

THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

**FireFIGHTER
MILE**

Candidate Orientation Guide



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Introduction

The Firefighter Mile is a standardized firefighter physical ability test designed to assess your readiness for the physical demands of firefighting. In particular, the test is meant to demonstrate that you have sufficient stamina, strength, and agility to accomplish the critical job tasks. Research has shown that the most common causes of firefighter injury and even death are overexertion and stress. Ensuring the physical fitness of firefighters helps reduce their chance of injuries and even death, which in turn provides for the safety of both victims and other firefighters.

The Firefighter Mile consists of ten separate timed events that occur sequentially. Each event represents one or more duties that a firefighter might perform on an actual fire scene. Each is only a simulation, however, as the safety and fairness of the test is more important than perfectly replicating every job duty. Your performance on the test is evaluated on a pass/fail basis.

In addition to familiarizing yourself with the information contained in this guide, it is strongly recommended that you also view the accompanying orientation video at <http://www.columbus.gov/civilservice> to see firsthand the events in the Firefighter Mile. You should become as familiar with the test as you can before taking it to ensure that your success or failure on the exam is due solely to your physical capabilities and not a misunderstanding of the events.

This guide will provide you with an overview of the Firefighter Mile, descriptions of each of the ten events that comprise the test, the purpose of each event, and the permissible and impermissible actions for each event.

Overview and Preparation

Overview

For all events in the Firefighter Mile, you will wear a weighted vest to simulate the weight of firefighter protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). You will also wear work gloves for your protection.

The events are arranged to simulate the progression of events at a fire scene while also allowing for recovery time between the more physically demanding tasks. As you move from event to event, a proctor will give you instructions on how to perform each event. A proctor will also notify you if you perform any actions that constitute a warning or immediate disqualification. A warning will be announced verbally with “WARNING” and the reason for the warning will be given. If a warning is given, you must immediately correct your action before continuing. Too many warnings for certain actions result in disqualification from the test. If this occurs, or if you perform a single action that immediately constitutes disqualification, the proctor will call “TIME” and end the test.

Preparation

You must arrive to the test wearing:

- Close-toed shoes.
- No watches or loose jewelry are permitted.

Watch the candidate orientation video to better familiarize yourself with Firefighter Mile events, equipment and rules. Carefully read through this guide and make sure you understand the scoring process and what actions constitute a warning or disqualification on each event. If possible, attend a practice session. Following these guidelines will ensure you are both physically and mentally ready to complete the Firefighter Mile.

How You Will Be Evaluated

This test is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. There is no overall time limit for the test. Events are individually timed and you must complete each event within a specified time limit to continue to the next event. To pass, you must not only successfully complete all 10 events within their respective time limits, but obtain at least 8 out of 10 possible points.

One point may be earned per event. To earn the point, you must complete the event within the *max time for one point*. If you do not complete the event within that time, you may still continue the test without earning a point as long as you finish within the time range for *passing with 0 points*. However, if you do not finish before the *disqualification time* is reached, then you will be disqualified from the test.

Because you only need 8 out of 10 possible points to pass, you may exceed the *max time for 1 point* for up to two events and still pass the test. This compensates for real differences in test difficulty based on body size. However, if you receive zero points on three or more events, you will be disqualified from the test. After each event, your proctor will inform you if you were above or below the *max time for 1 point*. It is up to you to complete subsequent events within the *max time for 1 point* if you have lost too many points.

There are a number of disqualifying actions you can perform during the test. If you perform any of these actions, you are disqualified from the test. Some actions only result in a warning; however, too many warnings from a particular action will also constitute disqualification.

The following are actions that constitute warnings or disqualification at any point during the test:

- Running between events constitutes a **WARNING**. The second time you run, “**TIME**” is called and the test is ended.
- Stopping between events constitutes a **WARNING**. The second time you stop, “**TIME**” is called and the test is ended.
- Removing gloves constitutes a **WARNING**. The second time this occurs, “**TIME**” is called and the test is ended.
- If you take off your vest at any time, “**TIME**” is called and the test is ended.

