

Firefighter Physical Ability Test



Candidate Orientation Guide

City of Lincoln
Fire & Rescue Department

Physical Ability Test Candidate Orientation Guide

This manual has been developed to introduce you to the Lincoln Fire & Rescue Department's Physical Ability Test (PAT). The test consists of a series of tasks designed to assess important physical abilities necessary for effective job performance as a firefighter. These tasks were developed to mirror real situations that firefighters encounter on the job. These tasks represent basic skills that do not require training or previous experience as a firefighter to successfully complete.

The selection process for firefighters is very competitive. Although you are not required to read or use this Orientation and Preparation Guide, we encourage you to do so. The more prepared you are, the more likely you are to pass the test.

There are eight job-related physical ability test components that are timed in a continuous series. Following is an overview of the components/stations of the PAT:

- Charged line advance
- Forcible entry simulation
- Equipment carry simulation
- Ceiling breach and pull
- Ladder heel
- Ladder raise
- Stair climb with equipment
- Victim Rescue (dummy drag)

The following points should help to familiarize you with what will take place on the day of the test.

- Applicants must wear a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), excluding the face piece and low-pressure hose, for all components of the PAT. The SCBA bottle will be full. The SCBA weighs approximately 25 pounds.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to wear athletic shoes (sneakers) and appropriate clothing for physically demanding work (long pants). You will be performing physical acts that demonstrate strength, agility, and endurance, and it is important to be outfitted in attire that does not hinder your performance. During the PAT, you may get dirty from maneuvering through the exercises and/or wet. Plan your dress accordingly.
- A safety helmet will be provided at the test site for your use. Protective gloves are optional and it is the candidate's choice whether or not to use gloves. You may bring your own gloves, kneepads, etc. to use; however, the testing authority reserves the right to inspect all equipment, and to disallow equipment, to ensure that its use does not affect the fair and impartial administration of the PAT.
- **All eight components of the PAT will be timed in a series. The test has a cutoff time and failure to complete the course in the allowed time will result in disqualification.**

- **You must not run during the test.** Running is not permitted on a working fireground, and it will not be allowed during this test. Failure to heed a first warning not to run will result in disqualification. Running is defined as any time both feet are off the ground at the same time while you are advancing on the course. You may move as fast as you like, while remaining safe, on the hose drag and stair climb stations as it is not technically possible to run during these components.
- Test monitors will be assigned to time you while on the course. It is acceptable to ask the test monitor questions concerning course rules and layout prior to beginning the course and while on the course.
- You will be allowed as much time as needed to complete each individual component of the PAT within the maximum allotted time. Should you perform one of the components incorrectly, the test monitor will guide you as to how to correct your actions or to perform the component again. Pay careful attention to the instruction of the test monitor and ask for clarification when needed.
- Unnecessarily dropping, throwing or other **intentional misuse** of any of the testing props will be grounds to disqualify a candidate. If a candidate is observed by any of the test administrators misusing the test props, the candidate will be immediately escorted from the test site and registered as having failed the test.

It is the expectation of the Lincoln Fire & Rescue Department that this orientation guide will provide you with sufficient information to prepare for and succeed in the PAT. The eight events that compose the Physical Ability Test are outlined for you on the following pages, along with suggestions for preparing for each event.

Please note that suggestions regarding preparation activities are simply suggestions intended to offer the candidate a means of practicing for the PAT. These are only suggestions. The Lincoln Fire & Rescue Department and the PAT developer cannot be held responsible for injuries or expenses incurred during preparation for the PAT.

Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department does not endorse any private schools or services offering preparation for this physical ability test and are not responsible for their advertising claims. However, Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department has provided practice and preparation opportunities for this physical ability test through the Lincoln YWCA program. Participation in the Lincoln YWCA program does not guarantee that participants will successfully pass the physical ability test administered by the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Department.

Charged Line Advance

Station Description:

One hundred and fifty feet of 1 ¾ inch line will be connected to the water supply source within the indoor facility. The candidate will be required to pull the charged hoseline for 90 feet. The candidate will complete this station when both feet cross the marked line.

Preparation:

This station assesses your leg strength and overall cardiovascular endurance. You can prepare for this event by dragging a weighted object across the ground using a rope for a distance of 90 feet. You may want to begin with lesser weights and build up to a total weight similar to that used in the hose drag station.



Forcible Entry

Station Description:

The candidate will use a 12-pound sledge hammer to strike a 'sled target.' This activity simulates forcible entry scenarios on the fireground such as penetrating a locked door. The candidate will strike the target the number of times necessary to move the sled a distance of 9 inches. The candidate must remain on the designated platform at all times while completing this station.

