



FIRE APPARATUS OPERATOR

Test Date:

September 22nd, 2026

Test Information Guide for Candidates

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Test Check-In Location:

2nd Floor Testing Facility
Personnel Board of Jefferson County
2121 Rev. Abraham Woods Jr. Blvd
Birmingham AL 35203

Study Materials at exams.pbjcal.org/ExamGuides:

Jefferson City Fire & Rescue Service Policies and
Procedures Manual

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Fire Apparatus Operator Test Information Guide Overview

Congratulations on your eligibility for the Fire Apparatus Operator examination! The Personnel Board of Jefferson County (PBJC) is pleased that you are interested in a job as a Fire Apparatus Operator within the Jefferson County Merit System. The PBJC has created this information guide to familiarize you with the position of Fire Apparatus Operator and the testing procedures for the job class. This guide is designed to provide you with an overview of the Fire Apparatus Operator position; the competencies being measured by the Fire Apparatus Operator examination; a description of the test components and the test administration; test scoring and report notification information; PBJC rules related to testing; what to bring and what not to bring to the exam; and how to prepare and what to expect during the Fire Apparatus Operator examination.

The Test Information Guide provides valuable information that will allow you to be more familiar with the Fire Apparatus Operator position and the examination process. It is strongly recommended that you thoroughly review this manual and utilize the information provided. Reading the entire guide will ensure that you understand what will occur during the examination. Reviewing and understanding the descriptions provided will ensure that you are prepared for the types of questions and scenarios that you will encounter. A thorough familiarity with the examination process will eliminate uncertainty and reduce anxiety that can sometimes be experienced in testing situations.

Please remember that the material in this guide is designed to help you prepare for the Fire Apparatus Operator examination. You will not be allowed to use this guide while you the exam. **Therefore, you will not be allowed to carry this booklet into the test site.**

Overview of the Fire Apparatus Operator Position

The following information is provided in order to assist you in determining whether you are able and willing to perform the job of a Fire Apparatus Operator. An individual's expectations of the job before they are selected for the position often differ from what he or she experiences once they are on the job, which can result in low levels of job satisfaction. This information is designed to help applicants make more accurate judgments about their interest in working as a Fire Apparatus Operator.

The following information was gathered through a process (known as job analysis) of interviews, meetings, and surveys with Fire Apparatus Operator incumbents from various jurisdictions throughout Jefferson County. Through this effort, the PBJC explored what is typically done on the job, as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that a person needs to possess in order to successfully perform the work. Although not for everyone, a career as a Fire Apparatus Operator is both challenging and rewarding. If you decide to pursue a career in this rank, you will be expected to perform the work behaviors described in this section.

The Fire Apparatus Operator job class is a Grade 21 position and is located in 12 jurisdictions within the Merit System. Please note that salary ranges for each jurisdiction are subject to

change due to cost-of-living adjustments. You can check current salary ranges at <https://www.pbjcal.org/employment/Schedules>.

The major duties performed by Fire Apparatus Operator employees include:

- **En route Considerations:** Evaluates variables affecting travel to emergency sites and on-site characteristics before/during arrival to determine how they will affect emergency activities.
- **Pump Operations:** Operates fire apparatus pump system during scenarios requiring water using the control panel to begin fire suppression activities.
- **Fire Suppression Operations:** Deploys fire hoses of varying diameters with different nozzle specifications and incorporates available appliances into fire suppression activities.
- **Ladder Operations:** Operates aerial or ground ladder during ladder operations while accounting for situational variables to complete operations.
- **Firefighting Activities:** Carries out officer/incident commander's fire suppression orders (when acting as a firefighter) by following incident response guidelines to extinguish the fire and ensure life safety of victims.
- **Search and Rescue:** Locates and removes victims from incident scenes by utilizing specialized rescue techniques and extrication equipment in order to minimize trauma, ensure life safety and facilitate transport to a patient care facility.
- **Basic Medical Services:** Administers non-invasive healthcare to patients/victims by following accepted medical guidelines and using specialized medical equipment for the treatment of various health-related conditions.
- **Public Relations:** Participates in activities that project a positive image of the department to the public by attending off site facilities or hosting visitors at the station to conduct trainings, tours and other community related activities.
- **Pre-Fire Planning:** Assists in developing pre-fire plans for businesses, public buildings, and residences to include surveying buildings, collecting information regarding hazardous materials, occupancy, hydrant location, etc.
- **Equipment and Apparatus Maintenance:** Ensures proper operation and conditioning of apparatuses, equipment, and personal gear used for incident response by performing scheduled cleaning, inspections, and maintenance to enable safe and effective incident response and mitigation.
- **Station Duties:** Participates in duties related to maintenance/appearance of fire station.
- **Acting Officer Responsibilities:** Operates in the capacity of company officer in his/her absence.
- **Training:** Participates in formal and informal training, sessions, and drills to acquire the proper training needed to carry out assigned duties in accordance with department policies and procedures and national guidelines.

- **Fire Prevention:** Assists the public with fire prevention measures by installing smoke detectors, performing inspections, and identifying potential hazards in order to reduce the risk of fire-related incidents and enhance awareness of fire safety precautions.

Competencies Being Measured

As stated previously, job analysis is a systematic process that the PBJC uses to collect, analyze, and interpret data about a job in order to identify the work requirements (i.e., work behaviors and tasks) and people requirements (i.e., knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics) for the job. The process results in a determination of the duties and tasks which are critical for job success and the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that are required to perform those duties.

During the test development process, the PBJC analyst clustered, or grouped, the KSAs determined to be critical for the Fire Apparatus Operator position into related categories, or competencies.