Event 1: High Rise Carry

Max Time for 1 point	2 min. 30 sec. (7 on countdown)
Passing with 0 points	2 min. 31 sec. – 2 min. 53 sec. (8 to 29 on countdown)
Disqualification time (exit test)	2 min. 54 Sec.



Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the task of climbing stairs during a structural fire while wearing full protective gear and carrying 40-50 pounds of tools, High Rise packs, and other similar equipment. The event tests your lower body strength and aerobic capacity in performing this critical firefighting task.

Description

For this event, you will wear a 40 lb weighted vest in addition to the 40 lb weighted vest that you wear throughout the test (total of 80 lbs for this event

only). You will ascend a 6-step flight of stairs, turn around at the top, and then descend the 6-step flight of stairs. You must repeat this process 18 times. You may use the hand rail.

You must ascend and descend the stairs at a steady pace without pausing. A recording is broadcast aloud to keep you on the correct pace. Once 18 repetitions have been counted off on the audio recording, a 30 second countdown timer will automatically begin. You must finish before the 8th second on the countdown to receive a full point. You will pass if you finish before the end of the countdown; however a score of 0 is recorded if 8 or higher on the countdown has been reached. If 18 complete repetitions have not been completed before the end of the 30-second countdown, you will be disqualified from continuing the test.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- You are not allowed to take two steps at once. The first and second time you do this, you will receive a **WARNING**. Doing this a third time will result in **“TIME”** being called and the test ended.
- If you fall, trip, or lose your balance at any point and your hand touches the ground or stair, you will receive a **WARNING**. The second time this occurs, **“TIME”** is called and the test ends.
- If you stop to rest, you will receive a **WARNING**. The second time you pause, **“TIME”** is called and the test ends.
- If you do not complete a full repetition up and down all 6 steps, with both feet on the platform or floor, you will be given a **WARNING** and instructed to correct the action. Three such warnings results in **“TIME”** being called and the test ended.

- If you deviate from the correct pacing, you will be warned. However, there are no penalties for such warnings. If you finish in 7 seconds or less on the audio recording countdown, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 30 seconds on the audio recording countdown, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. “TIME” is called and the test ended if you do not complete 18 up/down repetitions before the end of the 30 second countdown on the audio pace recording. Therefore, it is in your best interest to keep with the pace of the audio recording.

Event 2: Paced Walk

Max Time for 1 point	3 min. 40 sec.
Passing with 0 points	3 min. 41 sec. – 4 min.
Disqualification time (exit test)	4 min. 1 sec.

Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the aerobic demands placed on firefighters while working for extended periods of time. It also allows you time to cool down after some of the more physically demanding exercises. The event tests your aerobic capacity in maintaining a brisk pace.

Description

You will walk at a set pace (no jogging or running allowed) following a marked 381 yard course. A proctor will inform you of your pace as you start walking and then once every 50 seconds (e.g. “you are 10 seconds ahead/behind the desired pace”). This pace is designed to keep you under the *max time for 1 point*. You may not run, even to catch up if you are behind pace.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- If you move outside of the marked boundaries, you will be directed back on course and receive a **WARNING**. If you do not comply with proctor instructions, or go outside the marked boundaries again, you will receive another warning. After three such warnings, “**TIME**” will be called and the test will end.
- If you run on the course, you will receive a **WARNING**. Three warnings for running will result in “**TIME**” being called and the test ended.
- If you finish in 3 minutes 40 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 4 minutes, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 4 minutes 1 second or longer for this event, “**TIME**” will be called and the test will end.

Event 3: Charged Hose Advance

Max Time for 1 point	30 sec.
Passing with 0 points	31 sec. – 35 sec.
Disqualification time (exit test)	36 sec.



Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the task of carrying a 1 ¾” charged hose over your shoulder and dragging it through a fire site. The event tests your upper body strength, lower body strength, and aerobic capacity.

Description

You will advance a sand-filled (“charged”) 1 ¾” hose following an oval track that brings you around two barrel drums and then back to the starting line.

Before you begin, you will stand at the starting line, pick up the nozzle, and place the hose line over your left or right shoulder. You will then advance the charged hose line along the track, turning around the barrel drums and dragging the hose back until both feet cross the finish line. You may run during this event **ONLY**. In fact, you should move as quickly as possible so that your momentum helps overcome the dragging resistance of the hose.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- If you attempt to pull the hose in any way other than facing forward with the hose over your shoulder, you will receive a **WARNING**. If you don’t comply after the first warning or attempt it a second time, **“TIME”** is called and the test ends.
- If you move outside the designated boundary, you will receive a **WARNING**. If this occurs a third time, **“TIME”** is called and the test ends.
- If you finish in 30 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 35 seconds, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 36 seconds or longer for this event, **“TIME”** will be called and the test will end.



Event 4: Equipment Haul

Max Time for 1 point	28 sec.
Passing with 0 points	29 sec. – 35 sec.
Disqualification time (exit test)	36 sec.



Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the task of hoisting equipment such as hose packs and stretchers to the third story window of a building using rope. It also simulates the motion of extending the fly of a ground extension ladder by hoisting it with rope. Performed properly, the event tests both your upper and lower body strength, as well as your grip strength.

Description

Standing on a platform and reaching over a simulated railing, you will grab a rope attached to a weighted sled and drag the sled 40 feet across the ground. A hand-over-hand technique must be used to pull in the rope. The event ends when the sled is flush with the platform. (The picture below shows the sled in a position that is NOT flush.)

Warnings/Disqualifications

If you do not use a hand-over-hand technique, a warning is issued. If you fail to heed this warning, or use an improper technique a second time, a second warning is issued. Three warnings result in “TIME” being called and the test is ended.

If you finish in 28 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 35 seconds, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 36 seconds or longer for this event, “TIME” will be called and the test will end.



Event 5: Paced Walk

Max Time for 1 point	2 min. 46 sec.
Passing with 0 points	2 min. 47 sec. – 3 min 5 sec.
Disqualification time (exit test)	3 min. 6 sec.

Purpose

Like Event 2, this event is designed to simulate the aerobic demands placed on firefighters while operating for extended periods of time. It also allows you time to cool down after some of the more physically demanding exercises. The event tests your aerobic capacity in maintaining a brisk pace.

Description

This event is identical to Event 2, except that you will walk a shorter distance. You will walk at a set pace (no jogging or running allowed) following a marked 286 yard course. A proctor will inform you of your pace as you start walking and then once every 50 seconds (e.g. “you are 10 seconds ahead/behind the desired pace”). This pace is designed to keep you under the *max time for 1 point*. You may not run, even to catch up if you are behind pace.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- If you move outside of the marked boundaries, you will be directed back on course and receive a **WARNING**. If you do not comply with proctor instructions, or go outside the marked boundaries again, you will receive another warning. After three such warnings, **“TIME”** will be called and the test will end.
- If you run on the course, you will receive a **WARNING**. Three warnings for running will result in **“TIME”** being called and the test ended.
- If you finish in 2 minutes 46 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 3 minutes 5 seconds, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 3 minutes 6 seconds or longer for this event, **“TIME”** will be called and the test will end.

Event 6: Blind Crawl

Max Time for 1 point	2 min. 30 sec.
Passing with 0 points	2 min. 31 sec. - 3 min.
Disqualification time (exit test)	3 min. 1 sec.



Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the task of crawling in a burning structure to stay below smoke while carrying a tool as you advance to your destination. It is also intended to simulate high smoke conditions where you have no visibility and must follow one of several hoses that have been advanced into the structure in order to find your way around. This event tests your aerobic capacity and coordination skills.

