



NATIONAL  
**TESTING**  
NETWORK

# **Denver Fire Department Engineer Promotional Process**

Candidate Handout

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**\*\*MODIFICATION AUTHORITY\*\*** NTN and the City of Denver reserve the right to modify any aspect of the promotional process, including but not limited to test components, timing, scoring methods, and administrative procedures, at any time prior to or during the promotional process as needed to ensure fairness, security, and validity. Candidates will be notified of significant changes when feasible but may encounter procedural modifications on test day. Current information supersedes any prior information provided.

# 1.

## General Candidate Information

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in advancing to the rank of Engineer. Your decision to participate in this promotional process reflects your commitment to professional growth and your readiness to take on greater responsibility within your department.

Advancement to the rank of Engineer represents a significant step forward, bringing expanded responsibilities that will have a meaningful impact on both the department and the community you serve.

This document is designed to help you prepare for the promotional process. It provides an overview of what to expect, describes the testing components in detail, and offers practical tips to help you perform at your best. We encourage you to review this information carefully and use it to assist you as you prepare.

The promotional process has been carefully designed to be fair, job-related, and predictive of success in the Engineer position. All candidates will be evaluated using the same components, evaluation criteria, and standardized procedures. We recognize the time and effort you are investing in this process and wish you the best as you prepare for and participate in the promotional process!

### PROMOTIONAL PROCESS COMPONENTS AND WEIGHTING

Exercise	% Weight
Written Exam	35%
Practical	60%
Seniority	5%

**Note:** The Department will assign a seniority score based on each candidate’s tenure with the department and any other seniority factors as determined by the department.

## PRACTICAL STATIONS AND WEIGHTING

The practical will consist of the following stations:

Exercise	% Weight
Pumping	25%
Driving	25%
Aerial Operations	25%
Maintenance	25%

## GENERAL TEST INFORMATION

- Candidates are prohibited from receiving or sending pages, texts, or phone calls during any part of the promotional process. No electronic devices are allowed at the testing site.
- Candidates are prohibited from removing any material from the testing site.
- If a problem arises during the practical, it is the candidate’s responsibility to notify a proctor or member of Civil Service as soon as possible.
- Candidates may bring a water bottle with you to the test site.
- If a candidate has a question during the promotional process administration, ask a test proctor for clarification.

## DRESS CODE

**Written Exam:** There is no dress code for the written exam. Class B uniforms are recommended but not required.

**Practical:** The following is the required dress code for all candidates:

- Class B uniforms with work gloves, eye protection, and steel toed shoes.
  - Candidates may wear their badge, but the name tag, pins, insignia, and special commendations must be removed.

## EXAM DEVELOPMENT

NTN collaborated extensively with subject matter experts (SMEs) from the Denver Fire Department throughout the development and validation of the promotional process. This partnership ensured that all components reflect the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for success in the role. SMEs conducted thorough reviews of all test content and scoring indicators in conjunction with NTN consultants to ensure alignment with department standards and job-relevant competencies.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Applicants with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodation for the promotional process should refer to the [Candidate Resources website](#) as soon as possible and send requests to [CSCInfo@denvergov.org](mailto:CSCInfo@denvergov.org). You may be required to provide the following documentation in support of your accommodation:

- The specific disability
- A clear description of how the disability limits the candidate's abilities
- Documentation dated within the last 3 years (except for chronic disabilities)
- Specific accommodation recommendations

The City of Denver will make all final decisions on accommodations.

***⚠ IMPORTANT NOTICE TO CANDIDATES: The information in this handout describes the general structure and format of the promotional process. While this document reflects our current plans, specific details including but not limited to:***

- *Exercise timing and duration*
- *Number of questions or response segments*
- *Order of exercises*
- *Preparation time allocations*
- *Administrative procedure*

*...may be modified based on operational needs. You will receive final, specific instructions on test day. This handout is designed to help you prepare generally, not to provide exact specifications you can rely upon.*

# 2.

## Exam Security

### TEST SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Prior to participating in each phase of the promotional process, you will be required to sign a security and confidentiality agreement stating that you have not and will not violate test security. The content and nature of the entire promotional process are strictly confidential, and you must not discuss any aspect of the testing process with anyone—including other candidates, whether before, during, or after your participation.

Breach of this agreement is subject to prosecution under federal copyright law and would be viewed as an unacceptable integrity failure for an employee, particularly a promotional candidate. NTN and/or the Department reserve the right to disqualify candidates from the promotional process for violating the Test Security and Confidentiality agreement. This agreement applies during and following the promotional testing process.