The following are the competencies and KSAs that are being measured by the Fire Apparatus Operator examination process:

Adaptability & Flexibility

- Ability to adjust to changing work demands, procedures, technology, and/or priorities.
- Ability to assess the importance of, and consequences associated with, tasks in order to set priorities in light of competing demands.
- Ability to manage and allocate one's time in order to handle multiple tasks and/or meet pressing deadlines.
- Ability to shift attention back and forth between two or more activities or sources of information (such as speech, sounds, touch, or other sources)

Customer Service

- Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services (e.g., customer needs assessment, quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction).
- Ability to balance interests of clients and the department/organization and respond to pressing and changing client demands.
- Knowledge of appropriate citizen interactions when dealing with the public.

Heavy Equipment & Vehicle Use

- Skill at operating a motor vehicle.

Leadership & Management

- Ability to assess the performance of other individuals to ensure work is performed appropriately and/or take corrective action.
- Ability to assign and monitor the work of subordinates.
- Ability to commit, entrust, or transfer tasks or responsibilities to another.
- Ability to guide and direct the accomplishment of work through subordinate staff.
- Ability to influence, motivate, and inspire employees.

- Ability to motivate and encourage others to a course of action or goal.
- Ability to review work and evaluate it against established standards, procedures, laws, or codes to determine any discrepancies between how the work was performed and how it should be performed.

Learning & Memory

- Ability to learn unfamiliar material/information quickly and accurately.
- Ability to maintain mental stamina and focus over long period of work and/or during times of high stress.
- Ability to mentally store and retrieve work-related information for use at a later time.

Oral Communication & Comprehension

- Ability to attend to information presented verbally and actively ask questions to fill identified areas of missing or unclear information.
- Ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- Ability to orally communicate information and ideas so others will understand.
- Ability to speak clearly so others can understand you.
- Skill in verbally delivering information in a clear and concise manner to an audience.

Planning & Organizing

- Ability to obtain and allocate the appropriate equipment, facilities, and materials to complete work.
- Ability to plan activities to achieve short- or long-term goals designed to achieve overall mission.
- Ability to plan work activities in order to meet deadlines and/or goals.
- Ability to project, allocate, and maintain financial resources needed for the accomplishment of work goals.
- Skill in organizing information, materials, and/or documentation in a systematic and logical manner.
- Skill in managing one's own time and the time of others.

Problem Solving & Decision Making

- Ability to analyze a problem from different perspectives and generate potential solutions that are practical and effective.
- Ability to identify new processes or improvements to existing processes that allow work to be performed more efficiently or effectively.
- Ability to investigate a problem in order to identify the root cause(s) and determine an appropriate solution.
- Ability to use logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
- Skill in selecting the most appropriate course of action in situations where information is unclear or unavailable and making high quality and effective decisions.

Professionalism & Integrity

- Ability to demonstrate honest behavior in all work tasks and responsibilities.
- Ability to follow safety procedures and practices in a variety of novel and everyday work tasks/situations.
- Ability to work in an environment that requires strict adherence to instructions, standards, and/or procedures.
- Skill in conducting oneself in a calm and professional manner in stressful situations.

Researching & Referencing

- Ability to conduct research using various sources of information (e.g., databases, internet, books) in order to identify and compile needed information.
- Ability to identify appropriate materials and sources of needed information, to includes referencing, cross referencing, and evaluating the pertinence of information.
- Skill in maintaining records.

Reviewing, Inspecting, & Auditing

- Ability to identify or detect a known pattern (a figure, object, word, or sound) that is hidden in other distracting material.
- Ability to pay close attention to detail in order to ensure the completeness and accuracy of work.

Self-Management & Initiative

- Ability to accurately assess your own performance in order to identify areas of strength and areas for development.
- Ability to maintain awareness of safety procedures and practices in a variety of novel and everyday work tasks/situations.
- Ability to perform work in a manner that is careful, attentive and vigilant.
- Ability to persist at a task or problem despite interruptions, obstacles, or setbacks.
- Ability to see a need for and take constructive action at work without being prompted or urged.
- Ability to stay abreast of developments in the field/industry.
- Ability to work productively and effectively under conditions of high stress, such as tight deadlines, heavy workloads, or emergency situations.
- Ability to work without close supervision or significant amounts of direction/guidance.

Small Tool & Equipment Use

- Ability to determine safe operation of equipment based on given constraints or conditions.
- Ability to determine the kind of tools and equipment needed to do a job.
- Ability to monitor gauges, dials, or other indicators to ensure that a piece of equipment or machine is working correctly.
- Skill in using appliances such as hose clamps, couplings, nozzles, pressure boosters and portable hydrants during firefighting operations.
- Skill in using tools (e.g., chainsaw, jaws of life, skill saw) for firefighting and rescue operations.

Teamwork & Interpersonal

- Ability to confidently defend or gain support for one's opinions, needs, and/or ideas.
- Ability to create an environment that welcomes, values, and includes perspectives from different backgrounds and/or cultures.
- Ability to develop networks and builds alliances, engage in cross-functional activities, and collaborate across boundaries.
- Ability to manage and resolve conflicts with coworkers and/or customers.
- Ability to work collaboratively with a group or team in an effort to achieve a common goal.
- Skill in maintaining a positive working relationship through comfortable and appropriate interpersonal interaction.
- Skill in working through differences in goals or interests with an individual/group.

Training & Facilitation

- Ability to teach or train individuals with regard to new information, procedures, processes, and/or equipment.

