

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

The FCTC Written Test

FCTC strives to ensure that all candidates have the information and resources needed to land the job. The FAQs below are based on common candidate questions and have been divided into categories to help you navigate through all the information on this page.

If you can't find an answer to your question, please contact the FCTC team directly:

Email: FCTC@cpf.org

Phone: (877) 648-2728

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Registering for the FCTC Written Test:

How do I register for the FCTC Written Test?

All candidates must first create a profile through FCTCOnline.org and complete all requirements. [CLICK HERE](#) and follow the prompts to create your FCTC profile.

How much does the FCTC Written Test cost?

There is a \$50 fee for each test.

Can I choose my testing date, time, and/or location?

Yes. You may choose any testing date, time, and location that is currently open for registration at FCTCOnline.org. You can schedule a new event from your FCTC dashboard. [CLICK HERE](#) to view all currently available FCTC Written Test events.

Can I change my test date after registering?

Yes. In your FCTC profile, you can either reschedule your test OR place it into pending status. A \$10.00 fee will be assessed if you reschedule less than two (2) business days prior to your scheduled event. Your testing fee will be forfeited if you fail to reschedule, if you do not attend your scheduled event, or if you reschedule but do not take the test within twelve (12) months of your original payment date.

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

No. All FCTC fees are non-refundable.

How often can I take the FCTC Written Test?

You can take the FCTC Written Test as many times as you like, but cannot take the test more than once in a 30-day period. Only your most recent test score will be considered by FCTC and/or hiring fire agencies.

Does FCTC offer accommodations?

Yes. [CLICK HERE](#) to access the Accommodations Application. If your application is approved, you will receive an email from FCTC@cpf.org with instructions on how to schedule a test.

What if I cannot afford the testing fee?

If you demonstrate financial hardship, then you may be eligible for financial aid from the [California Fire Foundation](#), which covers all fees associated with both the FCTC Written Test and the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT). [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about the grant program and to access the application.

Test Format and Sections:

How long is the FCTC Written Test?

The FCTC Written Test takes two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes to complete. You will be given a ten (10) minute and a two (2) minute warning before the test time expires.

What is the FCTC Written Test like?

The FCTC Written Test consists of 100 multiple choice questions and each question is weighted equally. No previous firefighting experience is necessary to pass or even excel on the test.

What abilities are tested on the FCTC Written Test?

Each section of the FCTC Written Test measures your proficiency in cognitive skills that will be crucial to your success as an entry-level firefighter and evaluates your ability to perform the following four (4) types of tasks:

1. Recall and Comprehend Technical Information from Written Materials (35 questions)
2. Recall and Comprehend Verbal and Visual Information (20 questions)
3. Apply Mechanical Reasoning Concepts (25 questions)
4. Solve Mathematical Problems (20 questions)

In what order will I encounter the different FCTC Written Test sections?

At the beginning of the test, you will read an essay packet for thirty (30) minutes. After those thirty (30) minutes have expired, all essay packets are collected by FCTC staff. You will answer questions about these pre-test essays after the video component of the test.

Candidates then watch two (2) short video scenarios and answer questions about the scenes presented immediately after each video is played. Pencils must remain down while the video scenarios are playing.

Candidates are then instructed to open their test booklets and begin answering the remaining eighty (80) questions, which cover the pre-test essays and additional essays found in the test booklet, as well as mechanical reasoning and math concepts.

Preparing for the FCTC Written Test:

How can I prepare for the FCTC Written Test?

FCTC Written Test Study Guide: FCTC provides a 25-page study guide that explains what to expect on the test and why each section of the test is important for a career in the fire service, as well as sample test questions and answers.

This study guide is free of charge for all candidates. [CLICK HERE](#) to view and/or download the FCTC Written Test Study Guide.

FCTC Written Test Prep Class: FCTC provides an instructor-led, 2-hour preparatory class for \$25. In this class, an FCTC instructor will guide you through every component of the test, walk you through the process of answering each type of question, provide effective testing strategies, and answer your specific questions.

Taking the FCTC Written Test:

Can I take the FCTC Written Test virtually?

No. The FCTC Written Test is only administered at the physical locations listed at FCTCOnline.org. To view all currently available FCTC Written Test events and locations, [CLICK HERE](#).

What kind of identification do I need to take to the FCTC Written Test?

You must bring at least one (1) form of valid government-issued identification to the testing facility, such as a driver's license, state identification card, or U.S. Passport.

What am I allowed to have with me during the FCTC Written Test?

You are only allowed to bring two items into the test: your government-issued identification and your keys. No other personal items are allowed in the testing room, including, but not limited to, recording-capable eyewear, phones, watches, hats, backpacks, purses, wallets, liquids (including water), food, writing instruments, and/or scratch paper. If you have special circumstances, please contact FCTC before test day or inform an FCTC staff person at the testing site. FCTC staff will inform you of whether an exception can be made.

Are any electronic devices permitted in the testing room?

No electronic items of any kind are allowed in the testing room.

What behaviors are prohibited in the testing room?

When taking the FCTC Written Test, you are prohibited from distracting other test takers, cheating or looking at other candidates' testing materials, writing any notes on your optical scan form, taking notes during the video section of the test, opening your test booklet during the pre-test essay or video sections of the test and/or before the FCTC Written Test Administrator instructs you to do so, otherwise disobeying FCTC staff instructions or disrupting the testing environment.

What is the penalty for bringing prohibited items or exhibiting prohibited behavior during the FCTC Written Test?

You will be dismissed from the test, will not receive a score, and will not receive a refund if you fail to adhere to FCTC rules and/or instructions given by FCTC staff.

FCTC Written Test Scores:

What is a passing score on the FCTC Written Test?

The passing score on the FCTC Written Test is 70%. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about FCTC Written Test format and sections.

When and how will I receive my FCTC Written Test Score?

Your score will be posted in your FCTC profile and made available to hiring fire agencies within five (5) business days of your test date, and usually much sooner. For any fire agency requesting the FCTC Statewide Eligibility List (SEL), your score will be counted as if it was received the day of your test. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about the SEL.

What fire agencies can receive my test score?

Currently, over 170 California fire agencies use FCTC Written Test scores in their hiring process. [CLICK HERE](#) for a full list of participating agencies.

Does FCTC share my FCTC Written Test Score with anyone else?

No. Your test score will only be seen by FCTC staff and/or authorized personnel from hiring fire agencies.

When will my FCTC Written Test Score expire?

Your score is valid for one (1) year after your exam date. If you choose to take the test again before your score expires, only your most recent test score will be considered by FCTC and/or hiring fire agencies.