



CITY OF ABBOTSFORD EMERGENCY PROGRAM
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ABBOTSFORD EMERGENCY PROGRAM EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS) VOLUNTEER PROGRAM INFORMATION



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MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF

Thank-you for your interest in joining the City of Abbotsford's Emergency Support Services (ESS) Team. As a team member, you will be part of a group of dedicated and committed volunteers who provide a critical service to our community. You will work as a part of a cooperative team to provide essential support to community members when they truly need it the most. Our team values include teamwork, compassion, integrity, empathy, diversity and trust. If these traits describe you, I encourage you to join our team of like-minded and compassionate individuals and do your part to make a difference in our community.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Gaudette', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brad Gaudette

Deputy Fire Chief of Community Safety

WHAT IS ESS?

Emergency Support Services (ESS) provides short-term services (generally for up to 72 hours) to support the well being of evacuees and response workers in emergency situations. This assistance includes food, lodging, and clothing.

WHO ARE ESS VOLUNTEERS?

The City of Abbotsford ESS volunteers are a group of dedicated individuals who help their neighbours and fellow citizens in the event of a disaster. A commitment of approximately 2-4 hours per month is required for meetings, free training and exercises. More hours may be required during emergencies or disasters. Volunteers are required to:

- Be in good health
- Be at least 19 years of age
- A valid BC Drivers licence and have their own mode of transportation
- A current Police Criminal Record search (that will be required following interview and cost reimbursed).

WHAT DO ESS VOLUNTEERS DO?

There are monthly meetings and training sessions for all volunteers so they have the skills to:

- Act as a liaison between the evacuees and the first responders
- Provide temporary services to evacuees and a safe place where they can gather to receive assistance and information.
- Provide Emergency Preparedness education to the public and community organizations.

POSITION TITLE

Emergency Support Services Volunteer Level 1, 2, 3

ESS RESPONSE ACTIVATION LEVELS

Level 1 (small event)	Level 2 (moderate event)	Level 3 (large or complex event)
An incident involving one or two families.	An incident involving three to ten families.	Involves a larger number of evacuees and have an increase in complexity.
Services are provided at the incident site.	Services are delivered either on site or in a Reception Centre.	The number of Reception Centres and/or Group Lodging sites that are activated increase as needed.
ie. House fire,	ie. Apartment fire, explosion	ie. Chemical Spill requiring evacuation of a neighbourhood ie Major Flooding, interface fire, earthquakes

*Level 1 Activations occur several times per year. Level 2 to 3 activations are less frequent.

REPORTS TO RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM

Emergency Support Services Director or Designate

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

To be prepared to assist the City of Abbotsford's Emergency Program Office in providing the support needed to help the City cope with a major emergency.

SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, AND QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

- Age 19 with a valid BC Drivers Licence
- Must live in or in close proximity to the City of Abbotsford
- Good command of the English Language – written and spoken
- Must be empathetic and compassionate when required
- Work well as in a team environment
- Ability to contribute to a safe and inclusive environment
- Strong communication skills - written and spoken
- Be an effective listener with the ability to assess and problem solve
- Dependable and reliable
- Ability to work under pressure and with persons experiencing high levels of stress
- Be in good health to withstand long shifts and at times adverse weather conditions

BENEFITS TO VOLUNTEERING

- Prepares you to cope in an emergency
- Builds transferable skills such as empathy, effective listening, organization etc.
- Training Opportunities
- Meet new people with similar interests
- Many benefits attached to giving back to your community
- Volunteer hours acknowledged in a letter of reference (if requested)

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

Criminal Record Check is mandatory.

Attend the following City of Abbotsford training:

- Introduction to ESS (online)
- ESS Level 1 (online)
- Intro to Emergency Mgt. (online)
- ICS 100 (online)
- Registration and Referrals
- Group Lodging
- Intro to Reception Centres

Report for duty in the event of an emergency

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT FOR ABBOTSFORD ESS VOLUNTEERS?

