

**PROMOTION PROCEDURE GUIDELINES  
UNIFORMED FIRE CLASSIFICATIONS EXCEPT FIRE CHIEF**

**CITY OF LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS**

**NOVEMBER 12, 2009**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Promotion Procedure Guidelines (hereafter referred to as Guidelines) is to provide direction for the promotion of Uniformed Fire Personnel for all ranks, except Fire Chief. Promotion refers to the advancement of an employee from one classification to a position of another classification of a higher grade pursuant to a competitive selection process.

**II. RESPONSIBILITY**

The responsibility for establishing policy and general procedure guidelines regarding the promotion of Uniformed Fire Personnel rests with the City of Little Rock Civil Service Commission.

The responsibility for the administration of this Uniformed Fire Personnel promotion process rests with the Director of Human Resources (hereafter referred to as the Director). The Director is authorized and directed to develop and implement administrative procedures and test components to ensure the efficient and professional administration of the guidelines. The Director may modify such administrative procedures and test components as necessary to ensure compliance with the Guidelines. The Director shall also act as a technical advisor to the Civil Service Commission with respect to promotion matters. The responsibility for the initiation of timely promotion related activities for all ranks within the Little Rock Fire Department rests with the Director.

The Fire Chief shall ensure the:

- timely development of reading/study lists for candidates and distribution thereof, and
- availability of in-house subject matter experts and raters to assist in the development and administration of components (written exam, assessment center exercises, practical exams, etc. ), and
- timely distribution of promotion process announcements.

**III. PROCEDURES**

**A. Announcements**

The Director shall make every reasonable effort to announce and implement testing procedures according to a timetable that will result in certification of a new eligibility list upon expiration of the previous list. A promotion process for the classification of Assistant Fire Chief shall be scheduled to fill a vacancy or a projected vacancy.

1. At least 120 days before the written test for those ranks requiring a written test, the Director shall make every reasonable effort to announce the following:
  - eligibility requirements, and
  - a list of possible source materials from which the test will be constructed.
  
2. At least 30 days before the written test for those ranks requiring a written test, the Director shall announce the following:
  - The date, location, and time of the written examination.
  - Eligibility to compete in the selection process.
  - The promotion components, maximum points possible per each component, and any other relevant information regarding the components or the process.
  - Source materials used in the construction of the test.
  - The approximate percentage of questions per source.
  - Other information as necessary.
  
3. For Assistant Fire Chief at least 30 days before the first component, the Director shall announce the following:
  - The date, location, and time of the first component.
  - Eligibility to compete in the selection process.
  - The promotion components, maximum points possible per each component, and any other relevant information regarding the components or the process.
  - Other information as necessary.

B. General Provisions

Letters or notices to candidates shall be issued as necessary by the Director to explain or give notice about critical dates, action required by the candidate, documents required from the candidate specific to each component, and other information. Failure to comply with the requirements described in these letters or /notices may result in disqualification.

Candidates who arrive late for any selection component or fail to submit a Department of Human Resources Application or component documents by the announced deadline shall be immediately disqualified.

C. Application

Eligible current City employees must complete and submit an Application form to the Human Resources Department by the announced application deadline for all announced positions.

#### IV. **ELIGIBILITY LISTS**

- A. Upon completion of the promotion components (Chart II), including any appeals, the candidates shall be ranked in the order of their standing and their names placed on a list to be submitted for certification by the Civil Service Commission.
- B. For the classifications of Apparatus Engineer, Fire Captain, and Battalion Chief, the effective period of the eligibility list shall be two years from the effective date of certification by the Civil Service Commission provided that such period is announced in accordance with Item III. A. 2.
- C. For Assistant Fire Chief, the effective period of the eligibility list shall be one year from the effective date of certification by the Civil Service Commission.
- D. The Fire Chief may select any of the three (3) standing highest on the certified list for promotion to the rank for which the candidate has competed providing that the candidate meets the minimum service requirement for promotion to that rank as indicated in Chart I. Regardless of ranking on the certified list, a person will not be considered as standing among the three (3) highest on the certified list until the candidate meets the minimum service requirement as indicated in Chart I.
- E. At the expiration of the effective period of the list, all right of priority under the list shall cease.