Written Communication & Comprehension

- Ability to communicate information and ideas in writing to a variety of audiences in a clear, concise, and organized manner, free from spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.
- Ability to read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
- Ability to review written material and identify errors with regard to spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting.

Technical Knowledge: Communication

- Knowledge of radio communication systems.

Technical Knowledge: Emergency Medical Services

- Knowledge of American Red Cross first aid techniques including Adult cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Knowledge of basic EMS pharmacology as appropriate for EMT basic certification.
- Knowledge of departmental rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures regarding emergency medical services (EMS).
- Knowledge of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines.
- Knowledge of illegal drugs to include their effects, addictive properties, reactions, safe versus unsafe quantities.
- Knowledge of implied consent laws as they relate to patient care.
- Knowledge of medical care used for patients with life threatening illnesses or injuries until patient can be given full medical care (e.g., cardiac arrest, respiratory arrest, drowning, and foreign body airway obstruction).
- Knowledge of medical instruments and their practical uses.
- Knowledge of medical terminology and vocabulary for accurately describing the human body and associated components, conditions, and processes in a science-based manner.
- Knowledge of normal standards and values for patient vital signs (i.e., blood pressure, pulse, temperature) in order to detect deviation.
- Knowledge of patient/resident care techniques (e.g., vital signs, blood work, bathing, etc.).

- Knowledge of state emergency management services (EMS) protocols.
- Knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the human body, with respect to location, structure, appearance, functions, and vital processes of internal organs.
- Knowledge of the appropriate set-up of different types of medical equipment based on procedure or examination being performed.
- Knowledge of the immediate and temporary treatment of a victim of sudden illness or injury.
- Knowledge of the interactions of various legal and illegal drugs.
- Knowledge of the legal implications of medical actions (i.e., implied consent, do not resuscitate (DNR), living will, age of consent, and privacy).
- Knowledge of the mechanisms of injury to help in determining proper patient care
- Knowledge of the proper use of medical equipment (EKG, IV, etc.).
- Knowledge of the signs and symptoms of drug/alcohol abuse and addiction as they relate to the needs, attitudes and behavioral problems of the abuser.
- Knowledge of triage procedures.
- Knowledge of wound care techniques including cleansing, infection control and dressings.
- Skill in using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

Technical Knowledge: Fire Apparatus Operations & Maintenance

- Knowledge of fire apparatus placement at different types of emergency scenes (e.g., highway, residential, commercial).
- Knowledge of firehose operations (e.g., connecting the hose to a water source, operating the nozzle, maintaining stream direction).
- Knowledge of ladder truck pipe drainage techniques and purposes.
- Knowledge of pre-response safety protocols (e.g., firefighters in seats with seatbelts, personal protection gear on apparatus, doors closed).
- Knowledge of the mechanics of hydraulics such as water volume and pressure.
- Skill in performing pump operations (e.g., charge the lines, switch to hydrant water) on a fire apparatus during fire situations.

Technical Knowledge: Fire Apparatus Setup Procedures

- Knowledge of available water resources for fire incidents (e.g., location of hydrants, tank size on various apparatus).
- Knowledge of fire hydrant operations to include opening/closing hydrant, connecting hoses to hydrant, color codes designating water pressures of hydrants, etc.
- Knowledge of fire hydrant specifications (e.g., operations, color coding, testing, locations, type of hydrant, maintenance).
- Knowledge of the techniques and protocols for placement of an apparatus at a fire emergency scene.
- Knowledge of the techniques and protocols for the placement of ladders at a fire emergency scene.

Technical Knowledge: Fire Science Applications

- Knowledge of basic residential, commercial and industrial construction materials.

- Knowledge of fire behavior and characteristics to include ignition, growth, materials, heat, and smoke.

Technical Knowledge: Firefighting

- Knowledge of departmental rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures regarding firefighting operations.
- Knowledge of different types of fire attack strategies and techniques (e.g., offensive, defensive, transitional).
- Knowledge of fire extension search techniques.
- Knowledge of standard firefighting tactics for combating fires.

Technical Knowledge: Hazardous Materials

- Knowledge of departmental rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures regarding hazardous materials (Hazmat).
- Knowledge of flammable and combustible liquids and gas classifications, properties, labeling, transportation, storage, handling and use.
- Knowledge of the characteristics of hazardous materials (e.g., chemicals, fumes, corrosives).
- Knowledge of universal (standard) precaution techniques (such as using personal protective equipment) when dealing with contaminated patients and materials in order to prevent contamination.

Technical Knowledge: Incident Operations & Procedures

- Knowledge of appropriate emergency procedures to use when there are problems with electricity, water, fire, gas or chlorine.
- Knowledge of collapse zones including safe distances and circumstances where collapse is likely.
- Knowledge of emergency scene size-up procedures.
- Knowledge of forcible entry techniques and devices.
- Knowledge of local geography including location of streets, principle buildings, fire hydrants, water supply locations, and fire alarm boxes.
- Knowledge of personnel accountability protocols for emergency incidents (e.g., 2 firefighters in and 2 firefighters out).
- Knowledge of scene stabilization during emergency situations.
- Knowledge of techniques and procedures for proper ventilation of buildings/structures.
- Knowledge of the effects of various weather conditions on public safety personnel and incident management.
- Knowledge of traffic control procedures at emergency scenes.

Technical Knowledge: Personnel & Human Resources

- Knowledge of departmental leave policies (e.g., annual, sick, military, suspended without pay, leave without pay, injury, etc.).
- Knowledge of jurisdictional Employee Assistance Program (EAP) system.

