

Civil Service Commission | Entry Level Fire Fighter Examination Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1) When will the Civil Service Commission (CSC) issue the entry-level Fire Fighter announcement?

The Fire Fighter announcement will be posted on July 1, 2018 and will be open through August 31, 2018.

2) When will the Fire Fighter exam be administered?

The written exam is projected to be administered in the Fall of 2018. The pass/fail physical performance exam will be administered at the time of certification beginning in the Spring of 2019. The CSC website will be updated as more specific information becomes available.

3) Where can I find the announcement and application for the entry-level Fire Fighter exam?

The announcement and online application will be available on the CSC website on July 1, 2018.

4) What does it cost to apply for the entry-level Fire Fighter exam?

The application fee for the Fire Fighter announcement is \$35. For more information about application fees and exemptions, please visit the CSC website.

5) Why does it cost \$35 to apply for the entry-level Fire Fighter exam?

The application fee helps to offset the cost of the Fire Fighter exam.

6) What happens to the lists of eligible candidates from the previous entry-level Fire Fighter exam when the new lists from the current exam are released?

When the new lists are released, the old lists expire and will no longer be used.

7) Will candidates who passed the previous entry-level Fire Fighter exam be able to carry over their scores to the current exam?

No. If you want to be on the new list(s), then you must apply for the new exam before the closing date, and then take and pass the new exam when it is scheduled.

8) What is my Applicant ID number?

In accordance with NJSA 11A:4-1, all job applicants are requested to provide their Social Security Number (SSN) on applications to establish a unique means of identifying all their records throughout the selection and appointment processes. Providing your SSN is voluntary. If you do not provide your SSN, then another unique identification number will be assigned to you, and that number will appear on all subsequent records related to this exam.

9) How can I get veterans preference?

You will need to meet the veteran's preference requirements of the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NJDMVA) to claim veteran's preference for any examination. If you meet those requirements, then you will want to claim veteran's preference on the application form, and submit the required proof to be awarded the preference for the Fire Fighter exam. Please visit the CSC website for more information regarding veteran's preference.

Completed Civil Service Veterans Preference Claim Forms, along with the required documentation, must be submitted directly to the NJDMVA. You may visit NJDMVA's web site or contact them at 1-888-865-8387 to obtain a Civil Service Veterans Preference Claim Form or for more information.

You don't have to wait for an exam to be announced to file for veteran's preference. We encourage you to do it as soon as possible to ensure that your paperwork is processed on time for this exam. Preference must be established no later than eight (8) days prior to list issuance, and once established, is good for life.

10) Once I take the written exam, may I review it?

To protect the security of this examination, there will be no review of any exam material.

11) Will I be allowed to take a written make-up exam?

Make-up exams are provided in very limited cases. To receive a make-up exam, the criteria set forth in NJAC 4A:4-2.9(c) must be met. If a make-up exam is granted, you may be bypassed on the current certification, but may be included on a future certification. **MAKE-UP REQUESTS, WITH SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING WITHIN FIVE DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THE TEST NOTICE.** However, in situations involving an illness, death, or natural disaster that occurs on or immediately before the test date, a request for make-up must be made in writing no later than five days after the test date. All make-up requests based on medical grounds must include a New Jersey Civil Service Commission Medical Authorization Form for Make-up Examinations. This form can also be obtained by contacting the CSC's Information Center at (609) 292-4144.

12) If I pass the written exam, will you tell me my rank on the list?

The eligibility notice you will receive will include your final average, veteran status and rank on the list for each jurisdiction for which you are eligible.

13) What is an Eligible List?

Candidates who pass the written examination are placed on eligible lists based on test scores, veteran status, volunteer points, and residency. Eligible lists may last between two and four years.

14) When will I be scheduled for the physical performance test (PPT)?

The physical performance component of the examination process will be administered on a pass/fail basis at the time of list certification. For more information on the physical performance scheduling and testing process, see the Fire Fighter Post Written Exam Timeline Information Sheet.

15) What do I need to do to prepare for the PPT?

You can review the Fire Fighter Physical Performance Test (PPT) Physical Fitness Manual and Introductory Video. Also, condition yourself aerobically and anaerobically so that you are in adequate physical shape to pass each of the PPT components. If your rank is reachable on an eligible list and job openings exist, you may receive a Certification Notice asking if you are still interested in the job. After you respond to a Certification Notice that you are interested, you will receive an email from PPTschedule@csc.nj.gov that will have the Fire Fighter PPT Medical Clearance Form attached. You **MUST** have this form completed and signed by a medical doctor and present it upon arrival at the PPT test site on the day you are scheduled to take the PPT. If you **FAIL** to bring your completed and signed medical clearance form to your scheduled PPT test site, you **WILL NOT BE TESTED**, and you may be removed from future consideration on **ALL** lists.