Description

Like in a real zero visibility situation during a fire, you must find your way around by following a hose to your destination and avoid getting off track on a hose that does not lead your destination. You will crawl on your hands and knees for 50 feet following a simulated charged hose (designated the “target hose”) entangled with two other simulated charged hoses. Additionally, you will wear goggles that block out all vision and you will carry or drag a sledgehammer.

Before starting the event, you will put on the black-out goggles. You will then drop onto your hands and knees in front of the crawl start line. The proctor will help you place one hand on the target hose and one hand on the sledgehammer. You will then crawl following the 50 foot target hose. During the crawl, you will drag the sledgehammer with you and must remain on the target hose without becoming disoriented or following either of the other two entangled hoses. When you reach the end of the target hose with the sledgehammer in hand, you have completed the event.



Proper technique requires that you use both hands to stay in constant contact with the primary hose when feeling past obstructions. The tool may need to be set down while using two hands; however, you must not lose track of the sledgehammer since you must complete the event with it in hand.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- If you take off your mask, “TIME” is called and the test ends.
- If you stand up at any point, “TIME” is called and the test ends.
- If you reach the end of a hose other than the target (starting) hose, “TIME” is called and the test ends.
- If you reach the end of the target hose without the sledgehammer in hand, “TIME” is called and the test ends.
- If you finish in 2 minutes 30 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 3 minutes, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 3 minutes 1 second or longer for this event, “TIME” is called and the test ends.

Event 7: Forcible Entry Tire Strike

Max Time for 1 point	35 sec.
Passing with 0 points	36 sec. – 50 sec.
Disqualification time (exit test)	51 sec.



Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the task of using a heavy hand tool, such as a sledgehammer, to force open a door or breach a wall. The event tests your upper body strength, aerobic capacity, and coordination.

Description

You will use a sledgehammer to strike a truck tire 8 feet across a table. A chop stroke with one hand near the head of the hammer and the other hand near the base of the hammer

must be used. The tire must be controlled so as not to fall off the table. Once the edge of the tire reaches the designated marker near the end of the table, the event is completed.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- If you swing without your hands separated on the colored tape, a **WARNING** will be issued. If you receive three such warnings, **“TIME”** will be called and the test ended.
- If you lose control of the sledgehammer and release it with both hands, **“TIME”** will be called and the test ended.
- If the tire falls off the table, **“TIME”** will be called and the test ended.
- If you strike the table instead of the tire, a **WARNING** will be issued. After three such warnings, **“TIME”** is called and the test is ended.
- If you finish in 35 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 50 seconds, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 51 seconds or longer for this event, **“TIME”** will be called and the test ended.



Event 8: Paced Walk

Max Time for 1 point	2 min. 46 sec.
Passing with 0 points	2 min. 47 sec. – 3 min 5 sec.
Disqualification time (exit test)	3 min. 6 sec.

Purpose

Like Events 2 and 5, this event is designed to simulate the aerobic demands placed on firefighters while operating for extended periods of time. It also allows you time to cool down after some of the more physically demanding exercises. The event tests your aerobic capacity in maintaining a brisk pace.

Description

This event is identical to Event 5. You will walk at a set pace (no jogging or running allowed) following a marked 286 yard course. A proctor will inform you of your pace as you start walking and then once every 50 seconds (e.g. “you are 10 seconds ahead/behind the desired pace”). This pace is designed to keep you under the *max time for 1 point*. You may not run even to catch up if you are behind pace.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- If you move outside of the marked boundaries, you will be directed back on course and receive a **WARNING**. If you do not comply with proctor instructions, or go outside the marked boundaries again, you will receive another warning. After three such warnings, **“TIME”** will be called and the test will end.
- If you run on the course, you will receive a **WARNING**. Three warnings for running will result in **“TIME”** being called and the test ended.
- If you finish in 2 minutes 46 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 3 minutes 5 seconds, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 3 minutes 6 seconds or longer for this event, **“TIME”** will be called and the test will end.