Technical Knowledge: Policies & Procedures

- Knowledge of department policies and procedures on handling complaints (e.g., customer, citizen, etc.).
- Knowledge of departmental dress code policies.
- Knowledge of departmental standard operating procedures (SOPs), state, and federal traffic laws as they apply to emergency vehicles.
- Knowledge of medical documentation procedures.
- Knowledge of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards and guidelines regarding respiratory protection (e.g., use of respirators to protect individuals from overexposure to toxic and hazardous substances).
- Knowledge of organizational policies, procedures, and goals.

Technical Knowledge: Pre-fire Planning & Prevention

- Knowledge of types of fire detector systems (e.g., smoke, carbon monoxide) and their functions.
- Knowledge of types of fire suppression systems (e.g., sprinkler systems, hood systems, portables) and their functions.

Technical Knowledge: Safety

- Knowledge of life preservation techniques when performing search and rescue operations.
- Knowledge of necessary safety measures taken when transporting patients (e.g., rail positioning, brake usage, etc.).
- Knowledge of occupational hazards and necessary safety precautions when working near utility lines (e.g., power, gas, water, etc.).
- Knowledge of safety procedures and protocols for working around electricity (e.g., exposed live wires, downed power lines).

Technical Knowledge: Search & Rescue Operations

- Knowledge of primary and secondary search and rescue procedures.
- Knowledge of scene safety protocols when performing search and rescue operations.
- Knowledge of victim extrication techniques and devices.

The table below illustrates the competencies measured by each test component.

Competency	Supervisory Structured Interview	Emergency Scenarios
Adaptability & Flexibility	X	X
Customer Service	X	X
Heavy Equipment & Vehicle Use		X
Leadership & Management	X	X
Learning & Memory		X
Oral Communication & Comprehension	X	X
Planning & Organizing		X
Problem Solving & Decision Making	X	X
Professionalism & Integrity	X	X
Researching & Referencing	X	X
Reviewing, Inspecting & Auditing	X	X
Self-Management & Initiative	X	X
Small Tool & Equipment Use		X
Teamwork & Interpersonal	X	X
Training & Facilitation	X	
Written Communication & Comprehension	X	X
TK: Communication		X
TK: Emergency Medical Services	X	X
TK: Fire Apparatus Operations & Maintenance	X	X
TK: Fire Apparatus Setup Procedures		X
TK: Fire Science Applications		X
TK: Firefighting		X
TK: Hazardous Materials		X
TK: Incident Operations & Procedures		X
TK: Personnel & Human Resources	X	
TK: Policies & Procedures		X
TK: Pre-fire Planning & Prevention		X
TK: Safety	X	X
TK: Search & Rescue Operations		X

Description of the Fire Apparatus Operator Test Components

This section of the guide provides you with descriptions of the test components that you will complete during the Fire Apparatus Operator examination, as well as the Minimum Qualifications (MQs) that were used to determine which applicants were eligible to take the examination. The MQs and each test component were developed based on the job analysis data gathered from job incumbents and supervisors, referred to as subject matter experts, by PBJC analysts. Multiple methods were used for gathering job data, including site observations,

individual interviews, critical incidents, technical panels, subject matter expert (SME) meetings, and job analysis questionnaires. Through these methods, analysts were able to determine the critical duties, tasks, and KSAs for the Fire Apparatus Operator position. The MQs and test components are designed to assess the KSAs that were deemed important and needed on day one of the job by Fire Apparatus Operator subject matter experts.

PBJC analysts worked closely with Fire Service professionals from around the country to develop all of the scenarios and the scoring benchmarks used in each test component. These professional subject matter experts included Fire Apparatus Operators and other fire professionals from several departments outside of Jefferson County, Alabama.

Minimum Qualifications

Minimum qualifications (MQs) are descriptions of specific types of experience, education, and/or training that have been demonstrated to be job-related and that are both critical to job performance and needed on day one of the job for the Fire Apparatus Operator position. MQs focus on those competencies that are so critical to job performance that without them a person could not perform the job even at a minimally acceptable level, regardless of the possession of other competencies. The MQs developed for the Fire Apparatus Operator position are listed below:

Promotional Requirements:

- Must be a Merit System employee with Regular status (i.e., having completed a one-year probationary period).
- Must currently be employed as a Firefighter or Fire Paramedic within the Personnel Board Merit System.
- Two (2) years of uninterrupted professional fire service experience as a Firefighter or Fire Paramedic in the Merit System by the closing date of the announcement.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Fire Apparatus Operator: Pumper certification.
- Fire Officer I certification.
- Driver's license.

*****Please note that eligibility and seniority points are calculated using the announcement closing date as the end date (which was July 10, 2026).***

Your application has already been reviewed and you have been determined to meet the minimum qualifications for this job. The structured interview components will be administered on **Tuesday, September 22nd, 2026** at the Personnel Board's Testing Facility. Per Rule 9.16, make-up examinations will NOT be given (except where required by law). Candidates must attend and complete all phases of testing in order for their tests to be scored. Each phase of the testing process is described in detail below.

Your Role

During the exam, you will assume the role of AO Pat Candidate, a recently promoted Fire Apparatus Operator with the Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service. AO Pat Candidate is an Apparatus Operator for B shift at Station 1 and may act as the supervisor in the absence of the Lieutenant. A detailed description of the tasks you will perform as part of the exam is provided below.

Phase I: Staging (Instructions Phase)

After you complete the check-in process, you will be escorted to a group room where you will receive detailed instructions about the test.