If your name is certified and you respond as interested, you will be scheduled to take the PPT exam via **the email address that you used to apply for the exam**. Once you are scheduled to take the PPT, you must appear on your scheduled test date and time, with all required materials, and be ready to be tested. Otherwise you will be removed from all Fire Fighter eligible lists. You must check your spam folder and/or add the email address PPTschedule@csc.nj.gov to your safe-sender list.

16) Will I be allowed to take a PPT make-up exam?

Make-up exams are provided in very limited cases. To receive a make-up exam, the criteria set forth in NJAC 4A:4-2.9(c) must be met. If a make-up exam is granted, you may be bypassed on the current certification, but may be included on a future certification. If the make-up is related to an injury or health-related reason, and your Medical Clearance Form was completed and signed prior to the onset of the injury/illness, you **MUST** bring a newly completed and signed Medical Clearance Form to your rescheduled test date.

17) What is a certification?

A certification is a list of names that the CSC provides to an Appointing Authority (AA) for a specific jurisdiction to use for their hiring process.

18) Who does the actual hiring?

Each jurisdiction has its own AA for the selection process. The CSC reviews the AA's documentation for each certification to ensure compliance with related rules and regulations. The CSC is not the AA for entry-level Fire Fighter positions.

19) Does being certified mean I'll be interviewed or appointed?

No. It means that you may be scheduled to take the physical performance portion of the examination (PPT), which will be a pass/fail test. If you pass the PPT, the AA may request that you agree to a background investigation, potentially including but not limited to: medical screening, psychiatric testing, drug screening, etc. Dependent upon the number of vacancies, and the results of the PPT tests and background investigations, you MAY be interviewed and/or considered for appointment.

20) What about tied scores?

We do not break tied scores. Candidates who have the same final average and veteran's status have equal ranking on a certification. For example, if there are 20 people on the certification with the same final average and they're all non-veterans, they will be listed in alphabetical order by their last names, but they all have the same rank on that certification. If one of them is reachable for an appointment, all are reachable, and the AA may hire any one of them.

21) Do veterans get preference?

Yes. Eligible candidates awarded disabled veteran status or veteran status under New Jersey law are grouped at the top of the employment list by their veteran status and then by their final averages. Disabled veterans are placed above veterans who, in turn, are placed ahead of non-veterans.

22) Do children of Fire Fighters killed in the line of duty get preference?

Yes. *N.J.S.A. 40A:14-10.1(a)* grants hiring preference to children of paid Fire Fighters killed in the line of duty. The law gives them preference over non-veterans, but not over veterans. Applicants claiming this preference will be required to provide documentation which includes (1) parent's name, (2) date of death, (3) address of parent's Fire Department at the time of death, (4) a letter from the Fire Department confirming the parent was killed in the line of duty, and (5) proof of relationship to the Fire Fighter.

Please include your confirmation number on all documentation which can be:

- Uploaded/attached to the online application
- Scanned and emailed to FireFighter@csc.nj.gov
- Faxed to (609) 777-0937
- Mailed to NJCSC, M9999W, P.O. Box 321, Trenton, NJ 08625-0321

23) Do volunteer Fire Fighters receive extra points?

Yes. The Appellate Division of the New Jersey Superior Court made a determination on December 19, 2002, that interprets the preference provided by State Law *N.J.S.A. 40A:14-45* to volunteer Fire Fighters in civil service jurisdictions. The law provides that volunteer Fire Fighters with at least two years of volunteer service are eligible for 3 to 10 points of service credits (points) to be added to their passing score on the exam. Volunteers with two years of continuous service will get three service credit points. Another point will be added for each additional full year of continuous service, up to the maximum of 10 points. Only continuous volunteer service time earned up to the announcement closing date will receive credit. In addition, time served as a junior volunteer does not count toward the volunteer service credit. Only when volunteers reach the age of 18 can their volunteer service time count toward the volunteer service credit.

