

**COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
DEPARTMENTAL OPERATING GUIDELINES**

Date: 08/05/20

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**FIREFIGHTER PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST**

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All career and volunteer fire suppression personnel must successfully complete this Physical Abilities Test (PAT) before entry into the Fire Department and must retest on an annual basis.

The test is designed to assess the individual's strength, endurance, coordination, reaction to heights, and reaction to restricted visibility.

Each candidate may attempt each task only once. All tasks are pass-fail and must be successfully completed in order to continue the examination. With the exception of the two timed tasks, candidates will be allowed to perform each task at their own pace so long as they continue to complete the task without stopping to rest. All candidates must proceed from one task to the next without stopping to rest between the tasks.

The following tasks comprise the PAT examination and will be conducted in the order listed. Personnel should be cautioned to use proper lifting/hoisting techniques to minimize risk of injury. Candidates will be given the opportunity to preview each task and ask questions before they begin the test.

Candidates may wear comfortable clothing with the following exceptions:

- No Shorts – candidate will be crawling on the floor on his/her hands and knees during the maze crawl
- No Open-Toed Footwear (boots or running/walking shoes preferred)

Each candidate will wear the following Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during the PAT. All equipment will be provided by the fire department.

- Structural helmet (entire PAT)
- Structural firefighting gloves (entire PAT)
- Ladder belt (only during the aerial ladder climb)
- Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) pack (during bundle carry and hoist, and maze crawl)
- SCBA blacked out mask (only during the maze crawl)

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*Before beginning the PAT the evaluator will ensure that the candidate has a helmet that has been properly adjusted and properly fitting structural firefighting gloves.*

**TASK # 1      AERIAL LADDER CLIMB**

The aerial ladder will be fully extended (approximately 100 ft) at a climbing angle of approximately 70 degrees.

The candidate will climb to the top of the ladder and back down to assess how the candidate reacts to heights. The evaluator or ladder operator will assist the candidate with donning the ladder belt or harness ensuring that it is properly adjusted to the candidate. The evaluator and candidate will climb up to the pedestal where the evaluator or ladder operator will clip the candidate into the safety rope. The candidate will climb smoothly and continuously until they are able to touch the top rung, then immediately begin climbing back down the ladder. When the candidate has descended back down to the pedestal, the evaluator or ladder operator will disconnect the candidate from the safety rope. This event is not timed, but the candidate must keep moving without stopping to rest. When completed, the candidate will proceed to Task # 2.

*critical failure points next page*

### **Critical Failure Points**

- *Candidate does not maintain continuous movement up or down the ladder (stops for more than a couple seconds to ensure footing)*
- *Candidate does not complete the event*

### **TASK # 2 BUNDLE CARRY AND HOIST**

The candidate will don an SCBA pack (without the mask) with a 45 minute SCBA cylinder. The candidate will then place the high rise bundle (approximately 35 pounds) over either shoulder and carry it up the exterior stairway to the landing of the 6<sup>th</sup> floor without stopping. While ascending and descending the stairs the candidate may use the handrails and will step on each riser tread without skipping steps. The candidate will set the bundle down at a designated spot on the 6th floor landing and proceed to the roof via the interior stairwell. The candidate will use the utility rope provided to hoist and lower another high rise bundle from the ground to the top edge of the parapet wall. The candidate must raise and lower the bundle using a hand-over-hand method without allowing the rope to slip through the hands and keeping control of the bundle at all times. The candidate must stay between the wall and a line 60" from the wall. The candidate may place one foot against the parapet wall while raising and lowering if desired. The candidate will raise the bundle until the bundle touches the corner roller, then will lower the bundle back down to the ground using the same hand-over-hand method. A safety line will be attached to the bundle being hoisted and will be belayed while the bundle is being raised and lowered. Once the bundle has been lowered back to the ground the candidate will then proceed back down the interior stairwell, pick up the first high rise bundle, and return down the exterior stairs to the starting point. Time will start when the candidate steps onto the first stair tread and time will stop when the candidate steps back onto the ground. When completed, the candidate will remove the SCBA pack and proceed to Task # 3.

Time: 5:00

### **Critical Failure Points**

- *Candidate drops the shoulder bundle*
- *Candidate skips steps on the stairs*
- *Candidate lets the rope slip through the hands*
- *Candidate does not complete the task*

### **TASK # 3 2 ½" HOSE DRAG**

Three sections (approximately 150 feet) of 2 ½" hose will be neatly flaked behind a line. The candidate will place the nozzle end of the hose over a shoulder and stretch the hose approximately 150' to a designated target marked with two cones. Once the candidate crosses the line between the two cones they may set the nozzle down on the ground. The candidate will remain behind the line while pulling all of the remaining hose across the line. Time will start when the candidate picks up the nozzle and time will stop when the last coupling crosses the line. When completed, the candidate will proceed to Task # 4.

Time: 1:15

### **Critical Failure Points**

- *Candidate drops the nozzle prior to crossing the line*
- *Candidate exceeds the time limit prior to completing the task*
- *Candidate is not able to complete the task*

**TASK # 4 MAZE CRAWL**

The second floor of the tower contains a simple maze to test the candidate for claustrophobia while wearing a blacked out SCBA mask to simulate thick black smoke conditions. The evaluator will assist the candidate with donning a blacked out SCBA mask and SCBA pack. The cylinder and the pass alarm shall remain turned off during the event. The evaluator will assist the candidate to the entrance of the maze and put them in contact with the left wall. The candidate will crawl on their hands and knees while maintaining contact with the left wall at all times (left handed wall search). The evaluator will follow the candidate through the maze to ensure they do not get turned around and watch for signs of claustrophobia. The candidate may not stop to rest and must maintain continuous movement toward the end of the maze. When the candidate has completed the maze the evaluator will help the candidate remove the SCBA mask and SCBA pack. When completed, the candidate will proceed to Task # 5.

***Critical Failure Points***

- *Candidate removes mask prior to completing the task*
- *Candidate does not remain on their hands and knees*
- *Candidate does not complete the task*

**TASK # 5 EQUIPMENT CARRY**

Two kettle bells (35 lbs each) are used to simulate carrying two fire extinguishers from the fire engine to a fire on the second floor. The candidate will lift and carry two kettle bells from a starting point around two cones, into the drill tower, up a flight of stairs, and through the second floor door to a cone where the candidate will set the kettle bells down on the floor. Safe lifting techniques should be utilized. When completed, the candidate will proceed to Task # 6.

***Critical Failure Points***

- *Candidate drops the kettle bells*
- *Candidate does not go around the cones*
- *Candidate does not complete the task*

**TASK # 6 LADDER RAISE**

A 24' extension ladder will be laying on the ground with the heel of the ladder attached to a hinge and a safety rope attached at the top rung of the bed section. The candidate will flat raise the ladder to the exterior wall of the tower while the evaluator takes up the slack on the safety rope. Once the ladder is vertical and against the wall, the candidate will use the ladder halyard to hoist the fly section to full extension and back down again without letting the halyard slip through the hands. When the fly section is back in the stored position the candidate will lower the entire ladder back to the original position laying on the ground. When completed, the candidate will be taken back to the check in area for evaluation and rehydration.

***Critical Failure Points***

- *Candidate unable to raise the ladder to the wall*
- *Candidate drops the ladder or fly section to the ground*
- *Candidate lets the halyard (rope) slip through the hands*
- *Candidate unable to complete the task*

Responsible:	Training Officer	Review Cycle:	3 years
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