### PROHIBITED DEVICES AND MATERIALS

Electronic devices and personal study materials are not permitted in the testing sessions due to test security, confidentiality, and laws associated with this testing.

- Prohibited devices include, but are not limited to:
  - **cellular phone, audio/radio headsets, cameras, recording devices, tablets, watches with internet capabilities (smart watches), AI (artificial intelligence) devices/platforms (including AI glasses even if they are prescription), and other electronic devices with recording devices and/or communication capabilities.**
- Prohibited materials include, but are not limited to:
  - **your personal study notes, test reference materials, presentation aides, loose paper, etc.**

**If you have any questions about which devices or materials are permitted in the testing sessions, it is your responsibility to speak with an NTN or Department representative.**

Candidates should not bring these devices or materials to the testing site. If these devices or materials are brought on site, candidates will be required to check them in during the registration process. NTN and/or the department reserve the right to disqualify candidates from the promotional process if it is discovered that they are in possession of any of these devices or materials during the testing process.

## **TECHNICAL WAIVER**

Technical devices such as computers, audio devices, and/or recording devices may be used by NTN as a part of this process to either record performance and/or enhance the experience of the testing process. Technical issues may arise during the testing process. While NTN and the Department will work to resolve technical issues promptly, candidates are responsible for: immediately alerting proctors to any technical problems, following proctor instructions regarding technical difficulties, and understanding that technical issues affecting all candidates may result in rescheduling, while isolated technical issues affecting individual candidates will be addressed on a case-by-case basis

# 3.

## Multiple-Choice Written Exam

### TEST DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

Test Component	Date	Time	Location
Multiple-Choice Written Exam	April 9, 2026	<p>Registration opens at 8:00 AM and closes at 8:15 AM.</p> <p><b>Latecomers will not be allowed to test.</b></p> <p>Candidates should expect to be on site for approximately 3-hours.</p>	<p>PPA Event Center</p> <p>2106 Decatur Street</p> <p>Denver, CO 80211</p>

### WRITTEN EXAM CONTENT

The multiple-choice written test consists of 120 questions based on the following references:

- IFSTA Pumping and Aerial Apparatus Driver/Operator Handbook (2015), Third Edition
  - Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20
- Local 858 Firefighters Agreement
  - Article IV – Union Activity
  - Article XIV – Vacation
  - Article XV – Grievance Procedure
  - Article XVII – Workday and Workweek
  - Article XVIII – Sick Leave
  - Article VII - Productivity

- Article VIII – Call Back Compensation, Firefighter Obligation, Overtime
- Denver Fire Department Directives
  - 1010.01 – Driver Safety Program and Operator Classifications
  - 1010.02 – All DFD Related Accidents and Driver Review
  - 1010.05 – Driver’s License and Violation Reporting Policy
  - 1010.06 – Emergency (Code 10) Responses
  - 1010.07 – Use of Seatbelts in Department Vehicles
- Executive Orders
  - Executive Order 94 – City and County of Denver Employees’ Alcohol and Drug Policy
  - Executive Order 112 – Violence in the City Workplace
- Denver Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines
  - 2101.01 (Rank Structure)
  - 2105.01 (Operating Apparatus in Reverse)
  - 2105.02 (Ready Reserve Apparatus)
  - 2105.03 (Emergent Driving)
  - 2106.01 (Hose Inventory, Maintenance, and Testing)
  - 2106.03 (Personal Protective Equipment)
  - 2106.09 (Hose and Equipment Identification)
  - 2110.01 (Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) and Mayday Guidelines for Emergency Incidents)
  - 2111.03 (Elevator Rescue Response)
  - 2111.07 (Natural Gas)
  - 2111.13 (Lithium-Ion Batteries)
  - 2111.15 (Safety Vest Usage While in Traffic)
  - 2111.17 (Elevator Use During Fire Ground Operations)