#### V. **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- A. A Little Rock Fire Department employee serving in an eligible classification as listed in Chart I shall be eligible to compete in the promotion process for Apparatus Engineer, Fire Captain or Battalion Chief if the employee satisfies the minimum service requirements listed in Chart I or if the employee is within twelve (12) months of meeting the time in service requirements listed in Chart I.
- B. To be eligible for promotion to the next rank, the candidate must be a uniformed Little Rock Fire Department employee who satisfies the eligibility requirements indicated in Chart I and stands among the top three on the certified eligibility list.
- C. For Fire Apparatus Engineer, Fire Captain, and Battalion Chief, the time in service in the eligible class shall be computed to the date of expiration of the current applicable eligibility list or the expiration date of the most recent applicable list, if no list is in effect at the time of the promotion process announcement. For the rank of Assistant Chief the time in service will be computed to the 15<sup>th</sup> day after the application deadline.

**CHART I  
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

<b>For Promotion To (Subject Rank):</b>	<b>Eligible Classification</b>	<b>Minimum Service In Eligible Classification</b>
Fire Apparatus Engineer	Firefighter	5 years
Fire Captain	Fire Apparatus Engineer	2 years
Battalion Chief	Fire Captain	3 years
Assistant Chief	Battalion Chief	1 year

## VI. PROMOTION COMPONENTS

The promotion process for each rank is comprised of different selection components (see Chart II).

**CHART II  
PROMOTION COMPONENTS  
AND MAXIMUM POINTS PER COMPONENT**

<b>Promotion To (Subject Rank):</b>	<b>Written Test</b>	<b>Practical Exam</b>	<b>Assessment Center / Behavioral Simulation</b>	<b>Structured Interview</b>	<b>Accomplishments Review</b>	<b>Seniority*</b>
Fire Apparatus Engineer	55 points	35 points				10 points
Fire Captain	45 points		40 points			15 points
Battalion Chief	30 points		40 points		20 points	10 points
Assistant Chief				50 points	50 points	

\*See Item VI. D. regarding calculation of seniority.

### A. Composite Score

1. Candidates will be ranked by composite score. The composite score is the sum of the points obtained by an individual in each component.
2. Beginning the first Human Resources business day after the Civil Service Commission has certified an eligibility list for the specified rank, all candidates for promotion may personally review composite score information that they received on all promotion factors.

### B. Written Examination

For each rank, all candidates for the relevant rank will be administered the written test at the same time and date.

A candidate may be permitted to take the written examination at an alternate location pursuant to the following circumstances, if:

- the candidate is scheduled for military duty on the day of the test and the candidate provides acceptable documentation that he made reasonable effort to reschedule the military duty, or,
- the candidate is on Little Rock Fire Department business out-of-state on the day of the test, or
- the candidate is out-of-state attending to an emergency situation such as the death or hospitalization of a member of the candidate's immediate family, and
- acceptable written evidence of the scheduling conflict is provided to the Director a minimum of two weeks before the announced test date and time (unless the situation is considered an emergency), and

- an approved test monitor is available at the alternate location and the monitor agrees to perform the monitor duties as prescribed by the Human Resources Department,
- the monitor guarantees that security of test materials as prescribed will be maintained prior to, during, and after the scheduled test time, and
- the test is administered at an approved alternate test location at the announced time and date.

A committee consisting of one representative of the Fire Department and one representative from the Human Resources Department will determine if the requirements for an alternate test location are satisfied and sufficient timely notification was received. Approval or denial of the alternate test location by the Committee is final.

The written examination will cover the sources (or a portion thereof) specified in the reading list. The Director shall implement procedures to ensure the security of the examination during the test development and test administration process. Candidates must pass the test to be eligible to participate in the remainder of the promotion process.

Candidates will be notified of the passing score prior to the third Human Resources Department business day after administration of the written examination. No passing score will be determined prior to administration of the test. A modified Angoff Procedure, which combines a difficulty index (derived from SMEs) with an analysis of the actual test scores, natural breaks in the distribution, descriptive statistics and test utility, will be utilized to determine the passing score.