Preparation:

This station assesses upper body strength and coordination. You may prepare for this event by striking a solid object with a 12 pound sledge hammer a number of times. The object should be moveable and resistant to breaking or shattering. Practice hitting a target approximately six inches square.



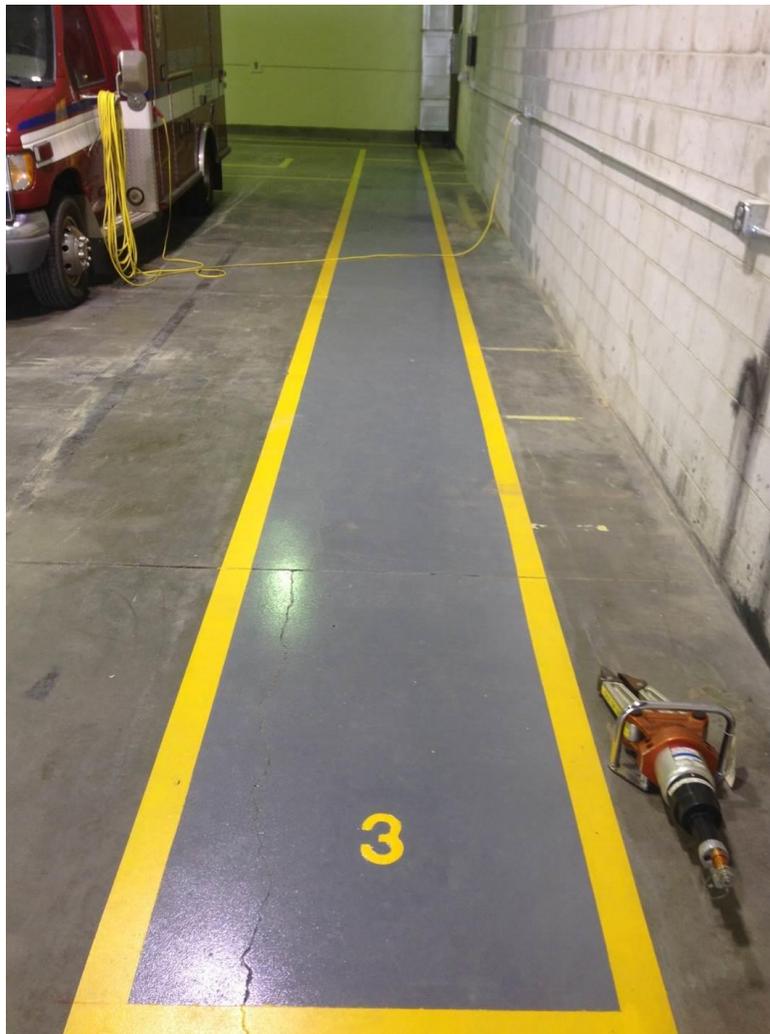
Equipment Carry

Station Description:

The candidate will carry a hydraulic spreader tool (Holmatro) weighing 44 pounds for a total distance of 100 feet. The candidate will carry the tool for 50 feet, walk to a line painted on the walking path, and then walk back another 50 feet to place the tool back down where it was retrieved from.

Preparation:

This station assesses core body strength, grip strength and overall cardiovascular endurance. You may prepare for this event by carrying a 44 pound object for a distance of 100 feet.



Ceiling Breach and Pull

Station Description:

The candidate will demonstrate the physical abilities needed to breach and pull ceiling with a pike pole during overhaul procedures by performing breach and pull motions using a ceiling simulator. The candidate will position the pike pole in the target diamond on the breach portion of the simulator and perform 3 breach repetitions. The candidate will then hook the pike pole onto the pull portion of the simulator and perform 5 pull repetitions. This sequence will be repeated for 4 total cycles.

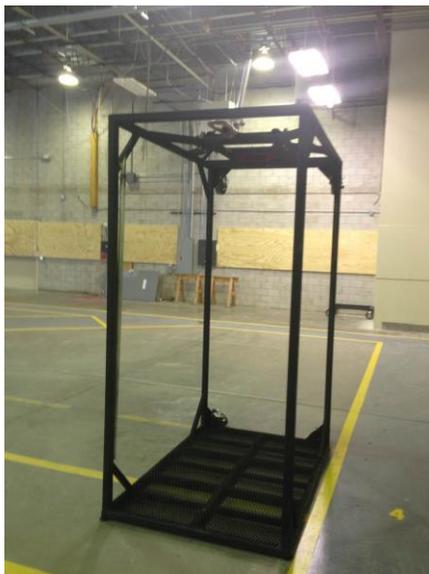
This station involves a highly specific simulator. It is recommended that you pay careful attention to how this simulator works prior to beginning the test.

