

COMMISSION COMMENTS

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Every Day is Veterans Day

As a country, we come together once a year to honor our veterans on November 11th.

However, the City of Columbus and its people are grateful for your service 365 days a year. The Commission offers veteran's preference to help military veterans return to the workplace. If you are an eligible veteran, you may qualify to receive veteran's preference points. If you meet our requirements, we will add five points to your score, giving you an increased chance of being hired by the City.



the test before we can grant you the additional preference points.

- Disabled veterans can submit proof of their disability and receive an additional five preference points, for a total of ten points.

- If you are hired using your points, you may not use them again.

- Veteran's preference points are not permitted for use on promotional exams.

Your military duty must meet certain conditions to qualify. Please refer to our website

(www.csc.columbus.gov), select *Public Forms*, and click on *Veteran's Fact Sheet* for more information. You may bring your documents with you on the day of your test. For non-uniformed testing, you also have the option of faxing your DD214 to 614-645-8379.

Would you like to use your points?

Here are the basics:

- You must have an Honorable Discharge status.
- You must submit an acceptable DD214 form to the Civil Service Commission no later than the final day of testing.
- You need to have a passing score on

Did You Pass the 2011 Firefighter Test?

If you are on the Firefighter Eligible List, your job is not done yet! Be sure to do the following:

- **Keep your personal information up-to-date with Civil Service.** If your address, phone number, email, or any contact information changes, update your profile on our website at www.csc.columbus.gov so that we can contact you when it's time to move to the next step.

- **Make sure you stay physically fit.** As part of the extensive selection process, you will be required to complete a stress test. In addition to the selection process, the Training Academy and the job itself will be physically demanding and you need to be ready.

- **Keep your background clean.** Make careful decisions every day so that as you reach each step of the process there will be no blemishes in your records and no cause to keep you from your dream. (Continued on Page 2)

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"When our perils have passed, shall our gratitude sleep?"

-George Canning



We Have A Form For That!

Some positions, such as Police Officer and Firefighter, have background standards above the minimum qualifications. If you receive notice that you were removed

from consideration for a position because you did not meet one (or more) of these standards, you have the right to contest the removal. A Background Administrative Review Request (BAR) can be submitted using one of two forms, depending on where you are in the employment process. If you have been removed for background reasons after filling out an application, but prior to testing for a position, use the *Pre-Screening Process Applicant Request for Administrative Review of Background File* form. If you already passed the test and were placed on the eligible list at the time you were removed, use the *Applicant Request for Administrative Review of Background File* form. Some tips:

- **Pay attention to the date on your removal letter.** BAR forms must be submitted to our office within ten (10) days after you have been removed. You still have the option of checking a block that gives you additional time to prepare your statement and/or provide supporting documents. We need to know that you are requesting the review by the deadline; otherwise, your request could be denied based on timeliness alone.

- **Request your background file.** The removal letter you get from us is typically vague in nature. This is because we usually remove more than one person from the list at a time, and each person's situation is unique. Follow the instructions in the letter to obtain a copy of your file to find out the exact reasons for your removal.

- **Look up the standard or law you were removed under.** Once you know why you were removed, look it up and read it. If you believe your circumstances are different than how it was portrayed in your official file, obtain the documents that prove the true facts of the situation. If you do not have documents, do your best to explain it to us in a narrative.

- **Just the facts, ma'am.** We can only accept supporting documents that directly relate to why you were removed and the standard/law you were removed under. Some people attempt to submit recommendation letters or information about their general character; unfortunately, we cannot consider those.

- **Please be patient.** We take BARs so seriously that we do not leave the decision up to one person. A Commission staff member collects your documents and conducts a review. Then, we make a recommendation to the three Civil Service Commissioners. The Commissioners vote on the BARs as part of their monthly meeting. Occasionally, the Commissioners request more information and delay a vote to their next meeting. Depending on when you submit your BAR paperwork and the extent of the review, you may wait a significant amount of time to receive a decision letter.

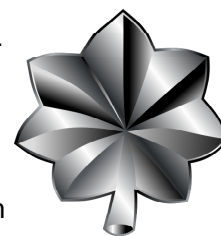
Police Promotional Testing

The promotional testing process for Police Lieutenant and Police Commander will begin this spring. This testing process is open to current City of Columbus police personnel who meet the minimum qualifications.

Applications will be accepted between April 16 and April 27, 2012, online at www.csc.columbus.gov. Those interested in applying can visit our website on their own or visit our office at 750 Piedmont Road, Columbus, Ohio 43224, Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for assistance with the online application process.

Testing for each rank includes several parts. There are multiple-choice exams (closed-book for the commander's exam and open-book and closed-book for the lieutenant's exam), a written work sample exam, and an oral board exam. Prior to testing, information sessions will be held in which general information regarding the testing process will be presented and candidates will have the opportunity to ask questions. For more information regarding the

exams, please refer to our website at www.csc.columbus.gov, email us at PoliceFireTesting@columbus.gov, or call the Civil Service Commission staff at (614) 645-6893.



Firefighter (*Continued from Page 1*) The background process begins with the Personal History Questionnaire (PHQ) with candidates in the top portion of the 90 Band being contacted first. This questionnaire requests employment and other history so if you need time to gather addresses and phone numbers, there is no need to wait. A copy of the complete selection process for Firefighters can be found on our website at https://csc.columbus.gov/pages/uniformed/fire_UFE_FF_Sel_Proc.asp. It is difficult to predict when contacts will be made, as it depends on many factors that are yet to be determined. These factors include the budget, the number of positions determined for each training academy class, your placement on the list, how many candidates contacted before you are successful in the process, and other factors. Congratulations on your success and good luck with the remainder of the process!

