



THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

# COMMISSION COMMENTS

Volume 18, Issue 1  
First Quarter, 2019

## New Location for Police & Fire Tests

**So long Piedmont...** Your Police and Fire Uniformed Testing Team has moved! For the last fifteen years, to become a Columbus Police Officer, a Columbus Firefighter, or get a promotion, candidates have taken a variety of tests at our 750 Piedmont Road location. Literally, thousands of candidates have pursued their dream at this location. We will miss that space, but we will continue to help candidates pursue their dreams at a new location.

The Uniformed Test Center is now located at **1111 East Broad Street** (The Jerry Hammond Building) on the second floor. This building houses many other City of Columbus Departments as well, so you may already know the location or have visited.

The Non-Uniformed testing team that helps candidates become our city's Recreation Leaders, Property Maintenance Inspectors, Automotive Mechanics, Office Assistants, 911 Emergency Call Takers, and many other great positions, will remain at **77 North Front Street**.

Make sure you carefully review your test notice for the location of your examination so you don't miss out on an opportunity! The City of Columbus has opportunities every day to pursue a dream job. Are you in your dream job? If not, take a look at what is available with ColumbUS at [www.columbus.gov/civilservice](http://www.columbus.gov/civilservice) Good luck!

### Inside this issue:

What Does Your Score Mean?	2
Pay Attention Where You Click	3
Notice Board	3
Meet the Staff	4
Where Is It?	4

## You Are A Unique Candidate

### ...and Your GovernmentJobs.com Profile Should Be Too!

Applying for a City job is easy – simply register online, or login to your established account, and fill out an application. Your work history, education, and other qualifications are saved to your profile when you apply, making it quick and easy to submit applications. This information should always be unique to YOU: it is your profile, and should not be shared with anyone else!

When candidates allow family members or friends to login and submit applications under their profile, it overrides existing contact information for already submitted applications. While we understand that some families share email accounts, each applicant must register under his or her own unique email address. This also helps us validate that the correct person is added



to an eligible list, or that the right candidate is selected for an interview.

If someone you know is having difficulty navigating the online application process, do not "help" them by allowing them access to your online profile. Instead, give the Applicant and Employee Services line a call at (614) 645-8369. We are here to help! We also have a Self-Serve Job Center on the first floor at 77 N. Front Street, and staff available to come assist you in person.

Having technical difficulties? Can't remember your password? Try calling the GovernmentJobs.com Customer Care Line at (855) 524-5627.

**Remember, your GovernmentJobs.com account should be yours and yours alone— do NOT share email addresses!**

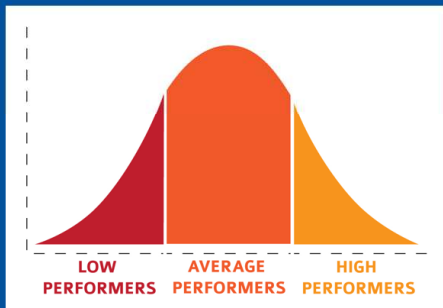


KEEP  
CALM  
we're  
MOVING  
OFFICE

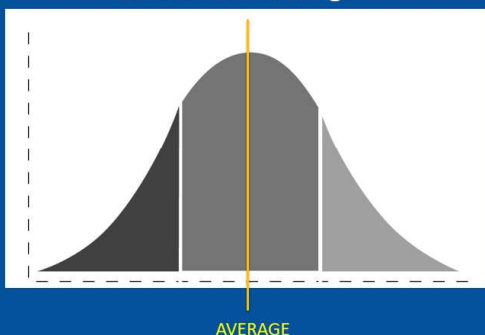
## What Does My Score Mean?

*A simplified explanation of how we determine your final score on an exam*

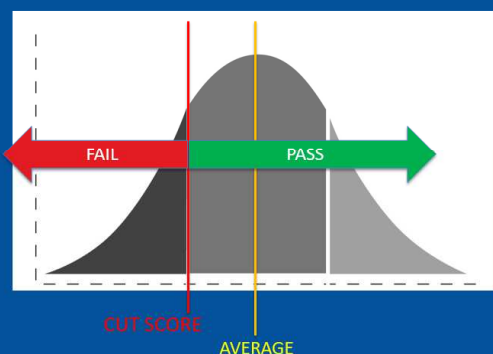
Most Civil Service examinations are graded on a curve. Your final score depends on how you compare to everyone else.