- 2111.21 (High Risk Patient Extraction Response)
- 2111.22 (Carbon Monoxide)
- 2112.01 (Engine Company Operations Introduction)
- 2112.02 (Engine Company Operations Definitions)
- 2112.03 (Engine Company Operations Humat Valve Use)
- 2112.04 (Engine Company Operations at Grass, Weed Fires)
- 2112.05 (Engine Company Operations – Parties Trapped, Extrication Response)
- 2112.06 (Engine Company Operations at Motor Vehicle Fires)
- 2112.07 (Engine Company Operations at Single Family Dwellings)
- 2112.08 (Engine Company Operations at Multifamily Dwellings)
- 2112.09 (Engine Company Operations at Commercial Buildings)
- 2112.1 (Engine Company Operations – 5-inch Water Supply)
- 2112.11 (FOAM OPERATIONS)
- 2113.01 (Truck Company Operations at Single Family Residential, Multifamily and Mixed-use Occupancy Fires)
- 2113.04 (Truck Company Operations at Commercial Structures (i.e. Strip-Mall, Warehouse, Big Box Stores))
- 2114 (High-Rise Introduction)
- 2114.01 (High-Rise Command-and-Control)
- 2114.02 (High-Rise Interior Suppression Operations)
- 2114.03 (High-Rise Exterior Operations)
- 2114.04 (High-Rise Definitions)
- 2115.01 (Recognized Technical Certifications)
- 2115.03 (Confined Space Rescue)
- 2116.01 (Hazardous Materials Incidents)
- 2116.02 (Decontamination Procedures at a Hazardous Materials Incident)

- Denver Fire Department Pump Chart (Hydraulics)
- JPRs
  - JPR A-01 (Approach, Position, Engage and Stabilize Operations)
  - JPR A-03 (Emergency Backup Systems Operations)
  - JPR A-07 (Deploy Aerial for Window Rescue)
  - JPR A-08 (Deploy Aerial for Window Ventilation)
  - JPR A-09 (Deploy Aerial for Roof Operations)
  - JPR M-01 (Inspect Electrical System, Gauges, and Safety Features)
  - JPR M-02 (Fluids, Belts, and Engine Compartment)
  - JPR M-03 (Steering, Tires, Wheels, Brakes, and Suspension)
  - JPR M-05 (Perform Aerial Inspection and Maintenance)
  - JPR M-11 (Perform Air Brake Check)
  - JPR P-01 (Produce Hand Line Using Tank Water)
  - JPR P-01A (Water Supply Transition)
  - JPR P-02 (Produce Additional Hand Line)
  - JPR P-04 (Supply a Standpipe System)
  - JPR P-05 (Produce a Master Stream)
  - JPR P-06 (Relay Operation)
  - JPR P-11 (Monitor Pump Panel)
  - JPR P-14 (Going to Work – On a Humat)
  - JPR P-15 (On the Plug – Maximizing)
  - JPR P-16 (Change Over at Hydrant)

## WRITTEN EXAM DETAILS

- Each multiple-choice question will consist of a stem and four answer choice options (see example below).

- Candidates will be given up to three (3) hours to take the exam.
- Candidates will be provided with a machine-scored answer sheet on which to mark their answers during the exam.
  - **Only the answer sheets will be scored.** Candidates are allowed to make notes in the test booklet; however, test booklets will not be reviewed.
- The exam is a closed-book exam.
- Candidates are not allowed to bring any material from the reading list to the testing site.
- Two pencils per candidate will be provided during the administration.

### EXAMPLE WRITTEN EXAM QUESTION

Below is an example of the written exam question format.

47. According to General Order 2017 (Secondary Employment), reserve officers may work how many hours of secondary employment for each hour of volunteer time they provided during the previous month?
- A) 1 hour
  - B) 3 hours\*
  - C) 5 hours
  - D) 8 hours

\*Answer B is the best answer choice.

*General Order 2017 (Secondary Employment): Reserve officers may work 3 hours of secondary employment for each hour of volunteer time they provided during the previous month up to the 100-hour limit. (This is only an example resource; this is not a Department resource).*

### EXAM ADMINISTRATION

#### When to Arrive

Please arrive at 8:00 AM. Candidates who arrive after their designated check in time and do not attempt to contact the Civil Service Commission at 720-913-3370 may be considered a “No Show” and may be disqualified from the testing process absent extenuating circumstances. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your arrival time or if an emergency arises, please contact the Civil Service Commission immediately. The department will make final decisions on late arrival on a case-by-case basis considering the circumstances.

#### What to Bring

- Bring identification; either your department ID or government issued ID

- Water bottle

### Registration Process

Upon your arrival, proceed to the registration desk. During registration you will:

1. show your ID (government issued ID or Department ID);
2. sign the promotional process sign-in sheet;
3. sign the Test Security and Confidentiality Agreement; and
4. confirm that you do not have any prohibited items (see the section on Exam Security).