Emergency Support Services [ESS] work is often described as *Hurry Up and Wait*.

As a disaster and/or emergency incident is not predictable, we ensure we are ready through training and practicing the skills required for an emergency response.

The Abbotsford Emergency Support Services program is committed to providing you with opportunities to practice, learn and train throughout the year and here are some of what you can expect.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE JUSTICE INSTITUTE OF BC [JIBC]

ESS courses are offered through the Justice Institute of British Columbia [JIBC]. The courses are sponsored by Emergency Management of British Columbia [EMBC] and offered to register ESS Team Members free of charge.

MONTHLY TEAM MEETINGS

We have 10 monthly meetings a year. Meetings take place on the last Monday of every month at the Riverside Training Centre at 1544 Riverside Rd at 6:30 pm. Please make every effort to attend these meetings.

We are also aware that lives are busy and that volunteer work is something that requires our flexibility as well. We completely understand if you are not able to attend a meeting, but please make a courtesy call to let us know.

ESS CALL OUTS

ESS callouts are sporadic and can happen day or night. Therefore, all ESS Volunteer positions are on-call.

ESS LEVEL 1 RESPONDERS

are requested to shadow an experienced ESS Volunteer for their first few call-outs. The objective is to watch the procedures on your first call, participate in the second and then hopefully become part of the team lead rotation after that. When you feel comfortable, we will likely give you the opportunity to act as Team Lead for a shift, and put all of your training into action!

MOCK EXERCISE

A practice exercise will take place once a year. During these mock exercises we activate current response plans to note strengths, and address any areas of improvement. Attendance at these sessions is *strongly* encouraged as a team evaluation works best if we are all there.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We also have opportunities to provide information to the public on Emergency Preparedness and ESS.

- Information booths at Community Events such as Berry Beat, Canada Day, Fire Prevention week and others
- Speak to different groups within our community about Emergency Preparedness.

If public speaking and outreach interests you, come out and join us as we deliver valuable tips on family preparedness within our community.

PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

We recommend being prepared personal and at home. This will help you to find a comfort level for your family and allow you to respond sooner.

We strive to promote emergency preparedness and would like all our team members to practice that as well. For more information, visit www.getprepared.ca.

We hope that you now have a better understanding of the opportunities that come with being an Abbotsford ESS team member. If you have any questions please feel free to call the program, we will be happy to offer any further information that you require.

The following websites are a great resource to learn more about Emergency Management in our province www.embc.gov.ca

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process for the Abbotsford Fire Rescue Service has been broken down into seven (7) different stages:

- Stage 1 - Application Process
- Stage 2 – Interview
- Stage 3 – Reference Check
- Stage 4 – Criminal Record check and Vulnerable Sector Search

All applicants will be notified during the process if they will be moving on to the next stage via email. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure email addresses are valid and up-to-date and computer firewalls/security is set up to accept emails from the City. It is the candidate's responsibility to check emails on a regular basis.

The Application Form

Complete the [online application](#) form **in full**. Carefully review each section thoroughly. It is your responsibility to understand the application and to provide all the requested information. You are responsible for the accuracy of all statements. Should a particular section not apply to you, write 'n/a'.

The Interview

The intent of the personal interview is to allow us to learn more about you, your experiences and your abilities from your perspective. It is also an opportunity for you to demonstrate that you are suitable for the position.

Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector

The nature of our business requires each candidate to complete the Police Information check with Vulnerable Sector.

Application for the Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector only should be made after successfully completing previous stages of the recruitment.

Abbotsford Police Station will process the search and is located at 2838 Justice Way Abbotsford or visit [Abbotsford Police Department \(abbypd.ca\)](http://abbypd.ca)

The original completed Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector must be obtained prior to the Pre-training Preparation Date.

Reference Checks

We use a number of tools throughout our assessment processes to validate your information and to capture a clear representation of your history. At this stage of the process, we substantiate this information through your references.

*Thank You For your interest in
The Abbotsford Emergency Program
And
Emergency Support Services*