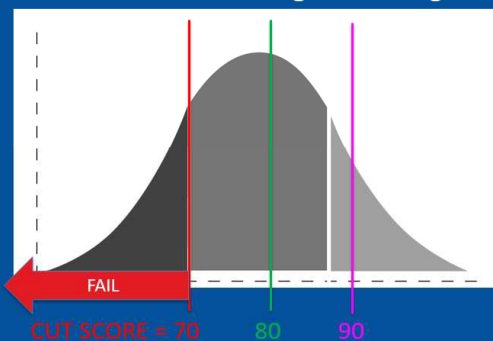
We find the average



We determine the cut off score.



This results in bands looking something like this:



If you have taken some of our tests, you may have noticed that each test has a different number of questions, but somehow your final passing score is designated as being in a score band labeled 70, 80, or 90.

This is because the Civil Service Commission uses a statistical process called "z-scoring" to grade exams. If you ask Google, the first result defines a z-score as "the number of standard deviations from the mean a data point is. But more technically it's a measure of how many standard deviations below or above the population mean a raw score is. A z-score is also known as a standard score and it can be placed on a normal distribution curve."

Your eyes may have glazed over with this definition. This is an advanced statistical process that can be difficult to explain. To the left, we have made an attempt to graphically show how we use it. We recognize it does not cover the entire process.

The bottom line about what this means to you, the test-taker, is that **your final score is determined by how well you did compared to everyone else who took the same test.**

The first graph represents a typical group of scores. A few people score very high or very low, with the majority in the average section.

The second graph shows that we find the average (mean) score. This average score is important because it helps us determine where to set the cut off score, as depicted in the third graph.

The third graph demonstrates how the cut score is placed below the average (using standard deviation). Everyone below the cut score fails and everyone above the cut score passes. Roughly, this means 60-80% of test-takers will pass.

The fourth graph portrays the banding process. The cut score becomes a final score of 70. Candidates receiving a final score of 70-79 are placed in the 70 band, 80-89 are placed in the 80 band, and 90 and above are placed in the 90 band. Some candidates think that when they receive a final score of say, 82, that it means they got 82% of the questions correct on the exam. That is not what this number means. A score of 82 on a Civil Service exam means that they did better than average on the test when compared to everyone else who took the test.

You can see there is a small number of people in the 90 band. These folks are the ones who scored notably higher than most others. We write each test based upon the knowledge, skills, and abilities the incumbents and supervisors of a specific type of job tell us is needed. The candidates who score the best on the test (the 90 band) have demonstrated that they have the best match of qualities we need. Thus, the 90 band is considered first when it is time to hire for a specific position. If you have further questions, we encourage you to inquire with the Test Center.

## Pay Attention to Where You Click

Applying for jobs online has made the job search process much easier. However, a convenient process does not mean you should rush through applying for a job or exam. An application is a legal document that will go in your personnel file if you are hired by the City of Columbus. When you apply, read each screen carefully, respond to the questions and go back and review your responses before you click submit.



Other applications ask supplemental questions about education and experience to determine if applicants meet the minimum qualifications. Applications for government agencies in Ohio are public records, so you should be careful in answering these questions. Answering "No" to one of these questions by mistake will lead to the rejection of your application and you won't be scheduled for the exam.

When you apply, be sure to scroll back and check the entire application before you turn it in. If possible, set up your profile on our website by using a desktop or laptop computer rather than a mobile phone. If you don't have one, we have desktops available for your use at 77 North Front in the Job Center. Public computers are also available at local library branches.

For example, we took applications for Firefighter in January. This application included supplemental questions designed to screen background requirements. It involved answering questions like "Have you been convicted of Domestic Violence in the last 10 years?" Over 20 people clicked on "Yes" for this question when they should have said "No." Another question was "Have you used or purchased marijuana in past 12 months?" At least 15 people selected "Yes" to this question when they have not used drugs.

There is a review process to correct entry mistakes such as this, but you can avoid the delay and hassle by taking a little extra time to review your answers before clicking "submit." An application is the first impression you make with us or any organization where you want to work—make sure it is a good one by not rushing.

Log on to [columbus.gov/civilservice](http://columbus.gov/civilservice) to check job openings and to apply.

## NOTICE BOARD

**We will be  
accepting  
applications for  
Police Officer  
during the month  
of July**

**NEXT TESTING  
CLINIC:**  
*Wednesday,  
May 22nd, 6:30 pm*  
**Sign up on our website**

**Keep yourself  
updated with  
the latest news  
from Civil  
Service**

Go to  
[www.columbus.gov/mycbus](http://www.columbus.gov/mycbus)  
Sign up for monthly email  
alerts direct to your inbox

**REMINDER:**  
The testing door is  
locked at the time  
listed on your notice.  
Bargaining and/or  
yelling at staff does not  
change the time on the  
clock if you arrived late.