#### 1. Review of Written Examination

Beginning the third Human Resources Department business day following the written examination, candidates may review their written examination answer sheets and a test key and submit a written appeal relative to the accuracy of any test question or keyed answer during published review hours. The "Review Period" duration is five Human Resources Department business days. If a holiday observed by the City, or extraordinary circumstance as determined by the Director, occurs in this period, the review period shall be extended to provide candidates the entire five Human Resources Department business days for the Review Period.

#### 2. Appeal of Written Examination Items

A candidate may appeal any test question or keyed answer. The appeal shall be submitted in writing to the Director during the Review Period. The Director shall confer with a consultant, if necessary, and other advisors to determine the final keyed answer. Appeals will be published without the name of the appealing candidate so that other interested candidates may freely support or challenge the appeal.

If an appeal is found to be valid, the Director will determine the appropriate remedial action and rescore all test answer sheets. Candidates will be notified of the appeal decision(s), the basis of decision(s), and their revised test score.

### C. Assessment Center / Behavioral Simulation

This component will consist of exercises designed to assess supervisory or management skills. The candidate's responses will be observed by an assessor or assessors, or videotaped, or recorded in written form in the case of an in-basket or other written exercise, and presented to a panel of trained assessors for evaluation. For the Fire Captain and Battalion Chief processes, the City may administer and/or score the Assessment Center/Behavior Simulation, or contract with a firm to administer and/or score the component, utilizing current or former fire personnel or other trained assessment professionals. Qualified assessors may reside inside or outside the state of Arkansas. Current or former LRFD personnel will not be utilized as assessors for Assessment Center exercises in which the identity of the candidates is readily apparent (i.e. videotaped counseling sessions, etc.). For exercises in which the candidate will remain anonymous, such as a Situational Judgment Test (SJT), which requires the candidate to respond only in a written format, current or former LRFD personnel may be utilized as assessors. Candidates' written responses will be typed to ensure candidate identity remains anonymous.

Candidates will receive feedback concerning their Assessment Center performance after the final certification.

#### 1. Review of Videotape of Exercises

Beginning the third Human Resources Department business day following the release of the scores for this component, candidates may review the videotape of their performance in the exercise(s). The "Review Period" is five Human Resources Department business days. If a holiday observed by the City, or extraordinary circumstance as determined by the Director, occurs in this period, the review period shall be extended to provide candidates the entire five Human Resources Department business days for the Review Period.

#### 2. Appeal

A candidate may appeal the outcome in this examination by the following appeal procedures. After notification of their rating on this component, candidates may initiate an appeal by reviewing their video-recorded performance and/or scoring criteria during the Review Period. After reviewing this video, candidates will be required to provide a written explanation of their appeal.

Utilizing the videotaped information and/or scoring criteria and the appeal information submitted by the candidate, a panel of assessors (the "Review Panel") will review the appeal and decide whether the candidate's rating is: a) reasonable (remains the same), b) should be raised, or c) should be lowered.

The Review Panel will be trained to conduct the review and may be drawn in part or whole from the group of assessors who originally rated the candidate. Candidates may appeal their results of an assessment center/behavioral simulation exercise developed by the Human Resources Department by following the procedures presented above. The Review

Panel may consist of current or former fire personnel or other trained assessment professionals.

D. Seniority Points Calculation

For purposes of calculating seniority points to be considered in the promotion process, Uniformed service time must be active, consecutive service time in the Little Rock Fire Department. Military service during employment with the Little Rock Fire Department will not be considered a break in employment or service time.

1. For Promotion to Fire Apparatus Engineer

Seniority points shall be calculated on a per day accrual rate (up to one point per year) from hire date as a Firefighter to the date of the written test, to a maximum of ten (10) points.

2. For Promotion to Captain

One (1) point per year beginning with the first day of the eighth year to a maximum of eleven (11) points and two (2) points per year beginning with the first day of the 19<sup>th</sup> year to a maximum of four (4) points. Maximum points shall not exceed fifteen (15).