Phase II: Supervisory and Emergency Scenarios Structured Interview

The term “structured” when describing an interview refers to the standardization of the interview process across all candidates. Predetermined, job-related questions are used for structured interviews and they are designed to assess KSAs that are important and needed on day one of the job for the Fire Apparatus Operator position. Every candidate is presented the same questions and in the same order during a structured interview. The scoring process is also job-related and set prior to test administration.

After you complete the staging phase, you will be escorted to individual rooms to complete Phase II of the examination. The individual test room contains video and audio recording equipment, and the table in the room contains a flat screen video monitor. All of your instructions and interview questions will be presented by a narrator on this video screen. The room will also contain writing utensils and all of the materials you will need to reference during the structured interview.

The supervisory scenarios will present you with multiple scenarios focusing on supervisory/leadership issues. Some of these scenarios may include AI-generated film or audio clips. Also, some scenarios may contain multiple parts that require separate responses.

The emergency scenarios will present you with several technical questions focusing on tactical pump operations and incident response concerns. The emergency scenarios may include safety issues, disruptions to the water supply, incident command, apparatus placement, changing fire conditions, apparatus inspections, etc. Similar to the supervisory scenarios, this portion may include AI-generated visual representations and multiple-part scenarios.

You will have a defined amount of time to provide your verbal response to each question. The test video will provide a timer on the video screen that will help you to monitor your time as you respond to each structured interview question.

It is important to remember that while you may use the pens, pencils, and scratch paper provided to take notes at any time, you must answer each question by responding out loud. Your responses to the questions will be recorded and will be scored by trained assessors at a later date. Any written outlines or notes you may take will not be scored.

Description of the Fire Apparatus Operator Test Administration

The examination for the job of Fire Apparatus Operator will be administered in a single session **on Tuesday, September 22nd, 2026** at the Personnel Board of Jefferson County. The Personnel Board works with each Fire Chief to schedule candidates' check-in times for each test day.

The Fire Apparatus Operator exam is designed to simulate tasks and scenarios that a Fire Apparatus Operator would be exposed to on the job. As you are aware, the Personnel Board of Jefferson County serves multiple municipalities and fire departments. Although the core duties performed by Apparatus Operators across the various departments are basically the same, some internal policies, procedures, and organizational structures vary across the jurisdictions. In order to test candidates appropriately, we must create a standard for all candidates. Therefore for the purposes of the selection process, you will be placed in the role of a Fire Apparatus Operator for a fictitious municipality called "Jefferson City." Jefferson City is a jurisdiction in Jefferson County, Alabama. All available information regarding Jefferson City, including policies and procedures, is found in the Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service Policies and Procedures Manual that is available online along with this information guide. **Remember that your actions throughout the examination should comply with the Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service policies and procedures.**

As you read through the policies and procedures, you should NOT assume they are the same as your real department's policies and procedures. Although they may be similar, failure to follow Jefferson City policies and procedures will adversely affect your exam performance. If you have any questions about the fictitious Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service or its Policies and Procedures Manual, you may contact Caroline Swiney at 205.279.3458 with your questions or email them to Caroline.Swiney@pbjcal.org.

On September 22nd, 2026, you should report to the 2nd floor of Personnel Board of Jefferson County located at 2121 Reverend Abraham Woods Jr. Boulevard in downtown Birmingham, for check-in. Upon arrival, you will first be asked to provide a valid government issued photo identification (e.g., driver's license, passport). Then, you will be checked in to the exam. In addition, you will be asked to read and sign a confidentiality statement. After checking-in, you may have a lengthy wait BEFORE you begin the examination process. It is necessary that you arrive to participate in the examination at your scheduled check-in time. **If you miss your scheduled check-in time, you will not be allowed to make up the exam.**

