

Firefighter's Physical Agility Test
Applicant's Handbook - City of Mount Vernon, NY

Arrival & Check-In

Arrival. The Firefighter Academy Training Grounds, is located on the Grasslands Reservation, Valhalla, New York. The entrance is located approximately one mile north of Elmsford, off Route 9A.

You will receive notice of the day and hour to appear. Be certain to appear at the designated time. If you are early, you will have to wait until your designated time and if you are late, you may not be able to take the test on that day. If the test date is canceled because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made over the radio station WVOX or WFAS. If your original test date is canceled, you should appear at the same time on the alternate test day assigned to you. The alternate day will be used only in the event of poor weather or another emergency. The alternate day is not an alternate test date for the convenience of the applicant.

The training center is located on the East side of Route 9A. After you have proceeded approximately 400 feet, you will see a driveway to the right. A sign indicating "parking" will be at this driveway. Park and lock your car in the designated parking area. Under no circumstances are you to park your car along the entrance road or the driveway.

Check-In. The tests will be held in the open field behind the main building. There is a gate located centrally from the parking area. Enter the training area through this gate only. You will check-in and check-out through this gate. You will NOT be admitted through the main building.

At check-in time, you must present the notice AND the Accident Waiver which was mailed to you and also a picture ID. You will be given an Applicant Score Sheet. (You will be required to fill in the heading of your score sheet with name, address and telephone number of a person to contact in the event of an emergency. You will also be required to make a statement concerning your medical health and your general preparation to take this test.

At the check-in station, you will be placed in a group of applicants. You will remain with that group as you complete each of the tests. You may not leave your group except on the specific instructions of a Test Administrator. Applicants wandering about the test area will be subject to disqualification.

Timing and Recording of Scores. At each timed test there will be an electronic stopwatch which is activated by an electronic beam. This is the same type of timing procedure you commonly see at sporting events. At each station, the Test Administrator will give you the instruction to start. The electronic timer is automatically started by you when you cross the start/finish line and stopped by you when you re-cross the start/finish line.

After each test, the Test administrator will note the minutes, seconds, and hundredths of a second that were required for you to complete the test. The Test Administrator will tell the Scoring Monitor to write the time on the electronic stopwatch and the time entered on the scoring sheet. Finally both you and the Test Administrator will initial the score. Any discrepancies must be reported before you initial the score.

After you have completed all of the sub-test stations, you will return to the check-out desk. If you elect to re-take one or more of the sub-tests at this time, you will be directed by the check-out desk Administrator to those stations. You may not re-take any of the three Pass/Fail tests. Do not go back to any station until you have been instructed to do so by the personnel at the check-out desk. They will insure that you will be able to re-take the sub-tests with a minimum of waiting.

Clothing. With the exception of the requirement that work gloves be used at Stations 1,2,3 and 4, there are no requirements or limitations on clothing. In general you should wear clothing appropriate to participate in an agility test. Footwear is important. It should provide you with good support, protection, and traction. Rubber soled shoes are recommended. Unless the day is warm, you should bring some type of jacket to wear between test stations. On very sunny days you may wish to bring a hat since you may have to wait in the sun between tests.

You will not be allowed to bring guests onto the testing grounds. Toilet facilities for use by applicants are located in the main building. You will pass by the main building after having completed the first two Pass/Fail tests. Water fountains are located in the main building also. The fountains on the test grounds are usually not operating.

There will be no food facilities for applicants at the test site. In general, you should not be eating immediately before you are scheduled to start the tests and we recommend that you leave the area immediately after completing the test. No food will be allowed on the training grounds. If you feel it is necessary to bring lunch, we suggest you leave it in your car.

Description of the Tests

Pass/Fail Tests. These tests are scored on the basis of passing or failing. You must pass the first two Pass/Fail test to be eligible to advance to the timed tests. If you fail either the AERIAL LADDER CLIMB or the LADDER LIFT, you are disqualified and may not proceed to the remainder of the tests. No second attempt will be allowed on any of the pass/Fail tests. No point credit is given for any of the pass/Fail tests.

You must complete the Aerial Ladder Climb within five (5) minutes, the Ladder Lift within three (3) minutes and the Wall Climb within three (3) minutes. No extra credit is given for speed on these tests.

Ladder Climb – Sub-Test A. An aerial ladder will be extended to approximately seventy (70) feet and will be at an angle of approximately seventy (70) degrees. You must climb to the top of the ladder, touch the top of the ladder, and return to the starting point on the ground. You may not stop for more than ten (10) seconds at any point in the climb up or down. You must wear the safety belt supplied.

Ladder Lift – Sub-Test B. A twenty- eight (28) foot extension ladder is hung from the side of a fire truck. The top rail (side) of the ladder is about six and one half (6-1/2) feet above the ground. You will grab the ladder, lift it off the hooks, and lower it to the ground. You may not drop the ladder. You may not take the ladder off the hooks one end at a time. After you have placed the ladder on the ground, you will step back. The Test Administrator will then tell you to go ahead and put the ladder back on the truck.

You will put the ladder back the same way you removed it, by grabbing it in the middle and lifting it up onto the hooks. You may not lift one end and then the other. You stand on the ground when taking the ladder from the truck and when putting it back onto the truck.

(Sub-Test C will be the LAST Sub-Test you will take. You will complete this sub-test after taking the five timed sub-tests.)

WallClimb – Sub-Test C. You will be required to scale a five (5) foot wall. You will stand three (3) feet behind the start/finish line. On the instruction of the Test Administrator, you will run across the start/finish line to a wooden wall located forty-five (45) feet beyond the start/finish line. You must climb over the five (5) foot wall and then run back to the start/finish line. If you lose your grip when scaling the wall, you may continue to try to scale the wall until you succeed, up to the three (3) minute limit imposed on this sub-test. You may not use a box, the braces on the wall or any other device to assist you in scaling the wall.