### Administration Flow

Step 1: Instructions	
<b>Instructions</b>  *est. 10 minutes	Candidates will be directed to a seat in the testing room and await further instructions from a proctor. Candidates may use the restroom while they are waiting for testing to begin.  Once all candidates are checked in and seated, the proctor will read the exam instructions and ensure that all candidates have their test materials.
Step 2: Test	
<b>Test</b>  *up to 3 hours	The proctor will begin the three-hour timer.  Candidates may use the restroom one at a time during the three-hour testing period; however, the timer will not be paused while they are using the restroom.
Step 3: Check Out	
<b>Completion</b>	Once you have completed the exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Turn in all test materials to the exam proctor</li> <li>● Turn in all protest forms (if applicable)</li> <li>● Sign out (if required)</li> <li>● Exit the testing site</li> </ul>

### PROTEST PROCESS DETAILS

Candidates must complete any desired protest forms prior to exiting the testing room. Candidates may ask for additional protest forms from the proctor. One protest form is to be completed per question. Candidates may not return to complete protests after exiting.

## SCORING

Following the completion of all written exam:

- Scores will be calculated and verified according to department procedures
- Results will be communicated to candidates by the Civil Service Commission
- Questions about scoring or results should be directed to [CSCinfo@denvergov.org](mailto:CSCinfo@denvergov.org)

The department reserves the right to extend timeline for results if additional verification or review is needed.

# 4.

## Multiple-Choice Written Exam Preparation Strategies

*\*Disclaimer: The preparation strategies below are suggestions only. Candidates are responsible for determining which preparation strategies and tips are appropriate for them.*

Leadership positions call for extensive knowledge of technical and management topics. This exam covers important issues from the assigned study material. Questions are designed to help the department identify the best potential managers and supervisors. The department is interested in promoting future leaders who will do the necessary studying and be able to apply the information on the job. You are competing for promotion with other qualified members of the department. This test is your opportunity to demonstrate your study ethic and personal effectiveness.

Studying the publications assigned is one way to improve your chances of ultimately being a successful candidate. There are many different approaches that you can take to studying. An excellent way to prepare for this type of test is to read each publication twice. First, read it straight through so that you understand the general focus as a whole. Next, reread the publication, making notes and highlighting the most important points that you see in each section. Other strategies are to use acronyms for remembering information or to form a study group. Candidates are encouraged to engage in the preparation strategies that work best for them.

### PREPARATION STRATEGIES

#### Minimize Environmental Distractions

Try to limit the number of distractions in your environment when studying. Distractions include, but are not limited to, email, cell phones, and even other people. Eliminating distractions will allow you to concentrate more easily so you can retain the information you are studying.

#### Avoid Burning the Midnight Oil

Retaining information is difficult for many people when they are tired. If possible, try to study when you are well-rested and ready to concentrate.

## **Review Chapter Overviews or Summaries**

Chapter overviews and summaries typically provide information on the most important points in a chapter. Oftentimes, reviewing these areas before reading a chapter helps you determine and understand the important topics in the chapter. After reading the chapter, you can use overviews and summaries to test yourself on critical knowledge from the chapter.

## **Quiz Yourself**

After reading a chapter or section, quiz yourself on important topics, definitions, etc. You can also use headings and specific terms to develop questions prior to reading the material. Afterward, while reading the section or chapter, you can try to answer those questions.

## **Have Someone Quiz You**

After you read a text, a great way to see if you have retained information is to have someone ask you questions regarding the material you just read.

## **Avoid Cramming**

Spreading your studying out over time will help you concentrate and retain the information you read.

## **Look Up Words or Phrases You Do Not Know**

Have a device available when studying so that you can look up words and phrases that you are not familiar with.

## **Mark it Up**

Highlight and/or underline important sections of the text while you study. Marking up the text will help you concentrate on important topics and also make it easier to review the material again later.

## **Take Notes**

Taking notes of the important topics you read in the text can be an efficient study aid to help you remember what you read.

## **TEST TAKING TIPS**

The exam questions have four answer choices. To get the highest score, always select the best choice listed, even if more than one choice seems plausible to you. Be sure to read all answers before deciding on your final answer. Do not focus on a choice that is not given to you. Do not get distracted by thinking of other possible responses that are not among the choices presented. Do not get stuck on the idea that you want to combine two responses. Demonstrate your judgment by picking the one answer that, by itself, is better than any other answer.

Prepare yourself physically for this exam as you would prepare yourself for any special assignment that requires concentration. Preparing in a way that is out of the ordinary may cause you problems. For example, consuming more caffeine than usual can make you jittery; less than usual can leave you listless. Get the amount of sleep that leaves you most alert. Bring any personal items you may need, such as eyeglasses, earplugs, or tissues.

