

2024 Police Commander Promotional Exam

Candidate Test Guide

July 2023

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction	1
Overview.....	1
Exam Filing Period.....	1
Minimum Requirements.....	1
Exam Reading List.....	1
Information Session Video.....	2
Section 2: Written Work Sample Exam	3
Written Work Sample Scoring Dimensions:	4
Section 3: Oral Board Exam.....	5
Oral Board Exam Scoring Dimensions.....	5
Section 4: Paper Inspection and Video Review.....	7
Bring a Mentor	7

Section 1: Introduction

Overview

This test guide is designed to assist you in your preparation for the 2024 Police Commander Promotional Exam process. The exam process for this rank consists of the following two phases:

- Phase I:** Written Work Sample Exam
- Phase II:** Oral Board Exam

Each phase of the exam will be standardized using the z-score method and weighted fifty (50%) percent of the total exam score. Seniority points will be added to passing scores. The cutoff date for seniority point calculations will be the last date of the test administration (i.e., the Oral Board Exam day). There is **no** cut point for the 2024 Police Commander Exam. Candidates who complete both the written work sample and oral board will be placed on the eligible list.

The exam is designed based on the information obtained from a job analysis of the Police Commander job classification. The job analysis provides a description of the duties performed by Columbus Police Commanders, and identifies the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics required to effectively perform the job.

Exam Filing Period. The filing period is April 8–22, 2024. Applications must be submitted on-line through the CSC website at <https://new.columbus.gov/Government/Jobs>.

Minimum Requirements. The Police Commander classification requires all candidates to have:

- a bachelor's degree
- one (1) year of continuous accredited service as a permanent appointee in the class of Police Lieutenant immediately prior to the first phase of the exam
- a valid Driver's License

The cut-off date to meet and provide the proof of education is April 23, 2024. Candidates can email their official transcript or diploma to the Civil Service Commission (CSC) staff member Chelsea Whims at cjwhims@columbus.gov. Please contact the CSC with any questions regarding the proof of education.

The cut-off date for the time in rank minimum qualification is on or before May 7, 2024. The minimum qualification of a valid Driver's License will be reviewed during check-in of Phase I (the Written Work Sample). Please bring your Driver's License to the Written Work Sample to assist with the check-in process.

Exam Reading List. The reading list for this exam is posted on the CSC Website, <https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/uniformed-police-series/Police->

Commander/. The Police Commander reading list allows for supplemental sources to be added to an addendum to the reading list by the first day of the application filing period. This document will be posted to the CSC Website by April 8, 2024. Supplemental reading sources may be texts, articles, documents, etc. relevant to the Written Work Sample or Oral Board phase. Supplemental reading list sources will be determined during development with input by development subject matter experts (SMEs).

Candidates are permitted to bring non-electronic copies of the sources and a non-electronic dictionary to the test site. Electronic PDF versions of the reading list sources will be loaded onto computers provided to candidates for their response during the written work sample phase of the exam and during the preparation period of the oral board exam. Below are the answers to commonly asked questions about source materials:

- Candidates may **not** add additional pages and/or note sheets to the reading list materials.
- Candidates may print reading list sources on 8 ½ by 11-inch paper in a letter-sized binder with tabs.
 - If you opt to copy a source to 8.5 x 11 inch paper and the original source is double-sided, you are **not** permitted to write notes on the blank reverse side of the page if you print the sources single sided.
- It is permissible to hand-write notes in the margins and other empty spaces **prior** to the exam. As stated in the point above, do **not** write on the blank reverse side of a page if you printed a double-sided source, single-sided. Candidates are not permitted to write in their sources during the exams.
- Candidates may print the Legal Updates and bring those stapled together or in a binder.

Please call the CSC to clarify all questions regarding sources before test day.

Both the written work sample and oral board exams are open-book exams. For the oral board exam, candidates will only be permitted to reference their sources during the preparation period. All internal sources subject to testing will include revisions up to and including those issued on or before July 1, 2023. The FOP Contract used for this administration is dated December 9, 2020 – December 8, 2023.