Event 9: Rescue Drag

Max Time for 1 point	30 sec.
Passing with 0 points	31 sec. – 40 sec.
Disqualification time (exit test)	41 sec.



Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the task of dragging an incapacitated partner or victim from a damaged or burning structure. The event tests your upper body strength, lower body strength, and aerobic capacity.

Description

From the starting point and in a standing position, you will drag a rescue mannequin around a marked course for 2 laps. You will drag the mannequin around a barrel drum or tire, continue along the course around another barrel drum or tire, and proceed back to the starting

line. You must repeat this process for a second lap. The event is completed when both you and the mannequin have completely crossed the starting/finish line on the second lap. You must drag the mannequin using the pull harness attached to the mannequin ONLY. It is unacceptable to drag the mannequin by a limb, to lift under the mannequin's arms, to drag by holding onto clothing, or to carry the mannequin.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- You may stop and rest by placing the mannequin down at any time during the event. However, keep in mind that if you take 40 seconds or longer for this event, "TIME" is called and the test is ended.
- If you use a technique to drag the mannequin other than using the harness handles, a **WARNING** is issued and you will be informed that the handles on the harness must be used to drag the mannequin. If your technique is not corrected, or you use an improper technique to drag the mannequin a second time, "**TIME**" is called and the test is ended.



- If you step outside of the designated track, you will receive a **WARNING**. If you receive three of these warnings, **“TIME”** is called and the test is ended.
- If you finish in 30 seconds or less, a full point is awarded. If you finish within 40 seconds, you pass the event, but 0 points are awarded. If you take 41 seconds or longer for this event, **“TIME”** is called and the test is ended.

Event 10: CPR

Max Time for 1 Point

2 min.



Purpose

This event is designed to simulate the task of performing initial medical treatment on a victim by administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). This event tests your upper body strength and aerobic capacity.

Description

The time on this event is controlled; passing is based on correct performance only. There is no possibility to pass with 0 points.

You will kneel down next to a CPR mannequin and perform chest compressions at rate of 100 compressions per minute for 2 minutes. You may remove your gloves for this event. Pacing is achieved by following warning lights on the mannequin.

Two green LED lights indicate correct pace, one green light indicates you are slightly off pace, a yellow light indicates falling further off pace, and a red light indicates seriously off pace.

You are allowed 10 seconds at the start of the event to achieve correct pacing for compressions with two green LED lights showing. Time is started at the beginning of this “trial” period; however, you only need to produce correct compressions after the 10 seconds have passed and then maintain correct compressions for two minutes after that.

Warnings/Disqualifications

- The CPR mannequin is equipped with warning LED lights:

- Red light: 1 to 59 compressions per minute
- Yellow light: 60 to fewer than 79 compressions per minute
- One green light: 80 to 99 compressions per minute
- Two green lights: 100 compressions per minute

After the 10 second warm-up period, if anything other than two green lights appears on the CPR mannequin, you will be issued a **WARNING**. If the single green, red, or yellow light is not corrected, another warning is issued. Three of these warnings will result in **“TIME”** being called and the test ended.

End of Test

Upon completion of the Firefighter Mile, you will be permitted to leave the building. If medical attention is necessary it will be provided. Candidates will NOT be permitted to view other candidates complete the examinaion.

Event Summary

Event 1: High Rise Carry 18 repetitions

Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test
2:30	2:53
	Test Over

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Taking more than one step at a time.	3
Failure to touch both feet at turn on platform or floor.	3
Stopping.	2
Falling.	2

Description

For Event 1: High Rise Carry, you will wear a weighted vest in addition to the one that you wear throughout the test. You will ascend a 6-step flight of stairs, turn around at the top, and then descend the 6-step flight of stairs. You must ascend and descend at a steady pace without pausing, following the recording. You will repeat this process 18 times. The hand rail may be used.