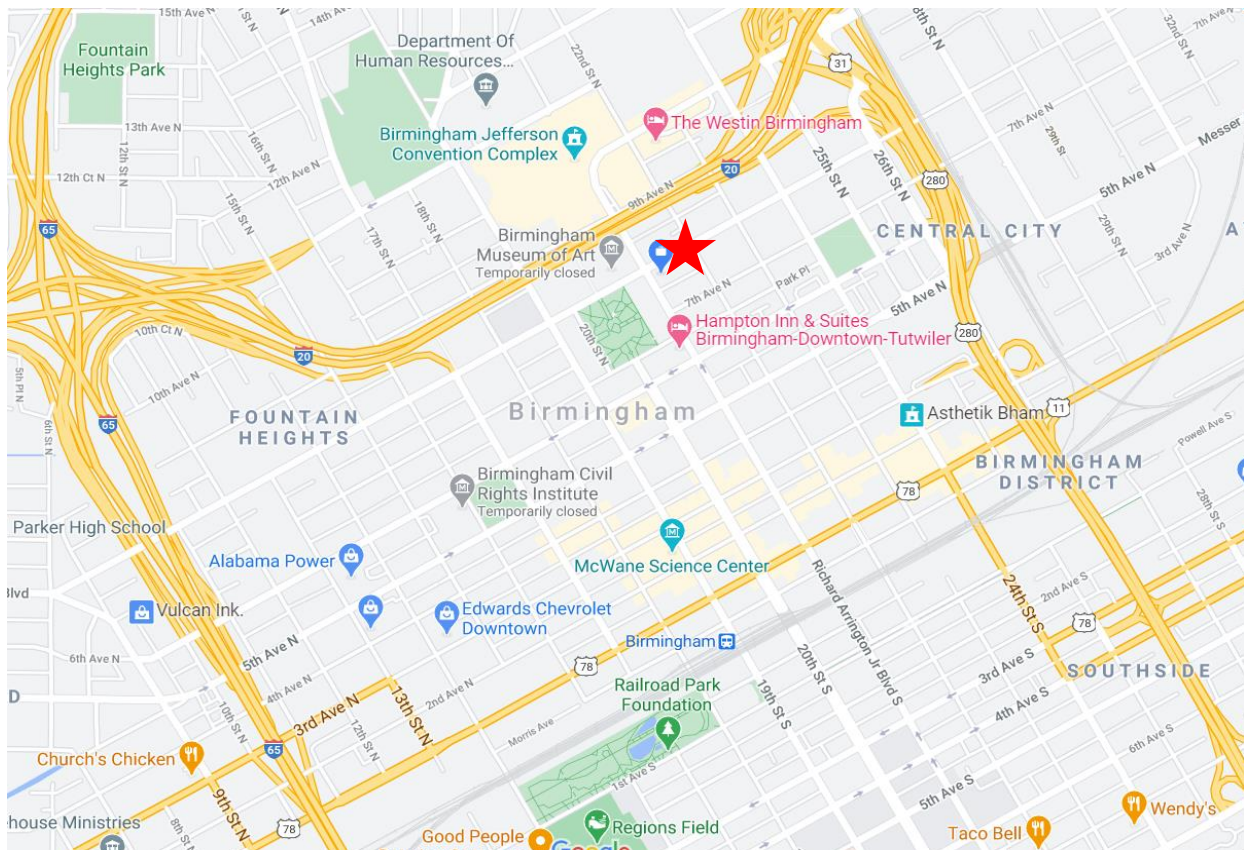
As explained above, the examination process will be divided into two (2) phases. You **MUST** complete all phases to remain eligible for employment in the Fire Apparatus Operator job class. The examination will take **approximately 1 ½ hour to complete**; however, you should plan to be on site at the testing facility for **up to 5 ½ hours**. Each phase of the testing process is listed below.

Check-In Period:	Sign in to test and wait for your turn to begin the test.
Phase I:	Staging (Instructions Phase)
Phase II:	Supervisory and Emergency Scenarios Structured Interview

Check-out Period: Sign out and wait for all other test candidates to be checked in before being released.

After completing the final phase of the examination, you will be escorted to the check-out room. You will be asked to sign out so that we can confirm that you have completed the entire examination process. After you check-out, if the final check-in time for all candidates has passed you will be allowed to exit the building. If the final check-in time has not passed, you will be escorted to a waiting room for the remainder of this time. It is important that you do not discuss the examination components or processes with anyone. Providing information about the examination with anyone would be unfair to you and to others taking the Fire Apparatus Operator exam. In addition, revealing information about the examination could result in your disqualification from the process and further disciplinary action within the Merit System.

EXAM LOCATION: The examination for Fire Apparatus Operator is scheduled to be held at the 2121 Building located at 2121 Reverend Abraham Woods Jr. Blvd., Birmingham, AL 35203 (downtown Birmingham). The map on the next page shows the location of the 2121 building with a red star.



PARKING: Given the amount of time you may be taking the test, **DO NOT** park in a metered space unless it is an 8-hour meter. Your best option is to park at the Birmingham Parking Authority (BPA) Deck 2 located next to the Boutwell Auditorium. The current parking rates for

BPA Deck 2 are \$2.00 for the first hour and \$1.00 for each additional hour, up to \$9.00 per day or \$10.00 per day for the special event parking rate. For more information about the parking deck and rates, please go to the BPA website at https://www.bhamparking.com/parking_lots/deck-2/.

The Personnel Board **DOES NOT** validate parking, nor are we responsible for costs incurred by candidates related to parking, including parking fees, fines and tickets. Allow plenty of time to travel, find appropriate parking, pass through any security checkpoint and arrive at the check-in area on time. **If you arrive late to the candidate check-in location, you will NOT be permitted to enter the facility and take the test!**

SECURITY PROCEDURE: The 2121 Building security procedures requires the public, including all Merit System employees, to only enter the 2121 Building through the main entrance on the Reverend Abraham Woods, Jr., Blvd /8th Avenue North side of the building. For the test administration, you may be asked to present a photo ID to a security guard or testing staff member in the building lobby and will be directed to check-in. On test days, these procedures may create some delays; therefore, please allow yourself extra time to go through this process. Your arrival time to the building does not matter; you must arrive at the designated check-in location by your check-in time.

Test Scoring & Results Notification

During the exam, all of your responses to test questions and exercises will be recorded on video and audio. The video recordings are only used for documentation purposes and will not be reviewed by any assessors. Only the audio recordings of your responses will be reviewed by the assessors in order to rate your response to each scenario. All of these materials will be scored over the course of a week (typically two or three weeks after the test) by a group of well-trained volunteer assessors who possess backgrounds and training in fire operations and procedures. We use such individuals to assess your performance for several reasons:

- a. They are not from the local area and therefore will not know local job candidates (or be able to influence and assist local candidates unfairly);
- b. Their training/education and experience prior to our assessment ensures they fully understand the critical aspects of a job in fire service; and
- c. As out-of-state volunteers, we can ensure that they are available for a full week of assessment without interruption.

All assessors are trained by the PBJC staff to ensure consistent, reliable and accurate ratings for all test components.