The breach side of the simulator requires you to push up a hatch door offering 60 pounds of resistance. The pull side of the simulator requires that you hook onto a metal ring a pull down with a force of 80 pounds. You will be required to push the breach-side hatch door completely up and then bring it back down completely to complete a repetition. You will be required to fully pull down and return the pull side of the simulator to complete a repetition.

The proctor will count out your repetitions and provide instruction to ensure that you perform acceptably during this component.

Preparation:

This station assesses upper body strength and grip strength. The easiest way to prepare for this exercise will be to use a universal weight machine. The military press exercise that is typically performed using a universal weight machine will allow you to practice pressing weight upward above your head using your arms. Do keep in mind that during this component you may be able to use your legs and lower body to assist in pushing up on the breach side of the simulator. The 'lat' pull down exercise typically incorporated into a universal weight machine will closely simulate the pull side of the simulator if you use a close, vertical grip.



Ladder Heel

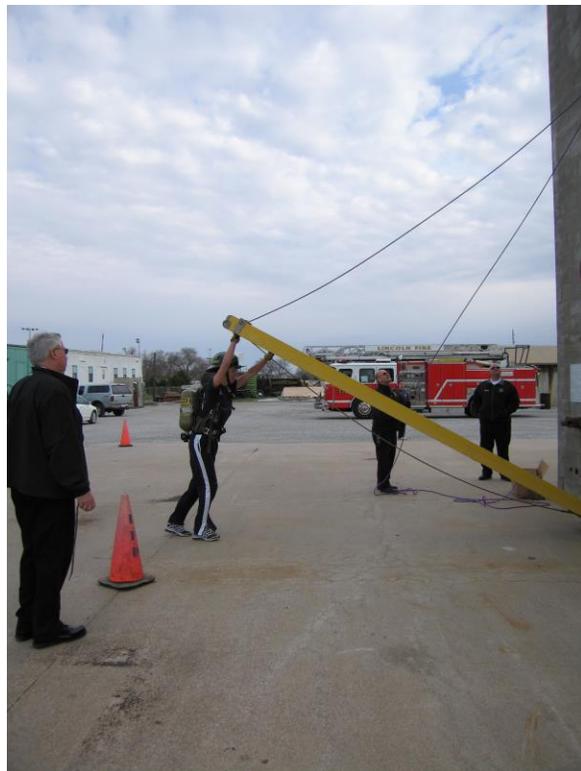
Station Description:

The candidate will raise a 24-foot extension ladder by 'walking it up' using a hand-over-hand technique. The ladder will be lowered in the reverse manner. The ladder is secured to the ground using a pivot system that will keep the base of the ladder in place. The upper portion of the ladder will be secured using a belay system that will control the ladder from falling should the candidate lose control.

The candidate must 'walk' the ladder all the way to a vertical position and all the way back down to the ground using the rungs of the ladder. The candidate must not drop the ladder or grasp the rails of the ladder at any time.

Preparation:

This station assesses basic coordination and upper body strength. You may prepare for this exercise by 'heeling' a ladder up against the side of a fixed structure.



