

Firefighter Candidate Testing Center

Frequently Asked Questions Candidate Physical Ability Test

Do I have to take the Cal-JAC CPAT in order to get a job as a firefighter?

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

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

FCTC is the exclusive statewide provider of the CPAT in California. While some departments will accept certification from other states, FCTC's Cal-JAC CPAT 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 Statewide Eligibility List, you must take the CPAT through FCTC.

How do I sign up for the test?

Candidates interested in taking the CPAT may sign up for the test by registering at www.fctconline.org. 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?

Cal-JAC CPAT through FCTC costs \$150. The fee covers the test itself and two orientation sessions. Candidates also have the opportunity to sign up for 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 grants covering the cost of the Cal-JAC CPAT and practice sessions through the **California Fire Foundation**. For details and application, please [click here](#).

Am I required to take Orientation and Practice sessions?

Yes. All candidates are required to participate in (2) orientation sessions and (2) practices. Candidates who fail to do so will be required to sign a waiver on their testing day acknowledging their decision to not participate in this pre-test requirement. Cal-JAC CPAT orientations and practices significantly improve the ability of all candidates to complete the CPAT within the cut off time of 10 minutes and 20 seconds.

Are there fees associated with the Orientation and Practice sessions?

Yes. (2) Orientation sessions are included in the cost of the Cal-JAC CPAT. There is a charge of \$25 for each practice session taken.

What happens at the Orientation sessions?

Orientation is an instructional session to allow candidates to learn about the test and the events. Cal-JAC CPAT proctors guide candidates through all (8) CPAT tasks where they receive hands on experience with the test apparatus associated with each task. Proctors will advise all candidates concerning specific conditioning regimens and techniques to help each candidate prepare for the test.

What happens at the Practice sessions?

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. Following the practice session, Cal-JAC CPAT proctors help the candidates understand the test elements and how they can improve their performance and conditioning.

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 locations at any time to take a practice test or work with the equipment?

No. FCTC locations 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 will receive the FCTC Card of Completion at the conclusion of their test.

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

No. Candidates must pay each time they take the Cal-JAC CPAT.

How often can I retake the test?

Candidates may retake the Cal-JAC CPAT as often as they like.