Here are some additional tips to help you while taking the book-referenced exam. These simple procedures will help you avoid marking the wrong answer when you know the right one.

### **Listen To the Instructions**

Before you begin the exam, it is important that you read and/or listen to all instructions carefully. Ensure you know how to correctly fill out the answer sheet.

### **Become Familiar With Your Test**

When you begin the multiple-choice written test, glance through it to acquaint yourself with the task ahead of you. By doing so, this can help you quickly identify questions by the source material and help maximize your allotted exam time. You do not have to go through the questions in the order you find them.

### **Check The Time**

Check the time periodically throughout the exam so that you know how much time you have remaining.

### **Do Not Spend Too Much Time on One Question**

If you have a difficult time with a question, make a note for yourself to come back to the question at a later time. You may come back with a fresh approach, and a question you had trouble with earlier may seem easy.

### **Read Questions Thoroughly**

Read every question carefully before you attempt to answer it. This advice may sound too simple, but it is important. The main reason people miss questions when they know the material is that they do not read the question completely.

### **Circle or Underline Key Words**

When you read a question, circle or underline key words that are important to the question stem. This approach will both help you focus on the critical aspects of what is being asked, as well as help you remember the important aspects of the question if you need to skip it and return to it later in the test session.

### **Break a Sentence Up**

Sentences in a question can be long. If you do not understand the sentence, use slash marks to break it into smaller sections to better understand the sentence.

### **Read All of the Answers Before Choosing One**

The most common answer people choose is option A, whether it is right or wrong. The reason is that they think the first answer looks plausible, so they stop reading. Ensure that you read all of the answer choices before making a selection. Even if option A looks like a good answer, one of the other answer choices may be better. When you read the alternatives, you may think of something you had missed at first.

### **Use Process of Elimination**

If you are not sure of the correct answer, use the process of elimination. Eliminate answer choices that you know are definitely wrong. Then focus on selecting the best answer from the choices remaining.

### **Do Not Read Something into the Question That is Not There**

When reading a question, assume that all the information you need is there to help guide your answer selection. Consider only what the question is asking by looking at the details, information, and facts to help you clarify any confusion.

### **Answer Every Question**

There is no penalty for guessing. Even if you do not know the correct answer, you have a one in four chance of choosing the right one. If you can eliminate one or two of the alternatives, your chances are even better!

### **Fill Out your Answer Sheet Correctly**

In marking the answer sheet, be sure to fill in the blank that corresponds to the answer you have chosen. If you skip a question, make sure you skip to the right space on the answer sheet. If you mark the wrong answer and want to change it, erase your first mark completely. Remember to mark only one answer for each question.

### **Use Your Time Wisely**

If you finish early, use the remaining time to answer questions you skipped, re-evaluate questions you were unsure of, and check to ensure that you filled out your answer sheet correctly.

When taking your test, do not compromise your chances of success by trying to follow test-taking tips you may have found online as they may be unreliable or do not pertain to this promotional process.

# Practical Overview

## OVERVIEW

### What is an Engineer Practical?

An Engineer practical is a comprehensive, multi-faceted evaluation process designed to measure a candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the Engineer rank. Unlike traditional tests that focus solely on knowledge or academic understanding, a practical uses a variety of realistic job simulations to evaluate how well you can apply your skills, knowledge, and abilities in practical scenarios that mirror the actual challenges you may face in the role.

### Key Features of an Assessment Center

#### 1. Simulation-Based Evaluation

A practical typically consists of multiple stations that replicate realistic components that you will encounter on the job. These stations are carefully designed based on a thorough study of the role, which includes identifying the most important and frequently performed job tasks. Throughout a practical, candidates are given the opportunity to actively demonstrate their capabilities within the critical components of the Engineer role.

Each exercise simulates different aspects of the job, allowing candidates to showcase various skills required in the target role. These simulations might include tactical decision-making exercises, presentations, structured interviews addressing operational challenges, in-basket exercises, or other job-relevant scenarios. The exercises are designed to elicit observable behaviors that directly relate to successful job performance.

#### 2. Multiple Trained Assessors

A candidate's performance throughout a practical is observed and evaluated by a panel of assessors who are currently at the rank of Engineer or who previously served at that rank. These assessors are experienced professionals who understand the demands and responsibilities of the position. They receive extensive training on the specific stations, rating methods, and evaluation criteria before the assessment begins.