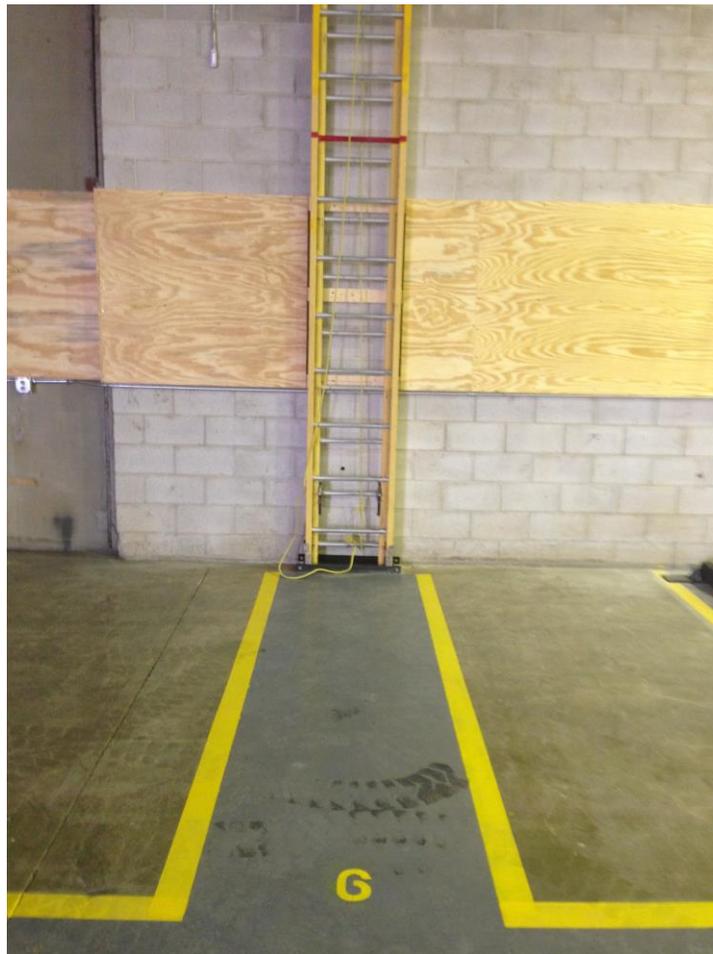
Ladder Raise

Station Description:

The candidate will raise the fly section of a 24-foot extension ladder using the halyard. The ladder is secured to the wall of the tower. The candidate will use the hand over hand technique to extend the fly section of the ladder beyond the red line marked on the side of the ladder. The candidate will then lower the fly section down using the hand under hand technique.

Preparation:

To simulate the ladder raise exercise, you can tie a rope securely to a weighted bag and place the rope over a sturdy horizontal bar that is eight to ten feet above the ground. Then you can use the same movements as you would in the ladder raise to bring the weight to the top of the bar and slowly lower it back to the ground.



Stair Climb

Station Description:

The candidate will climb up and back down a simulated staircase. The candidate will ascend to the platform and descend the opposite side to complete one repetition. A total of seven repetitions will be completed. The candidate will carry a 'high-rise pack' containing two sections of bundled 1 ¾-inch hoseline weighing approximately 30 pounds. Once the candidate exits the stairs following the seventh repetition, he/she will place the highrise pack back in the designated location.

You may carry the hosepack in any manner that is comfortable. You must carry the hosepack at all times. You must not drag the hosepack at any time.

Preparation:

This station assesses muscular and cardiovascular endurance. You may practice for this station by ascending and descending two flights of stairs while carrying approximately 55 pounds of weight (SCBA plus hose pack).

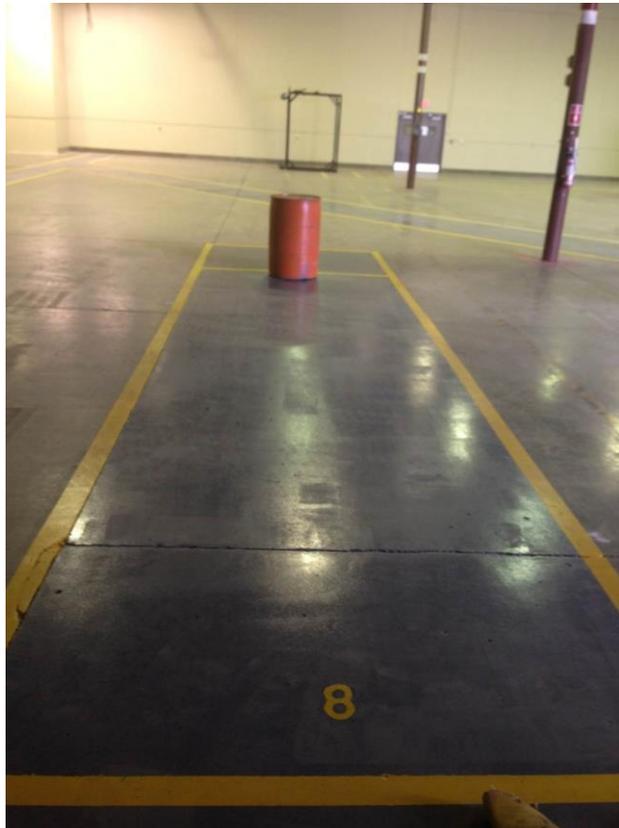


Victim Rescue (Dummy Drag)

Station Description: The candidate will drag a human form dummy weighing 170 pounds (weight of dummy and clothing) for 25 feet, around a weighted barrel, and then back across the starting point for a total distance of 50 feet. The candidate will drag the dummy using the pull harness attached to the dummy **ONLY**. It will be unacceptable to drag the dummy by any limb, to lift under the dummy's arms, to drag by holding onto clothing, or to carry the dummy. In order to complete this station, the candidate and the dummy must both completely cross the finish line.

Preparation:

This station assesses lower body strength and endurance. You may prepare for this event by dragging a weighted object using a rope.



Scoring

The PAT is a timed test. Any candidate that completes the course in **6 minutes** (6:00) or less will pass this stage of the selection process. There is no advantage in seeking to complete the test in a time significantly lower than the allotted time.