Event 2: Paced Walk 381 yards

Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test
3:40	4:00
	Test Over

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Stepping outside track.	3
Jogging or running.	3

Description

For Event 2: Paced Walk, you will walk at a brisk pace (no jogging or running allowed) following a marked course for 381 yards. A proctor will inform you of your pace as you start walking and then once every 50 seconds.

Event 3: Charged Hose Advance

100 foot drag

Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test
0:30	0:35
Test Over	

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Not facing forward with hose over shoulder.	2
Stepping outside track.	3

Description

For Event 3: Charged Hose Advance, you will advance a sand-filled (“charged”) 1 ¾” hose following an oval track that brings you around two barrel drums and then back to the starting line. You may run during this event ONLY.

Event 4: Equipment Haul

40 foot drag

Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test
0:28	0:35
Test Over	

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Wrong Technique	3

Description

For Event 4: Equipment Haul, you will stand on a platform and reach over a simulated railing, grab a rope attached to a weighted sled, and drag the sled 40 feet across the ground. A hand-over-hand technique must be used to pull in the rope. The event ends when the sled is in-line with the platform.

Event 5: Paced Walk

286 yards

Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test
2:46	3:05
Test Over	

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Stepping outside track.	3
Jogging or running.	3

Description

Event 5: Paced Walk is identical to Event 2, except that you will walk a shorter distance.

Event 6: Blind Crawl

50 foot crawl

	Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test	Test Over
	2:30	3:00

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Finishing on wrong hose.	1
Finishing without sledgehammer.	1
Standing up.	1
Removing mask.	1

Description

For Event 6: Blind Crawl, you will don darkened goggles and crawl while following a 50 foot hose (the target hose) intertwined with two other hoses. You will drag a sledgehammer with you as you crawl. When you reach the end of the target hose with the sledgehammer in hand, you have completed the event.

Event 7: Forcible Entry Tire Strike

8 feet

	Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test	Test Over
	0:35	0:50

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Hands not separated in taped areas.	3
Tire falls off.	1
Striking table.	3
Releasing hammer.	1

Description

For Event 7: Forcible Entry Tire Strike, you will use a sledgehammer to strike a truck tire 8 feet across a table. A chop stroke with one hand on each colored area on the hammer must be used. Once the edge of the tire reaches the designated marker near the end of the table, the event is complete.

Event 8: Paced Walk

286 yards

	Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	0 points Continue Test	Test Over
	2:46	3:05

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Stepping outside track.	3
Jogging or running.	3

Description

Event 8: Paced Walk is identical to Event 5.

Event 9: Rescue Drag

2 laps

Point Time Limit	Pass Time Limit
1 point	Test Over
0:30	0:40

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Stepping outside track.	3
Using incorrect technique.	2

Description

For Event 9: Rescue Drag, you will drag a rescue mannequin around a marked course for 2 laps. The event is completed when both you and the mannequin have completely crossed the starting/finish line on the second lap. You must drag the mannequin using the pull harness attached to the mannequin only.

Event 10: CPR

2 minutes proper CPR (two green lights)

Warm-up	1 point
0:10	2:00

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Not having 2 green lights on compression.	3

Description

For Event 10: CPR, you will kneel down next to a CPR mannequin and perform chest compressions at a rate of 100 compressions per minute for 2 minutes. You must maintain correct pacing, indicated by 2 green lights on the mannequin. The test is completed when the proctor says “stop.”

General

There is no overall time limit. The following are warnings that you can receive at any time during the test:

Possible Warnings	Test Over (# warnings)
Taking off gloves.	2
Taking off vest.	1
Running between events.	2
Stopping between events.	2

TOTAL POINTS NEEDED TO PASS	8
MAX POINTS POSSIBLE	10