Having multiple assessors (rather than just one) is a critical feature of the evaluation method. This approach helps ensure fairness and reduces the potential for individual bias. Each assessor observes the candidate's performance and confirms their scores are aligned

with those of the other assessors at the station. This systematic approach ensures that all candidates are evaluated using the same standards.

### **3. Competency-Based Assessment**

Practicals evaluate specific job-related competencies (also called “dimensions”) that have been identified as critical for success in the position either through research and/or job analysis. These competencies represent the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) that distinguish effective job performance from less effective job performance. Unlike a written test that primarily measures knowledge, practicals evaluate candidates’ ability to apply that knowledge in realistic contexts. It measures not just what candidates know, but how effectively they apply that knowledge.

### **4. Designed to Predict**

Practicals are grounded in decades of research demonstrating that it is among the most valid and reliable predictors of future job performance. By observing how candidates handle realistic job scenarios under controlled conditions, assessors can make informed predictions about how those candidates will perform if selected for the target position, known as predictive validity. This predictive validity exists because the exercises are specifically designed to:

- Simulate the actual complexity and challenges of the job
- Require candidates to demonstrate the same competencies needed for success in the role
- Create conditions that allow multiple samples of behavior to be observed across different situations
- Use standardized evaluation methods that have been validated against actual job performance/requirements

The assessment also allows for the systematic viewing and scoring of behavior, ensuring that results are fair, job-related, and legally defensible. All candidates complete the same exercises and are evaluated using the same criteria, which means everyone has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their qualifications in a consistent and fair manner.

## **SCORING**

### **Scoring Process**

The assessment center uses a rigorous and standardized scoring process to ensure fairness and consistency across all candidates. Below are key features of that scoring process.

#### **1. Multiple Trained Assessors**

Candidate performance is evaluated by a panel of trained assessors who have extensive

experience at or above the target rank. Prior to the practical, these assessors participate in comprehensive training that covers:

- The requirements and responsibilities of the target rank
- The specific stations and dimensions being measured
- The scoring procedures

This training ensures that all assessors use the same standards and evaluation methods when observing all candidate performance.

## 2. Behavioral Observation and Rating

During each exercise, assessors carefully observe candidate performance. After the exercise concludes, assessors as a group evaluate the performance of a candidate. Assessors use predetermined scoring indicators that describe what desirable actions are for each station component. This approach ensures that ratings are based on concrete expected actions, rather than subjective impressions or personal preferences.

## 3. Consensus

NTN utilizes a consensus scoring approach. Consensus scoring is a collaborative evaluation process where multiple assessors discuss their observations and ratings of a candidate's performance before arriving at a final score for each rating. Rather than simply averaging individual assessor ratings, consensus scoring involves assessors meeting together to share the specifics of what they heard and observed, discuss their preliminary ratings, and come to a complete agreement on a final score that accurately reflects the candidate's demonstrated performance.

### Why is Consensus Scoring Important?

- **Increases Rating Accuracy** - Multiple observers are better than one. Each assessor may notice different aspects of a candidate's performance. By pooling their observations, assessors create a more complete picture of what the candidate did.
- **Reduces Individual Bias** - Every person has unconscious biases and preferences. When assessors must justify their ratings to colleagues using specific behavioral evidence, it becomes much harder for individual bias to influence scores. If an assessor's rating isn't supported by observable behaviors, the consensus process will reveal this through discussion.
- **Ensures Consistent Standards and Provides Quality Control** - Through discussion, assessors calibrate their understanding of the rating scales and ensure they're applying the same standards across all candidates. If one assessor is rating more strictly or leniently than others, the consensus process helps bring ratings into alignment with the group standard.

# 6.

## Practical Administration

### TEST DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

Test Component	Date	Time	Location
Practical	May 11 – 15, 2026	Candidates will receive individual report times.	Rocky Mountain Academy 5440 Roslyn Street  Denver, CO 80216

### CHECK IN AND REGISTRATION

#### When to Arrive

Please arrive at the report time provided to you by the Civil Service Commission. Candidates who arrive after their designated check in time and do not attempt to contact the Civil Service Commission at 720-913-3370 may be considered a “No Show” and may be disqualified from the testing process absent extenuating circumstances. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your arrival time or if an emergency arises, please contact the Civil Service Commission immediately. The department will make final decisions on late arrival on a case-by-case basis considering the circumstances.

#### Testing Duration

Candidates should plan to be onsite for the assessment center administration for approximately 2.5 hours.

