course of the current Legion year, have performed some feat which adds to his or her already impressive record.
3. Posts within the Department of Texas shall use the firefighter application form, on which the Post's certification for the award winner is to be listed. The endorsed Post application shall be forwarded to their District Commander prior to their Spring District Convention.
4. It shall be the duty of each District Commander to appoint a committee of up to five (5) Legion member of the District, whose duty it will be to screen all applications and determine one (1) District winner. The District winner may then be endorsed by the District membership. **Districts may only submit one entry.**
5. The winning District application shall then be endorsed by the District Commander and District Adjutant and be forwarded to the Department Headquarters by **June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.**
6. At the Annual Department Convention, the Department National Security Commission will review all District winners and select one to be recognized as "The Department of Texas Firefighter of the Year."
7. The declared winner of the Firefighter of the Year Award will be invited to attend the next Department Midwinter Conference for presentation of the award.

The National Security Commission will select the firefighter, who in the opinion of the Department of Texas best exemplifies the traits and characteristics of a good firefighter; one who goes about his/her daily duties in the protection of life and property of others. We must all know, in making our recommendations, that only one person will be the eventual winner and his/her selection will be made by the Department Commission, Thus, applications should be as thorough as possible before submitting them to the District.

**Eligibility Criteria:** To be eligible for consideration, Post and District nominees must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a citizen of the United States, male or female.
2. Be certified, living, active, full-time, paid, or volunteer firefighter.
3. Consideration for a posthumous award will be acceptable only if the nominee's death has occurred after the department's selection and within the dates for which the award is being presented.
4. Be assigned to, or fully recognized by, Municipal (City), County, District, State or Federal firefighter officer.
5. Be selected as the District Firefighter of the Year.

6. Nominees are not required to be veterans or members of The American Legion.
7. Nominees must reside and be assigned or attached for duty in the District area from which they are selected.
8. Nominees selected for this award should be available to receive this award at The Department Midwinter Conference.
9. Military firefighters are eligible for participation in this award provided they are state firefighter certified.

**Application Packets:** Only one copy of application packet needs to be submitted to the Department Headquarters and must include the following

1. Application form – Complete the application form and uses it as the cover page of the application. This cover page shall not count as part of the maximum 18 pages of service documentation.
2. A 5x7 photograph of the nominee
3. A maximum of 18 one-sided pages 8 1/2x 11 bond paper of service documentation. The first six (6) or seven (7) pages should contain the individual's service narrative. The additional pages may include supporting citations and other documentation to include press articles.
4. Service narrative and supporting documentation. The goal of the Department of Texas is to select a well-rounded firefighter who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements of his/ her position and who exemplifies the virtues of professionalism and dedication and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service to his/her community, state or nation; and also has proven his/her personal dedication to community security and protection. The firefighter must be recommended by his/her Commanding Officer or Supervisor for this award. The commanding officer or supervisor should also state that the firefighter, if selected for this award, will be available for its presentation at the Department Midwinter Conference. Specific acts of community service, heroism and meritorious performance recognized by his/her firefighting agency should be included and documented.
5. Community Service: Outstanding service to the community, state or nation by the firefighter, in both on-duty and off-duty activities, should be explained for the past year and may include previous years. Cite, for example, awards and/or supporting letters from city or county commissioners, letters from state officials, and letters from The American Legion Department or Posts, or from citizens attesting to and commending the firefighter for his/her community service contributions. Remember, one of the major aims of the award program is to select a well- rounded firefighter officer who has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service, above and beyond assigned duty requirements.
6. Citations for community service, heroism and meritorious performance of duty should be explained for the past year and may include previous years. Include citations and any supporting letters from the officer's chain of command as well as other documentation from city, county, state authorities and American Legion officials, citizens or civic groups as further evidence of community service, heroic and meritorious performance of duty by the officer.
7. Include a copy of your nominee's state or federal certification as an firefighter as well as copies of pertinent training and education certificates as appropriate.
8. The Post and District which submits the winning nominee will be notified by the Department Headquarters as expeditiously as possible.

**APPLICATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS FIREFIGHTER AWARD**

Candidates Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Work \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

How long has the candidate been engaged as a firefighter? \_\_\_\_\_

Employed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**Recommendations: (use the reverse side or attaché your typewritten recommendation to this application.)**

- From applicant's superior. Attach a resume of his/her firefighting experience and include honors that have been bestowed upon the applicant.
- Submit a biographical narrative of the candidate's, include service, education, family, church affiliation (if any), fraternal or social organizations. Include specific acts of community service, outstanding performances, heroism, and any meritorious service recognized by the agency and documented. Outstanding service to the community, both on and off-duty should be explained for the past year or previous years.
- Provide supporting documentation, copies of citations, and copies of press articles.
- Provide a copy of the candidate's certification or license.
- Provide a 5" x 7" photograph of the candidate.
- What, in your opinion, makes this candidate an outstanding firefighter?
- In the event the candidate is selected as the recipient of this award at the Department (state) level, will he/she be available to attend an awards ceremony? Yes  No

**CERTIFICATION OF POST**

This recommendation is submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ Post No. \_\_\_\_\_

The American Legion, Department of Texas, located in the \_\_\_\_\_ District Submitting

\_\_\_\_\_  
Post Commander

\_\_\_\_\_  
Post Adjutant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**DISTRICT WINNER**

The American Legion, Department of Texas, District \_\_\_\_\_ winner is the individual listed above Submitting

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Commander

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Adjutant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Application Form must be received at Department Headquarters by June 1<sup>st</sup>**

**(Continued)**

**APPLICATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS FIREFIGHTER AWARD  
(Continued)**

1. List of previous firefighter experience: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Give a brief biographical sketch of the firefighters nominated, including education, family, church affiliation (if any), fraternal or social organizations:

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3. What, in your opinion, makes this candidate an outstanding firefighter?

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4. Has the firefighter ever been cited for outstanding firefighting before? If so, what honors have been bestowed upon him/her?

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5. List any pertinent information which may help the commission in making a final decision, including outside activities of the firefighter beyond his/her official duties:

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