Once the assessment is complete, you will be notified of your score by email. The score notice will contain several pieces of information such as your test score along with your seniority points and two ranks (promotional rank and overall rank). Ranked lists for promotional jobs are established, first, by ranking all passing candidates (by final score with seniority points added) who work for the jurisdiction requesting the list; then by ranking all other candidates below

those candidates employed by the jurisdiction. Therefore, your *promotional rank* is your placement on the ranked list considering only candidates who work for the same city as you. Your *overall rank* is your placement on the overall ranked list compared to all other candidates regardless of jurisdiction. Please note that seniority points are calculated using the closing date of the announcement as the end date; therefore, seniority points are awarded using the date of July 10, 2026.

There is an appeal period that lasts four (4) business days from the date the score notices are emailed out. If you have any questions about your test score or rank, please contact **Caroline Swiney** at **205.279.3458** or **Caroline.Swiney@pbjcal.org**. If after speaking with this staff member you still have concerns about your test score, you may submit a written appeal to Jeffrey Crenshaw, the Personnel Board Director, outlining your concerns. All appeals are treated seriously and reviewed thoroughly before making a determination. Appeals related to the content of the test, however, are not considered. Procedural matters related to test administration, assessment, or score calculation are legitimate areas for appeal. For example, if you feel that you received different treatment than all other candidates, you may appeal this. But if you don't like a particular question or do not feel that it is related to the job, you may not appeal this matter.

If you successfully pass the exam, your name will be added to an eligible register of candidates. Your name will be placed on the list, in rank order, according to your score on the exam. Names are sent to departments with vacancies throughout Jefferson County according to rank on the test. (Keep in mind that your rank will improve as other individuals are selected and hired off of the eligible register.) The Fire Apparatus Operator register stays active for approximately two years. If, during that period, you would like to see if your rank has changed, you may call our Applicant Services department at 205.279.3500, select 1.

The various jurisdictions for which there are openings for Fire Apparatus Operator may wish to conduct background checks, criminal record checks, or further selection procedures to review candidates. After the eligible register has been released to these jurisdictions, you must contact them for further information about your status in the selection process. Please note that in some cases, a specific jurisdiction may require you to participate in additional interviews or other selection processes before hiring you.

Description of Rules Related to Testing

Electronic Devices are Prohibited: Electronic devices include cell phones, radios (including work radios), smart devices (e.g., watches, glasses), tablets, Bluetooth devices, MP3 players, e-readers, calculators, laptop computers, etc. ***Candidates bringing such devices will not be allowed to check-in and will be required to return such items to their vehicles.*** If a candidate misses his/her check-in time while returning an electronic device to their vehicle, he or she will not be permitted into the test. ***There are no exceptions to these rules.***

Grace Period: You should report to the Fire Apparatus Operator exam at your scheduled check-in time. There is a 15-minute grace period following each check-in time during which candidates will still be permitted to check-in to the examination. If you are not in the check-in area before

the grace period for your check-in time closes, you will not be permitted to take the exam. The grace period closes at precisely 15 minutes after the scheduled check-in time.

Make up Exams: No make-up examinations will be given. The sole exception to this rule will be for eligible candidates who are on active military duty on the day of the exam, in compliance with USERRA guidelines established by the federal government. Traffic emergencies, family emergencies, illness or other incidents, regardless of whether or not they are outside your control, do not constitute grounds for a make-up exam.

If you have any questions or concerns pertaining to participation in the promotional examination process, please contact Sarah Freed at Sarah.Freed@pbical.org or 205.279.3599.

Cheating: The Personnel Board has a strict “no cheating” rule. If you are caught cheating during any component of the examination, you will receive a zero and be immediately disqualified and escorted from the premises. In addition, you may be barred from taking any future merit system examinations (Rule 9.14). There are no exceptions to this rule.

Smoking/Vaping: Smoking/Vaping breaks will not be accommodated under any circumstances. Candidates found attempting to smoke/vape in restrooms will be disqualified from the examination.

Emergency Calls: If anyone needs to contact you while you are taking the examination, please have him/her contact the front desk of the Personnel Board at 205.279.3500, select 1. A message will be taken, and the information will be relayed to the test administrators who will then notify you. **Note: THIS IS FOR EMERGENCY CALLS ONLY.**

What to Bring / What Not to Bring

BRING a government issued PHOTO ID to the exam location. You will not be allowed to enter the exam location nor take the Fire Apparatus Operator exam without your PHOTO ID.

BRING a cooler with any food and/or beverages that you might need during the test period. Remember, you may be at the Personnel Board for **up to 5 ½ HOURS**. Access to food and beverages will be quite limited. If you anticipate wanting food or beverages (including coffee and water), please bring these items yourself.

DO NOT BRING any communication devices or electronic devices such as **cell phones, smart watches, smart glasses, tablets, radios (including work radios)**, Bluetooth devices, e-readers, mp3 players, calculators, laptop computers, etc. If you have these items with you at check-in, you will be required to return them to your vehicle as these items are NOT permitted on the testing floor. **The Personnel Board will not hold them for you, nor will we take responsibility for items lost or damaged.** If you miss your check-in time due to this, you will **not be allowed** to take the exam.

DO NOT BRING any outside reading materials to the examination, including magazines, newspapers, books, or study materials. Any personal reading materials brought to the test will be confiscated and discarded prior to entry to the check-in area. There are no exceptions to this rule.

How to Prepare for the Fire Apparatus Operator Examination

✓ *Come prepared.*

Bring all the materials you will need, such as your picture ID. **You must bring a government issued PHOTO ID** to the exam location. You will not be allowed to enter the exam location nor take the exam without your **PHOTO ID**. Being prepared will also help you focus on the task at hand. **Leave all electronic devices at home or in your vehicle. You will not be allowed to enter the testing facility if you have any electronic devices with you.** Please **DO NOT BRING** any cell phones, smart watches, tablets, radios, or other electronic communication devices. If you bring any such device with you, you will be asked to return the item to your vehicle before you can check in.

