

Firefighter Pre-Employment Strength & Agility Test Booklet

City of Wilmington, North Carolina

Prepared by Wilmington Fire Department

FIREFIGHTER PRE-EMPLOYMENT STRENGTH AND AGILITY TEST

Introduction

The tasks to be performed in the Physical Strength and Agility Test are designed to evaluate the candidate's natural or acquired talent, ability, and capacity for satisfactorily performing the functions of a Firefighter. This test does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, or national origin. It is specifically planned to evaluate the candidate's ability to perform the following tasks which have been identified on the basis of both importance and frequency to be critical to the job of a Firefighter.

1. Recovers victims from burning, smoke charged building, or from toxic areas;
2. Ascends and descends ladders;
3. Climbs stairs carrying fire hose or equipment;
4. Couples hose lines and connects nozzle to hand lines;
5. Maneuvers charged hose lines of various sizes and weights inside and around buildings;
6. Works in smoke-filled buildings and confined areas when sight, hearing, and breathing are impaired;
7. Performs a variety of physically demanding tasks for an extended period of time.

It is the intent of this examination process to determine the candidate's suitability and capability to perform the function of a Firefighter and to provide the Fire Department with an evaluation of its prospective employee.

FIREFIGHTER PRE-EMPLOYMENT STRENGTH AND AGILITY TEST

Instructions to the Candidate

This test booklet has been provided to you for your use in preparing to take the Firefighter Pre-Employment Strength and Agility Test. You are encouraged to read this material carefully so that you will be familiar with the test components and procedures. Previous experience has demonstrated that familiarity with the test benefits the candidate.

1. Waiver of Liability – You will be required to sign a Waiver of Liability before being permitted to take the test. This document states that you will assume full responsibility for any injuries occurring during the test.
2. Practice Exercise – Included in this booklet is a list of suggested exercises which would be helpful in preparing you for the test.
3. Suggested Clothing – You should appear at the Fire Training Ground wearing long pants, soft-soled or athletic shoes, and a shirt or top appropriate for the weather. Male candidates should also wear an athletic supporter. You will not be allowed to take the test if, in the opinion of the examiner, you are not appropriately dressed.
4. Eating Before the Test – It is recommended that you do not eat at least one hour before you take the test.
5. Instructions Given by Examiner – Before each test event the examiner will give you instructions concerning that event. You will be expected to listen to those instructions, ask questions if they are not clear, and to follow them in performing the event. You will be penalized if you fail to satisfactorily complete the events on the test as a result of a failure to follow instructions.
6. Instruction Periods – An instruction period has been set aside. The purpose of this period is to provide you with instructions for the next event and to allow you time for preparations. You may also rest during this period if time permits. You will not be allowed to take more time than specified on the test materials.
7. If You Do Not Feel Well – If you do not feel well enough to take the test, please notify your examiner. You will be rescheduled to take the test on another day. Once the test begins, you will be expected to continue.

8. If You Are Injured – If you are injured while taking the test, you will be allowed to continue if you provide a written letter from a doctor granting clearance.
9. Passing the Test – In order to pass the test, you must satisfactorily complete all of the events. If you fail any event, you will not be allowed to proceed through the remaining exercises. If you pass all events, your application will be allowed to continue to the next step of the process.
10. Biological Measures – All candidate's blood pressures and pulse rates will be checked by EMTs before any event begins. The EMT may deny the Candidate from participating, based on its findings, if participation would pose a risk to the wellbeing of the Candidate.

Suggested Practice Exercises

1. Climbing ladders
2. Weight lifting
3. Push-ups
4. Chin-ups
5. Running or jogging with weights
6. Running in place
7. Running stairs
8. Climbing stairs with weights
9. Making connections of garden hose or threaded pipe
10. Dodge runs
11. Wind sprints

CITY OF WILMINGTON
FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIREFIGHTER PRE-EMPLOYMENT
STRENGTH AND AGILITY TEST

Event 1 – Ladder Climb

For this event, the candidate will be required to wear a standard Firefighter's helmet and gloves. The candidate is required to climb to the thirty foot (30') level (indicated by a red mark) of an extension ladder which is placed at an angle supported by the drill tower and tied off. After reaching the prescribed height, the candidate will climb back down the ladder.

Failure of the candidate to successfully complete this event will constitute failure of the test and the candidate will be dismissed. This event tests that a candidate does not suffer from acrophobia and is able to work from a ladder at a considerable height.

Event 2 – Hose Coupling

Three sections of 2-1/2" hose will be coupled together with one end connected to the coupling on the drill tower and with a nozzle attached at the other end. This hose will be stretched out in a straight line. On the command "ready-start", the candidate will jog 25 feet to the nozzle, and beginning at the nozzle, disconnect the nozzle and each section of hose one at a time, folding each coupling back on the hose until all are disconnected including the connection to the drill tower. Candidate must then, in the reverse order, make all connections back to the nozzle, folding the nozzle back on the hose upon completion and jog back to the starting point. A demonstration will be made by the examiner. After each coupling is reconnected, the examiner will examine the connection.

This event tests that the candidate has the ability to manipulate objects using his or her hands and arms as required in hose coupling and the use of other firefighting and rescue equipment.

Event 3 – Room Search

The candidate will be outfitted with a self-contained breathing apparatus, turnout coat and helmet. The mask will be blacked-out as to limit the visibility of the candidate. The candidate will not be on air. This will simulate reduced visibility that firefighters encounter when entering a smoke-filled room. The candidate will enter the building, assume a crouched position, and proceed along the wall to his or her left. The candidate will continue around the entire room, returning to the starting location. The candidate will stay in contact with the wall the entire time during this exercise.

This event tests a combination of the ability to work under stressful conditions and claustrophobia. The ability to rescue unconscious people from burning or smoke filled buildings using self-contained breathing apparatus is essential for satisfactory performance as a Firefighter.

Section #2

DESCRIPTION

This is an assessment that consists of five (5) job-related tasks laid out in a continuous format. These five (5) tasks and the equipment needed are described in the following sections. Each task is separated by a minimum of fifty feet (50') designed to create a cool down period between each task. There will be no running and/or jogging during any portion of this assessment. Running and/or jogging will constitute an automatic failure of the assessment. All safe lifting techniques and procedures will be observed at all times during the assessment. Assessors will demonstrate all proper lifting techniques. Timing will start at the beginning of Task #1 and end at the conclusion of Task #5. Each candidate will wear a firefighting coat, helmet, gloves, and breathing apparatus. No mask will be worn.

TASK #1 – VICTIM DRAG

This task is designed to assess the Candidate's ability to rescue a victim. The Candidate shall move a one hundred fifty pound (150#) mannequin from the starting point to a cone located twenty-five feet (25') away and then back to the starting point. The Candidate will place the mannequin on the ground and proceed to the next task.

TASK #2 – LADDER RAISE

This task is designed to assess a single Candidate's ability to lift, raise, properly set for climbing, and lower a twenty-four foot (24') extension ladder. The Candidate will be assisted by two (2) firefighters during this task to ensure safety. The ladder will lie flat on

the ground, fly section up, with the heel facing the wall. The Candidate will then lift the ladder to a vertical position and extend the ladder five (5) rungs above the roofline. The dogs will lock and the Candidate will then set the ladder at a seventy degree (70°) angle suitable for climbing. The reverse steps will be used to place the ladder back on the ground and proceed to the next task.

TASK #3 – HIGH RISE PACK/STAIR CLIMB/HOSE HOIST

This task is designed to assess the Candidate's ability to lift and carry a one hundred foot (100') high rise pack up two (2) flights of stairs, hoist an uncharged section of two and one-half inch (2-1/2") hoseline with nozzle, and then return to the starting point. From the starting point, the Candidate will pick up the high rise pack and walk to the entrance of the drill tower, proceeding up the stairs to the third floor. After arriving on the third floor, the Candidate will place the high rise pack on the floor and proceed to the adjacent window to raise the uncharged hoseline with the attached rope. The Candidate will then, in a hand over hand fashion, raise the hose up to the second floor. The Candidate will then lower the hose line to the ground in a hand over hand fashion. The Candidate will then pick up the high rise pack and proceed back to the starting point. At no time will the Candidate skip or jump steps; all stairs must be touched on the way up and on the way down.

TASK #4 – HOSE DRAG

This task is designed to assess the Candidate's ability to advance a charged one and three-quarter inch (1-3/4") hoseline. From the starting point, the Candidate will advance the charged hoseline one hundred feet (100'). The Candidate will then operate the nozzle and hit a target located twenty five feet (25') away. The Candidate will then close the nozzle and place the nozzle on the ground and proceed to the next task.

TASK #5 – EQUIPMENT CARRY

This task is designed to assess the Candidate's ability to pick up and carry two (2) power saws and advance them one hundred feet (100'). From the starting point, the Candidate will pick a power saw in each hand and walk to a predetermined point located fifty feet (50') away. The Candidate will then return to the starting point and place the saws back on the ground.