TIMED TESTS – The five timed tests must be performed in the order given below.

Station #1, HOSE PULL. The start/finish line will be approximately ninety (90) feet before a hydrant. A one hundred (100) foot (or 1-50') length of 2-1/2 inch hose will be connected to the hydrant and laid out on the opposite side of the hydrant from the start/finish line. You will stand three (3) feet behind the start/finish line and, on the Test Administrator's instruction, run and pick up the nozzle and hose at the far end. You will place the hose over your shoulder and drag it back to the drop zone which is ten (10) feet before the start/finish line. In the drop zone will be a pad of canvas and you will place, not throw, the nozzle on the pad. You then continue across the start/finish line. The time clock is started and stopped as you cross the start/finish line.

The 1-1/2 inch hose will not be charged with water. The hose must be carried as described, over the shoulder. The nozzle must be in front of you and may not drag on the ground. If the hose is dropped, you may pick it up, put it back on your shoulder, and continue the pull. Dropping a hose will cause you to lose several seconds in time. You should be careful not to lose control of the hose. You must have control of the hose when you reach the drop zone.

Station #2, DONUT LIFT. This test must be performed using the gloves provided. The gloves will have leather palms and fingers. Small, medium and large sizes will be available. The test is performed from the roof of the Drill Tower which is six stories tall. A donut of 2 ½ inch hose is placed on the ground. A ¾ inch Manila rope is tied to the hose and extends to the roof where the other end is tied.

Wearing a safety belt which has been provided, you will stand three (3) feet behind the start/finish line and, on the instruction of the Test Administrator, cross the line, move to the rail, attach the safety belt, pick up the rope, and pull the donut of hose to the top, lifting it over the rail. The donut will be placed on the roof, you will unhook the safety belt and return across the start/finish line.

The coil of hose must be lifted by pulling the rope in a hand-over-hand fashion. You may not walk away from the edge of the roof while pulling the rope since you are attached to the rail by the safety belt. You may not release the safety belt until you are ready to move directly to the start/finish line.

There are open windows on the floors below where you are working. If you do not pull the rope evenly, the donut of hose will start to swing and may catch on the open window. To be sure that you perform this test in the shortest time, try to pull the rope as evenly as possible.

Station #3, HOSE CARRY. You must carry a one hundred (100) foot section of 1-1/2 inch hose from the ground, up five floors and back to the ground. The hose will be folded and on the ground at the start of the test. The hose weighs approximately fifty-five (55) pounds. Gloves will be provided.

You will stand three (3) feet behind the start/finish line and, on the instruction of the Test Administrator, cross the start/finish line and pick up the hose. The hose must be placed on either shoulder and carried in that manner up the internal stairway of the Tower. At the FIFTH FLOOR, you must touch the tape marker on the standpipe on that floor with your free hand.

This marker will be pointed out to you when you climb to the roof in preparation for the previous test. After touching the marker, you will immediately return to the ground level, place the hose on the ground in the drop zone, and cross the start/finish line. If you drop the hose, you may pick it up. However, the hose must be carried on the shoulder. Dropping the hose will obviously increase the time it takes to complete this test.

Station #4, OVERHEAD PULLEY. (WEIGHT PULL FROM GROUND)..This test must performed, using the same type of glove used for the donut lift. You will use the gloves supplied.

A ¾ inch Manilla rope will be attached to a fifty (50) pound weight. The rope will extend upward and over a pulley and then down to the ground. For this test, you must pull the weight to a height of twenty (20) feet above the ground and then lower the weight to the ground without losing control of the weight.

You will stand three (3) feet behind the start/finish line. On the instruction of the Test Administrator, you will cross the start/finish line, run to the pulley, and grab the free end of the rope. You must stand on the concrete sidewalk. The weight will be resting in a bluestone area just at the edge of the sidewalk. The rope will be marked with a band of tape at a point twenty (20) feet above the ground. You must pull the rope until you can touch the band of tape to the ground, at which time the weight will be twenty (20) feet above the ground.

You will then lower the weight to the ground. The weight must be raised in a hand-over-hand fashion and lowered in the similar, but reverse, fashion. You must not lose control of the weight. If the rope slips through your hands or you lose your grip on the rope, you are disqualified. After lowering the weight to the ground, you return to the start/finish line.

Station #5, HORIZONTAL LADDER TRAVERSE. For this test, you will start from a point approximately fifteen (15) feet from the base of the stairs which lead to a five (5) foot high platform. Using only your hands, you must move across the length of a ladder which is suspended eleven (11) feet above the ground. At the other end of the ladder, you will pull yourself onto another five (5) foot high platform, touch the contact point on the far side of the platform, and then return in the same manner across the ladder to the original platform, descend the stairs, and cross the start/finish line. The distance between the platforms is eighteen (18) feet. (Gloves will be used for this station.)

At the start of this test, you will stand three (3) feet behind the start/finish line. On the instruction of the Test Administrator, you will cross the start/finish platform using only your hands. When traversing the ladder, you may grasp the rungs or rails or both. You are not required to grasp each rung of the ladder. When you have returned to the starting platform, you will descend the stairs and cross the start/finish line.

Your feet and legs may be used only when leaving or getting onto the two platforms. Neither your feet, nor legs, nor any part of your body except your hands may come in contact with the ladder. It is not necessary to touch every rung on the ladder if you feel that you are able to traverse the ladder by skipping rungs. Dropping from the ladder to the ground disqualifies the attempt. You may not jump over the side of the stair handrail when going up or down the stairs.

GOOD LUCK! MUNICIPAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION