

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Candidate Physical Ability Test**

#### **Do I have to take the CPAT in order to get a job as a firefighter?**

It is not mandatory that you take and pass CPAT to be hired, but it is highly advisable. While there are departments that do not require CPAT, a large majority accept FCTC's Card of Completion as proof of physical ability. In most of them, CPAT certification is required as part of the application process.

#### **Do I have to take CPAT from FCTC to get a job?**

FCTC is the exclusive statewide provider of CPAT in California. While departments will accept certification from other states, FCTC is the recognized standard in California and many departments use it exclusively.

#### **Does FCTC accept CPAT results from other organizations?**

If you wish to get on the FCTC hiring list, you must take CPAT through FCTC.

#### **How do I sign up for the test?**

Candidates interested in taking the CPAT may sign up for the test [HERE](#). You can schedule your test date and one or both of your orientation days, as well as practice tests.

#### **How much does the test cost?**

CPAT through FCTC costs \$150. The fee covers the test itself and two orientation sessions. Candidates also have the opportunity to sign up for additional timed practice tests, at a cost of \$25 per practice test.

#### **What if I can't afford the cost?**

Candidates that can demonstrate financial hardship may qualify for scholarships covering the cost of the test through the California Fire Foundation. Details [HERE](#).

#### **What happens at the orientation sessions?**

Candidates who sign up to take the CPAT must have the option to participate in two orientation sessions, which will acquaint them with how the test is run, the eight test events and what specifically constitutes success or failure. Orientation is not a practice test, but candidates will have hands-on time with the testing equipment.

**Do I have to attend orientation in order to take the test?**

Attending orientation is not required but it is strongly encouraged. Candidates who participate in orientation have a significantly higher chance of passing than those that don't. If you do not participate in orientation, you will be required to sign a waiver form when you check in on test day.

**What's the difference between orientation and a practice test?**

Orientation is an instructional session to allow candidates to learn about the test and the events. A practice test is a timed simulation of the actual test, giving candidates a chance to experience the test as they will on their test day.

**If I pass the practice test, can I use that as my test result?**

Practice tests are just that – practice. You still must show up and pass the test on your scheduled testing day.

**Can I drop in to FCTC centers any time to take a practice test or work with the equipment?**

No. FCTC Testing Centers are only open on designated testing, orientation and practice days. Candidates must schedule events in advance.

**What if I can't make my scheduled test day?**

You can reschedule your test without penalty online up to two business days before your test date. Changes less than two business days before a scheduled event will be subject to a \$50 processing fee. FCTC does not accept reschedule requests on the date of the event.

**What if I don't show up to take my test?**

If you don't show up on your scheduled test day, your fee is forfeited. If you want to schedule another test, you will have to pay the full fee again – you will not get credit for the forfeited fee.

**Can I get a refund if I decide not to take the test?**

No. All FCTC fees are non-refundable.

**How do I get the results?**

Candidates who pass the CPAT receive the FCTC Card of Completion, which can be used in most departments around California as evidence of physical ability.

**Does the test fee cover taking the test again if I fail?**

No. Candidates must pay each time they take the CPAT.

**How often can I retake the test?**

Candidates may retake CPAT as often as they like.