#### What to Bring

- Bring identification; either your department ID or government issued ID
- Water bottle
- You may bring a stopwatch or a watch that does not have internet capabilities

#### Registration Process

Upon your arrival, proceed to the registration desk. During registration you will:

5. show your ID (government issued ID or Department ID);
6. sign the promotional process sign-in sheet;
7. sign the Test Security and Confidentiality Agreement;
8. confirm that you do not have any prohibited items (see the section on Exam Security); and
9. receive a candidate ID badge.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Candidates will be informed of the order in which they are completing the stations upon arrival to the practical.

## **CHECK OUT**

Upon completion of all of your assessment center exercises you will:

- Return any remaining test materials to the exam proctors;
- Turn in your candidate ID badge; and
- Sign out (if required)

## **ASSESSMENT CENTER ASSESSORS**

The assessment center assessors will be seasoned fire service members recruited from external agencies to ensure objectivity and fairness. All assessors hold the rank for which candidates are testing or higher. Prior to the practical, all assessors will complete comprehensive training facilitated by NTN staff, which includes scoring procedures, review of evaluation criteria, and bias training to ensure consistency and reliability across all candidate evaluations. During the practical administration, the candidate will be evaluated by groups of 2 or more assessors.

## **SCORING**

Following the completion of all assessment components:

- Scores will be calculated and verified according to department procedures
- Results will be communicated to candidates by the Civil Service Commission
- Questions about scoring or results should be directed to [CSCinfo@denvergov.org](mailto:CSCinfo@denvergov.org)

The department reserves the right to extend timeline for results if additional verification or review is needed.

## Practical Stations

\*All of the information included in this section is subject to change, including but not limited to exercise format, timing, etc. All test-taking tips are suggestions only. Candidates are responsible for selecting preparation strategies that work best for them. All exercise examples are only examples, provided to give candidates a general picture of the exercise format. The example content will not be used during the assessment center.

The practical exam consists of four stations: Pumping, Aerial, Driving, and Maintenance. These exercises have been developed to simulate real situations performed on the job by Denver Fire Department Engineers. NTN facilitated meetings with Denver Fire Department SMEs to develop and review all materials related to these exercises.

Candidates will be provided written and verbal instructions before each station. If instructions are unclear or confusion arises, ask the rater for clarification immediately. Assessors will provide as much information as deemed appropriate and fair to all candidates participating in this exam. No question will be answered that would provide an unfair advantage to a candidate.

Each exercise will be based on department operations manuals (e.g., JPR's, aerial manual, pumping manual) maintenance rig protocols, and department charts (e.g., friction loss pump).

You will be escorted to the starting point of each station. Once you start a station, you will be evaluated by trained assessors assigned to that station. The assessors will be observing your performance and rating your performance based on a standardized scoring sheet created in partnership with Department SMEs.

Safety in practical testing is paramount. If at any time there is a situation that is not safe, candidates should immediately inform the assessors. If instructions are provided that candidates deem to be unsafe, candidates have the responsibility to inform the assessors. Furthermore, the assessors will stop the candidate if they feel an unsafe situation is being created.

If an unsafe event is caused by the candidate, the exercise will be stopped until the situation is rectified. During this time, the exercise timer will remain active and points will be deducted as appropriate. If the candidate is not responsible for the unsafe condition, the candidate will not be penalized and the timer will be stopped until the situation is resolved. There are no unsafe conditions that have been purposely incorporated in the testing process.

When candidates report at their assigned time for the practical test, candidates are required to wear

a Class B uniform. In addition, candidates must bring your work gloves, eye protection, and steel toed shoes to the practical test. No name tags will be permitted.

### **Station 1: Pumping**

This exercise was developed to simulate commonly performed pumping activities as outlined in the JPRs. These activities will include calculating hydraulics problems and hands-on performance to demonstrate the candidate's ability to pump the conditions established in the problems. Candidates will be provided with a Denver Pump Chart and the appropriate writing materials. Candidates will be provided written and verbal instructions before each exercise and the performance on these evolutions will be evaluated by trained assessors.

### **Station 2: Safe Driving**

The exercise was developed to assess candidates' ability to perform routine driving maneuvers based on the JPRs. Candidates will be provided with written and verbal instructions before each station component and performance on these evolutions will be evaluated by trained assessors.

### **Station 3: Aerial Operations**

This exercise was developed to simulate commonly performed aerial operations based on the JPRs. This exercise will include driving set-up and operations, as well as knowledge of aerial backup systems and emergency overrides. This will include, but is not limited to, driving, spotting, preparing for operations, operating the aerial and securing the aerial for driving. Candidates will be provided written and verbal instructions before each exercise and performance on these evolutions will be evaluated by trained assessors.