The service credit is calculated as of the Closing Date for filing applications for the examination announcement. There will be one list for each jurisdiction which will include both volunteers and non-volunteers. Volunteer points are ONLY awarded for volunteer service in fire departments or districts that have BOTH paid and volunteer Fire Fighters. For example, if you volunteer in Newark or Jersey City or any other strictly paid fire department, you will NOT receive any volunteer points. Volunteer departments and districts are clearly noted on the Fire Fighter Announcement Fact Sheet by * or **.

24) How do I show that I'm a volunteer Fire Fighter?

To be awarded volunteer service credit points, you must complete the volunteer Fire Fighter section on the online application. You will have to indicate the fire district or part-paid municipal fire department where you currently volunteer. If you volunteer at more than one district or department, send this information to FireFighter@csc.nj.gov. Information regarding all volunteer service will be verified with the Fire Chief/Appointing Authority of your district/department. If the Fire Chief/Appointing Authority determines that you did not meet the criteria for volunteer service credit, then you cannot receive credit for any previous years of volunteer service because it would not be continuous service.

25) Can you show an example of how Volunteer Points and Residency Preference works?

- Ewing Township is a civil service jurisdiction and has three volunteer fire districts (FD1, FD2 and FD3). Ewing has residential preferences;
- The City of Trenton is a civil service jurisdiction but is not a volunteer department. Trenton has residential preference;
- Princeton has a volunteer fire department, but is not a civil service jurisdiction;
- Ewing Township, Trenton and Princeton are all in Mercer County.

Example 1:

- John lives in Ewing Township and has been a volunteer at FD1 for two years. His final average on the Fire Fighter test was 90.000;
- John will appear on the Ewing Township FD1 list with a score of 93.000, because he was awarded 3 points for two years of volunteer service;
- He will also appear on the lists for Ewing Township FD2 and FD3 with a score of 90.000. He has not been given volunteer points with FD2 or FD3 because his volunteer service was not with those districts;
- He will not appear on Trenton's list because of Trenton's residential preference. However, if Trenton exhausts their municipal list, they may ask for a county-wide list, at which time John will be eligible for appointment in Trenton. He will be grouped with all non-Trenton, Mercer County residents and ranked according to veterans' preference and his test score of 90.000;
- He will also appear on the list for Burlington City with a score of 90.000. Because Burlington City has not residency requirements, every Fire Fighter candidate in the State who passed the test will appear on the Burlington City list.

Example 2:

- Bonnie lives in Trenton and has never been a volunteer. Her final average on the Fire Fighter test was 92.000. As a non-volunteer, her score will be 92.000 on any list for which she is eligible;
- Bonnie will not appear on any of the lists for Ewing. However, if Ewing FD2 exhausts their municipal list, they may ask for a county-wide list, at which time Bonnie will be eligible for appointment in Ewing. She will be grouped with all non-Ewing, Mercer County residents and ranked according to veterans' preference and her test score;
- Bonnie will appear on the list for Trenton.

Example 3:

- Mike lives in Princeton and has been a volunteer in Princeton for 12 years. His final average on the Fire Fighter test was 76.000. As a volunteer for a non-civil service jurisdiction, Mike will not be awarded volunteer points on any lists;
- Mike will not initially appear on any list;
- If any of the Ewing fire districts or the City of Trenton exhaust their municipal lists and ask for a Mercer County list, Mike will then become eligible for appointment, based upon his veteran's preference and his score of 76.000.

26) How do I notify the CSC about a change in my name, mailing address or email address?

You must immediately notify the CSC in writing if you change your name, mailing address or email address or if it is listed incorrectly on a notice that you receive from us. To ensure that your records are updated correctly, please include the following in your request for change:

1. Your name;
2. Your social security number or, if you have been assigned a unique number for the examination process, include that number;
3. Your new mailing address, including zip code;
4. Where you actually live, if it is different from your mailing address;
5. Your daytime telephone number;
6. Your email address; and
7. The effective date of the change.

This information may be mailed or faxed as follows:

NJCSC Information Center
PO Box 310
Trenton, NJ 08625-0310
Fax: (609) 984-1064

For security reasons, changes cannot be made through telephone calls.

27) Does changing my address after the closing date affect my eligibility for appointment?

Since eligibility needs to be established as of the closing date of the announcement, your residency code cannot be changed after the closing date, even if you change your residence address or mailing address. If you change your residence to another jurisdiction after the closing date, you may not be eligible for appointment in your former or new jurisdiction. Please research with both jurisdictions to see how their residency requirements will affect you before you change your residence address or mailing address.