**CITY JOB  
FAIR**  
**POSTPONED**



**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

**Main Office and Test Center**

77 North Front Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-1895  
614-645-8300  
CivilService@columbus.gov  
TestCenter@columbus.gov  
Fax: 614-645-8379

**Uniformed Test Center**

1111 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43205  
614-645-0848  
PoliceFireTesting@columbus.gov

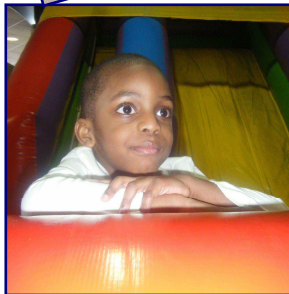
[columbus.gov/civilservice](http://columbus.gov/civilservice)  
[cscfeedback@columbus.gov](mailto:cscfeedback@columbus.gov)

*Commission Comments brought to you  
courtesy of:*

Andrew J. Ginther, Mayor  
Grady L. Pettigrew, Jr., President  
Delena Edwards, Member  
Stefanie Coe, Member  
C. Amy DeLong, Executive Director

*Articles and information contributed by:*

Brenda Sobieck, Editor  
Cat Emhuff, Assistant Editor  
Beth Bailey  
Sheri Goodwin  
Laura Hausman



## Meet the Staff: Melissa Michel-Thomas

Many of you have been helped with an application by the ever stylish Melissa Michel-Thomas, one of Civil Service's two Office Assistant II's in the Applicant and Employee Services (AES) section. After transferring to our department from Recreation and Parks over a year and a half ago, Melissa has taken on a number of different duties around the AES suite. Need help filing an application? Melissa is ready to answer your call! Need assistance navigating NEOGOV? Melissa is an excellent resource for our HR staff when it comes to navigating the MQ Review process! When asked what she likes best about her job, Melissa says, "That's a tough question...I love everything about my job, but the one task that brings me joy is helping people complete the process of becoming City of Columbus employees."

Melissa grew up on "the beautiful island of St. Lucia (Saint Lucia Helen of the West)," where she says Christmas is one of the best times of the year: spending time with family, baking fruit cake, deep cleaning the entire house (inside AND outside!), and preparing the Christmas ham – "the smell circulates in the whole neighborhood because everyone is boiling ham!"

She attended Entrepot Secondary School before moving to New York City to attend Manhattan Community College where she earned her associate's degree. She now lives in Columbus with her husband of 10 years, Wilson, and her 9 year old son, Tevin. She's also earned her Bachelor's degree at Franklin University, and prefers to spend her free time watching Lifetime movies and investigation shows, travelling, cleaning, organizing, and decorating. Fun fact: Melissa also speaks patois.

## WHERE IS IT?

See if you recognize the location in our title banner on the first page and email your guess to [BSobieck1@columbus.gov](mailto:BSobieck1@columbus.gov)

We will print the answer and the names of the first five correct entries in our next issue

### LAST QUARTER'S ANSWER:

Dorrian Green (new park near COSI)

### Last Quarter's First Five:

Michael Wood, *Technology*  
Lori LeClair, *Technology*  
Whitney Mannon, *Recreation & Parks*  
Jacqueline Kelley, *Public Utilities*  
Edith Thornburg, *Health*

## Police & Fire Testing Updates

**Are you interested in becoming a Police Officer or Firefighter?** Information about the testing and hiring process can be found on our website at [columbus.gov/civilservice](http://columbus.gov/civilservice). Go to the *Police Exams* and *Fire Exams* links at the bottom of the home page to find a list of documents and videos to help prepare for the exam.

**If you are on the eligible list right now**, our website has some new information about that as well. Under the appropriate exam, find the section labeled "QUESTIONS?" go to "YOUR STATUS ON THE CURRENT ELIGIBLE LIST" to find a summary of what band the Background Investigators are currently processing. As of the publish date of this newsletter, only Police is available; however, Fire will be accessible soon. This will be updated regularly to provide current information for candidates.

**If you would like to learn more** about the jobs of police officer or firefighter including salary and benefits information and development opportunities, you can go to the Division of Fire and Division of Police from our site. Go to the left side of the page and click on *Public Safety*. From there you can choose *Fire > Employment* or *Police > Recruitment* for more information.