### **Station 4: Maintenance**

This exercise was developed to simulate commonly performed maintenance checks based on the JPRs. Candidates will be expected to identify and verbalize the tasks as identified in the JPRs. Candidates will be provided written and verbal instructions before each exercise and your performance on these evolutions will be evaluated by trained assessors.

# 8.

## Practical Preparation

*\*Disclaimer: The preparation strategies below are suggestions only. Candidates are responsible for determining which preparation strategies and tips are appropriate for them.*

Although you may be able to do well without preparing, you can always do better with preparation. Remember, you are competing against others who are also qualified candidates, so you need to do your best to stand out as excellent. The more prepared you are, the more relaxed and confident you will be.

The information below is meant to be a brief general overview to help you prepare for practical exam components that take place before several raters. There are many other resources, including books, classes and on-line resources that are available, should you choose to use them.

As you approach a promotional competition, the most important thing is your own personal readiness to assume a higher-level position and how that compares with the readiness of others. That does not mean formal preparation only, such as education and study. It also means your mental, intellectual and developmental readiness.

In the practical assessment center, you will interact directly with several raters that will ask questions, listen to your answers and observe your behavior. There is nothing to be gained, and much to be lost, by trying to pretend you are someone other than who you are. You do, however, want to show yourself to your best advantage.

### Practice Dates

Denver Fire Department will offer practice dates for the station exercises.

**Advanced Hydraulics Class** – March 24th and 25th , 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

**Engine Operations Hands on Training** – April 15th and 20th, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Truck Operations Hands on Training** - March 20th and April 1st, 8:00 – 12:00 PM

**Maintenance Hands on Training** – March 4th, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### Arrive early

This is one of the easiest and most effective ways to minimize stress.

### Prepare

You may be able to do well without preparing, but you can always do better with preparation. Remember, you are competing against others who are also very good and you need to do your best

to stand out as excellent. The more prepared you are, the more relaxed and confident you will be. There are many ways you can prepare:

- **Understand the job.** Understanding the job itself is the most important way to improve your competitiveness for promotion. The more you understand about supervision, management, department practices and organizational goals, the better you will be able to answer potential questions relating to the job and organization. Expand your understanding of management issues and solutions through study and seeking mentors. Even reading one management book can give you more depth.
- **Minimize how much you will need to “wing it.”** A practical is like an emergency response. You never know precisely what the demands will be, but the more you have practiced what you can, the easier it is to improvise and adapt. You will have to demonstrate flexibility and on-the-spot thinking. Try to develop your thinking as much as you can in advance. Study your handouts. Learn as much as you can about the job. Think about how you would handle management challenges like those you have observed.

### **Do not pretend**

Represent yourself honestly and do not try to fake it. Don't spin your experience to sound like something it's not. Do not use words you do not know as that is a quick way to cast doubt on your credibility, intelligence and integrity. It is easy for assessors to identify candidates who have memorized answers to questions that they don't really understand or believe.

### **Display confidence**

You are applying for a position of greater responsibility. You will need to be a role model of confidence and credibility.

- **Show that you can communicate with managers.** Answer questions; use eye contact.
- **Never answer a question you don't understand.** Ask for clarification when needed.
- **Don't act confused.** If you are confused just say so and ask the raters for clarification. Don't self-deprecate or apologize for your answers.
- **Think aloud.**

Whatever your answer to a question is, the raters may understand it better if you think aloud. Considering options is an important part of management thinking.

### **Imagine yourself in the assessor's place**

Be friendly and respectful to the assessors; they are trying to do a good job, just like you. Don't act defensive if they ask for information that you think they should already know. This is your chance to show how you respond in public situations and how easy you might be to work with.

### **Don't make assumptions**

The assessors are considering large amounts of complex information about many candidates. Don't assume anyone has memorized or knows anything about you. If something is important for understanding what you are saying, just tell them.

**Be concise in your communication**

Sufficient time is provided in the exercises to communicate the necessary answers to questions asked. Time management is a critical management skill that requires preparation.

**Relax as much as you can**

Try to maintain physical relaxation and use appropriate gestures. Smile - don't act like you are in pain and don't feel you have to fill every silence. Answer questions and then wait for the next question. At the end of the exercises, thank the raters.

**Do your best**

Remember, the most important thing is to represent yourself honestly and do your best.

Good luck to you in the promotional process!

**If you have any questions about the process, please contact the Denver Civil Service Commission.**