A link to the Legal Updates for this testing process, which includes all legal updates subject to testing for this exam, is included in the reading list posted on the CSC Website.

Please note: All sources are subject to inspection by CSC staff at the test site

Information Session Video. The information session video will be posted to the CSC website by April 25, 2024. Please contact CSC with any questions regarding the information presented in the video.

Section 2: Written Work Sample Exam

Each exercise of the Written Work Sample is designed to assess various knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) necessary to be an effective Police Commander. The Written Work Sample will consist of one or more situations or problems similar to those a Columbus Police Commander might face on the job. Candidates may be asked to describe, in writing, how they would handle each problem, issue, or situation. Candidates may be required to review and/or complete a letter, memo, report, or other written work product(s). The situation may require a brief description of actions to be taken or call for a detailed plan of action. Candidates will be given a set amount of time to complete this phase of the exam.

Candidates may bring printed copies of the sources along with a non-electronic dictionary to the Written Work Sample. **CANDIDATES MAY NOT SHARE SOURCES OR DICTIONARIES DURING THE EXAM.** All sources will be subject to inspection at the test site to ensure that no additional summary pages have been added. The use of tabs, highlighting, underlining, and notes in the margins made in your sources prior to the exam are permitted, however you are not permitted to write in your sources during the exam.

The scoring of the Written Work Sample will utilize behaviorally anchored rating scales (BARS) scoring mechanism. BARS are used in the scoring of the written work sample in the same way that they are used in scoring the oral board. BARS are created for each of the specific dimensions targeted for assessment. The use of BARS enhances the ability of assessors to differentiate degrees of performance along an effectiveness continuum. No appeals will be accepted for the written work sample or oral board phase of the Commander Exam.

Commander level assessments of KSAOs, such as critical analysis and creative problem-solving skills, with candidates responding in an open ended narrative response, are better suited to the utilization of BARS. Assessors in the rank of Commander or equivalent or above from outside the state of Ohio will score the Written Work Sample. The assessors will be provided with training for rating the exercise(s) and use of the scoring criteria.

Written Work Sample Scoring Dimensions

Four out of the five scoring dimensions listed below will be utilized for each exercise during exam scoring. If appropriate, different scoring dimensions may be utilized for each exercise.

Written Communication. The act of clearly expressing ideas in writing. Presents ideas in a clear, concise, logical manner. Uses appropriate vocabulary, structure, grammar and syntax. Communicates appropriately for the needs of the audience.

Delegation/Control. The act of using personnel effectively to attain desired results. Establishes procedures to monitor tasks and job activities of personnel and their assignments.

Judgment/Decision Making. The act of making up one's mind about something by critically assessing the alternatives. Makes decisions based on the logical assessment and weighing of evidence. Renders judgments, takes action, and commits oneself.

Organizing/Planning. The act of systematically putting something in order using future-time orientation. Makes and implements plans that reflect the Columbus Division of Police's (CPD) mission. Provides a framework or strategy for accomplishing goals and overcoming obstacles.

Technical and Professional Knowledge. The specialized knowledge and expertise required to perform specific tasks and use specific tools and programs in real world situations.

Section 3: Oral Board Exam

Phase II of the promotional exam is the Oral Board Exam. The Oral Board Exam will consist of two exercises. Candidates will be provided a 60 minute preparation period to prepare responses for both exercises. Candidates will be permitted to use notes generated during the preparation period when participating in the exercises. The allotted response time for the exam will be approximately 10 – 20 minutes for each exercise. The exact exam response times have **not** yet been determined. Candidates will be sequestered either before or after the exam. All candidates will be tested on the same day.