Tips from the Test Center

Read Your Letter (The Whole Thing)



While it may sound simple enough, candidates often focus solely on the date and time of their exam, skipping over the other important details in the letter.

The person who wrote the letter is closely involved in the exam preparation process and has carefully considered all the information that you will need on the day of your exam. Your letter will tell you what items to bring with you to the test center, and it will also tell you what to do if you cannot come on your scheduled day.

We are always happy to answer your questions via phone or email; however, we may not be open when you are seeking an answer. In this case, ensure that you have read your letter thoroughly – the information you need may be hiding in plain sight!

Follow the Parking & Entry Instructions



Plan on arriving early. You need to allow yourself plenty of time to obtain a parking spot and *be in the test center* before the exam start time. Our Piedmont location has free parking; however, for our

downtown location:

- You are responsible for the cost of your own parking.
- All of the garages/lots listed on our map are privately owned. Prices vary, but most meters and surface lots accept credit cards.
- If needed, the nearest ATM is on the 2nd floor of the garage located at the corner of North Front Street and

West Gay Street (the Laveque Tower garage).

- When you enter the Beacon Building, be prepared to present your ID to the guard at the security desk.

Listen To and Follow All Instructions



Even if you have tested before, be sure to listen carefully to the instructions.

Everything has a specific reason for being included, often gleaned from experience from previous test administrations. This

could be to make the test instructions clearer so that you will get the best score possible, to enhance test security so that the test fairly assesses each candidate, or to orient you to our procedures so that we can manage large numbers of candidates efficiently.

For example, calculators may be allowed during portions of certain exams. While we notify you of this in your admission letter, some candidates may still forget to bring their own. We have a limited number of calculators available for use on a “first come, first served” basis, and if you are paying attention to the instructions, you will know where they are and how to get one, which will help you earn a better score on the designated portions of the exam.

By ignoring instructions, a candidate can inadvertently do something that compromises his or her exam. We can only accommodate what we know about, so if you believe that you have a special case that requires you to be an exception, please make us aware of it before the test begins. We will work within our rules to make your test as comfortable as reasonably possible.



??? Ask Eyestein ???

Dear Eyestein:

I recently took a Civil Service Exam and the test started so early that I had to skip breakfast that day. The test monitor would not let me get food out of my car. She said that if I left the building, I would not be allowed back in to finish the test. I feel this was unfair and that I could have done better on my test if I wasn't so hungry.

Signed, All I Wanted Was an Apple

Dear Apple:

The main goal of conducting an exam is to find out who would be the best employees for a specific type of job. The exams are designed to evaluate the knowledge and abilities needed to do the job. If a candidate receives information from an outside source that helps them do better on the exam, it creates an unfair testing environment for the other candidates who were not allowed any outside contact.

We have strict rules regarding test security, and we generally do not allow candidates to leave our testing area once an exam has begun. When a candidate leaves our area of control, we do not know what they are doing, and we can no longer say with any certainty that they answered all the test questions on their own. It is for this same reason we have everyone shut off their cell phones during an exam. We want to know what a candidate is capable of, not what they are capable of Googling.

We also have general rules that do not allow eating or drinking at your seat during an exam. This is not intended to starve you or jump-start a new diet, but to protect our equipment and your answer sheet (i.e. no crumbs in our keyboards, and no coffee covered answer sheets). It is truly unfortunate that you were so hungry. Perhaps next time you can bring your snack into the waiting area with you, or allow more time to eat prior to arriving.

Civil Service Commission

CivilService@columbus.gov

www.csc.columbus.gov

50 West Gay Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-9038
Phone: 614-645-8300
Test Center Phone: 614-645-7439
Fax: 614-645-8379/8334

Piedmont Testing Center
750 Piedmont Road, Columbus, Ohio 43224-3266
PoliceFireTesting@columbus.gov
Phone: 614-645-0800
Fax: 614-645-0866

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Meet Commission Employee Don White

Please meet the CSC's Sensei of SIGMA, the Sultan of Swat, our favorite downtown Personnel Analyst Supervisor: Mr. Don E. White.

Don grew up in Newton, Massachusetts, but his family eventually made their way to Munroe Falls, Ohio. He's humble about it, but Don is smart. From high school, he graduated fourth in his class of 333 students with straight A's. After attending The Ohio State University, he left the premises with a BA in psychology, a master's in counseling psychology and a wife! He worked as a dispatcher in the trucking industry before joining the City as a Personnel Analyst in the early nineties.

Don and his team are responsible for creating and administering the non-uniformed Civil Service exams. He is also the most knowledgeable man around regarding SIGMA, the City's applicant tracking and test management software that's connected to many things users can see on the CSC website.

Don and his wife, Susan's true passions lay with Zelda and Scully, their Champion Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs. The dogs have racked up awards in lure coursing, conformation, agility, and they really enjoy the evening jogs with their dad. According to Don, everyday they earn Best in Show. They also enjoy caring for their horses, chickens, and extensive garden.

Please extend a friendly "hello" to Don if you see him around the City. And a prize to the first person who can guess his middle name, because he won't tell us!



Did You Know?

**In 2011, the Commission
received over 32,000
applications.**

**Over 96% of those
applications were submitted
through our website.**



Update Your Job Interest Cards

Job Interest Cards expire after 12 months. Update yours so you don't miss a recruitment!

Note-able CSC Staff Notes

Congratulations to
Darlene Coleman, Payroll Specialist,
who received the 2011 City of Columbus Civil
Service Commission "Commission Award for Peak
Performance."