✓ *Remember the following when responding to the test exercises:*

1. Your responses will be evaluated by trained assessors against a defined set of performance standards.
2. More detail is better than less detail when making your responses.
3. The assessors will not “read into” what you are saying, so be explicit.
4. You should respond to all items that are presented.
5. Be sure to talk and/or write about what needs to be done and why.
6. You do not have to have actual experience as a Fire Apparatus Operator to successfully respond to the test exercises.

✓ *Have a positive attitude.*

Approach the test as you would approach a difficult task. It might be tough, but you can do it! A positive attitude goes a long way toward success. Remind yourself that you are well prepared and are going to do well.

✓ *Read the study materials thoroughly.*

This test has two guides that you should reference when preparing for this exam: The Fire Apparatus Operator Test Information Guide and the Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service Policies and Procedures Manual. This Test Information Guide has been provided to you to help you prepare as much as possible for the various components of the Fire Apparatus Operator exam. This guide will provide some insight into the testing process, what to expect on the test day, as well as the job duties, knowledge, skills and abilities that are important for the Fire Apparatus Operator position.

The Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service Policies and Procedures Manual will provide you with details about the fictitious Jefferson City along with several policies that candidates may need to reference while responding to scenarios during the testing process. The Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service Policies and Procedures Manual does not need to be memorized (it will be available to you on test day), but familiarity with the policies contained in the manual is essential for successful performance on the exam. Remember, **failure to follow Jefferson City**

policies and procedures outlined in the Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service Policies and Procedures Manual can adversely affect your exam performance.

✓ *Dress comfortably.*

Be sure to dress comfortably when you come to the exam. **You may be there for up to 5 ½ hours.** You will not be evaluated based on your appearance, although professional attire may help put you in the appropriate mindset for the exam.

✓ *Arrive early for your scheduled check-in time.*

Allow adequate time for parking at the test facility. Candidates who arrive late for their check-in time will not be permitted to take the test.

✓ *Make sure you have all necessary materials.*

Before the test begins, make sure you have everything you will need to successfully complete the examination process. Also, make sure you have all pages of the test instructions, so that you understand what to do.

✓ *Listen to and read all instructions.*

Listen to all instructions from the test administrators and **read all instructions** contained in the test. You want to make sure you are performing the tasks correctly. If you cannot hear or understand the instructions, ask one of the administrators to repeat the information.

✓ *Stay relaxed and confident.*

Do not let yourself become *anxious*. If you feel anxious before or during a test, take several slow, deep breaths to relax. Do not get worried or frustrated.

✓ *Focus your studying.*

You should spend time reviewing the Competencies Being Measured section of this guide and think about the parts of the test in which each dimension is measured. This will help you focus your studying and preparation, particularly during the week of the exam.

What to Expect During the Fire Apparatus Operator Examination Process

You will be given periodic opportunities to use the restroom throughout the exam. You should use these opportunities as necessary. Once the exam begins, you will not be permitted to use the restroom. During the examination and any waiting periods, candidates must seek permission from a Personnel Board staff member to leave their assigned room for any reason.

You will not be permitted to open your exam or preparation booklets until you are instructed to do so.

Candidates making any disturbances or caught cheating will be disqualified from the test.

You must not leave the rooms where you are taking the different components of the exam unless you are told that you may do so. Once the exam begins, you must remain in your room. There will be Test Administrators nearby at all times and they will be available to assist you if you have any problems or questions.

Test Administrators will **not** interpret or explain test questions for you; however, they can assist you with any problems, such as mechanical difficulties or equipment breakdowns or problems with your writing utensils.

There will be video cameras in the rooms in which you complete the structured interview. These video cameras will be used to record your verbal responses. Your recorded performance will be assessed at a later date by trained assessors. Additionally, the Personnel Board records ALL rooms in the Test Facility at all times during the examination for security purposes.

You should speak in a normal speaking voice when you are required to give spoken responses to questions. Please refrain from shouting or whispering. A normal conversational tone should be more than sufficient.

The actual test exercises will take approximately 1½ hour to complete. However, due to facility and staffing limitations, only a certain number of candidates will be able to go through the testing process at any one time. Therefore, you may have a lengthy wait BEFORE you begin the test. Also, because of the procedures regarding public safety exams, you may be required to wait AFTER you complete the test until the final check-in time has passed. Please be patient and understand that there will be NO EXCEPTIONS to the procedures set by the Personnel Board for the administration of this examination. You will NOT be allowed to leave the test site once you check-in for the test. This includes leaving to feed a parking meter, purchase food, or make phone calls.

REMEMBER: The Jefferson City Fire and Rescue Service Policies and Procedures Manual is also available at exams.pbjcal.org/ExamGuides for you to download and review prior to the examination.

Contact Information

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this material or the examination process, please contact any of the individuals listed below.

Caroline Swiney
Assessment & Development Specialist
Email: Caroline.Swiney@pbjcal.org
Phone: 205.279.3458

Lauren Peters
Senior Assessment Development Specialist
Email: Lauren.Peters@pbjcal.org
Phone: 205.279.3619

Sarah Freed
Test Administration & Assessment Coordinator
Email: Sarah.Freed@pbjcal.org
Phone: 205.279.3599

ADA Accommodations

If you would like to request special testing accommodations or have any questions concerning the test site or testing conditions, please contact Allysa Singer at 205.279.3603 or at Allysa.Singer@pbjcal.org.