Exercises may be a role-play, structured interview, presentation, or a combination of these. For role-play type exercises, individuals will be playing the roles of civilians, subordinates, peers, superiors, or others with whom the candidates are expected to interact in the given situation. For a structured interview, an interviewer(s) will ask each candidate one or more questions, and the candidate is expected to respond. For a presentation, candidates will be given a topic or problem and asked to present their ideas or solutions. Candidates will be expected to respond as if they currently hold the rank of Commander with the CPD.

Candidates' presentations should be complete and concise, remain focused on the issue(s)/problem(s) presented, and result in sound resolutions to the problems. Candidates should be very careful to answer all questions fully.

Oral Board Exam Scoring Dimensions

Four out of the six scoring dimensions listed below will be utilized for each exercise during exam scoring. If appropriate, different scoring dimensions may be utilized for each exercise.

Oral Communication. Oral Communication has two basic components — the ability to make one's thoughts or ideas understood by others, and the ability to understand thoughts or ideas expressed by others.

Oral Communication involves the ability to organize thoughts and express them in a clear and logical manner, to comprehend another's meaning, and to use appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar in oral expression. Candidates who speak distinctly and at an appropriate pace, enunciating clearly to the oral board members, are better able to communicate their ideas than candidates who rush or mumble. Oral communication also involves the ability to listen and accurately comprehend what others are saying or asking. Candidates who do **not** take the time to carefully listen to others run the risk of misinterpreting information. Candidates whose answers are unfocused, rambling, or non-responsive present themselves as being confused or unable to comprehend the information presented.

Managing People. Managing people involves managing your chain of command based on Division goals, public interests, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Motivating

and addressing performance issues with direct reports. Resolving disagreements between direct reports in a constructive manner. Fostering an inclusive workplace that values diversity and individual differences to help achieve Division goals. Candidates who respect the opinions of their direct reports, resolve conflicts between subordinates impartially, and focus on solving problems in alignment with Division goals will perform well in this dimension. Sensitive to the needs of civilians and external relations.

Interpersonal Relations. Interpersonal Relations has two basic components — the ability to work with other individuals in a cooperative and constructive manner, and the ability to consider and respect the feelings, needs, and viewpoints of others. Interpersonal Relations involves the ability to establish and maintain cooperative and constructive working relationships with individuals and/or groups. Those candidates who are insensitive to the needs of others typically convey that insensitivity during the role playing situations.

Judgment/Problem Resolution. Judgment and Problem Resolution involves identifying the problem, securing relevant information, assessing alternative courses of action, evaluating the potential results, and making sound decisions based on the logical assessment of available information. In short, this dimension involves the ability to make logical decisions based on the facts. The candidate who fully investigates the options, exhausts all sources of information, and develops a logical solution to a problem will perform well on this dimension. The candidate who doesn't bother to seek out information or consider alternatives, and thus comes to illogical conclusions or develops an ineffective plan, will **not** perform as well.

Decisiveness/Initiative. This dimension involves originating and implementing programs, taking action to achieve goals, making timely decisions, and committing oneself to a course of action.

Technical and Professional Knowledge. The specialized knowledge and expertise required to perform specific tasks and use specific tools and programs in real world situations.

Section 4: Paper Inspection and Video Review

A video review and paper inspection of the Oral Board and Written Work Sample will be offered for three days during the tentative results period and **by appointment only**. For the paper inspection, candidates may review copies of their Written Work Sample and Oral Board scoring sheets that were completed by each assessor and verify their reported scores are correct. For the Oral Board video review, candidates will be able to view a copy of their recorded Oral Board presentations for the purpose of identifying areas of personal development for future testing.

Bring a Mentor

Candidates have the option of bringing a CPD mentor with them to this video review, to review their Oral Board video and provide feedback on their performance. The mentor must be in the rank being tested or above and did **not** assist with the development or pilot testing of the 2024 Police Commander Oral Board Exam. SMEs who assisted in the development of the Written Work Sample are allowed to be a mentor for the Oral Board video review. The tentative results notice will contain information regarding scheduling the review.