3. For Promotion to Battalion Chief

One (1) point per year beginning the first day of the eleventh year to a maximum of ten (10) points.

E. Practical Exam

A “Practical Examination” is an examination which permits the evaluation of a candidate’s skill in the operation of Fire Department apparatus(es) and/or equipment. The Fire Chief and individuals designated by the Fire Chief as the “Rating Panels” shall be responsible for conducting and scoring the Practical Examination. A Practical Examination” will be administered to each candidate for Fire Apparatus Engineer who has passed the written examination and is eligible for further consideration.

Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure gender and race diversity of personnel on the Rating Panels. Current or former LRFD personnel may be utilized in the Rating Panels for this component and panel members will hold a rank equal to or greater than the rank for which the candidate is applying. Reasonable effort will be made to ensure that the Practical Examinations are videotaped.

The results of the Practical Examination shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Department as soon as possible after the completion of the examinations. If a candidate fails the practical exam, the candidate will not be eligible for further consideration in the current promotional cycle. Candidates will be informed of failing criteria before the administration of the Practical Examination.

1. Review of Videotape of Exercises

Beginning the third Human Resources Department business day following the release of the scores for this component, candidates may review the videotape and/or rating criteria of their performance in the exercise(s). The "Review Period" is five Human Resources Department business days. If a holiday observed by the City, or extraordinary circumstance as determined by the Director occurs in this period, the review period shall be extended to provide applicants the entire five Human Resources Department business days for the Review Period.

2. Appeal

Candidates may appeal their outcome in this component by the following appeal procedures. Following notification of their rating on this component, candidates may initiate an appeal by making an appointment to review their video-recorded performance and/or scoring criteria during the review period. After reviewing this video, candidates will be required to provide a written explanation of their appeal.

Utilizing the videotaped information, if necessary, scoring criteria and the appeal information submitted by the candidate, a panel of assessors (the "Review Panel") will review the appeal and decide whether the candidate's rating is: a) reasonable (remains the same), b) should be raised, or c) should be lowered.

The Review Panel will be trained to conduct the review and may be drawn in part or whole from the group of assessors who originally rated the candidate. As indicated regarding the original assessors, the panel members will hold a rank equal to or higher than the rank for which the candidate is applying.

- F. Accomplishments Review

1. An accomplishments review will be conducted for the ranks of Battalion Chief and Assistant Fire Chief. Candidates must complete a questionnaire prior to the interview and for each designated knowledge, skill, or ability they must report a specific and verifiable accomplishment that demonstrates their expertise. During the interview, candidates report their accomplishments and interviewers follow a structured interview guide to ask follow-up questions and probe the nature and value of each accomplishment.

- a. Battalion Chief: The Review panel for the Battalion Chief process will include the Fire Chief or designee, and two designees of the City Manager.

- b. Assistant Fire Chief: The Review Panel will be comprised of a minimum of one individual chosen by the City of Little Rock City Manager, and two former or current Fire Department personnel from within or outside the state of Arkansas equal to or higher than the rank of Assistant Fire Chief.



2. Appeal

The rating of the accomplishments review panel is not subject to appeal.

G. Structured Interview

1. A Structured Panel Interview will be conducted for the rank of Assistant Fire Chief. A portion of the Structured Interview may consist of one or more Situational Judgment Tests (SJTs). A portion, or all, of the Structured Interview may be conducted with a live panel of raters (the "Interview Panel") (depending upon the number of candidates).

An Interview Panel will be comprised of: one individual chosen by the City of Little Rock City Manager, one individual chosen by the Director of Human Resources, and one individual chosen by the Fire Chief. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure gender and race diversity of personnel on the Interview Panels. The interviews may be videotaped.

2. Review of Exercises

Beginning the third Human Resources Department business day following the release of the scores for this component, candidates may review their performance in the exercise. The "Review Period" duration is five Human Resources Department business days. If a holiday observed by the City, or extraordinary circumstance as determined by the Director, occurs in this period, the review period shall be extended to provide applicants the entire five Human Resources Department business days for the Review Period.

3. Appeal

Candidates may appeal their rating(s) related to the Situation Judgment Test question(s). In order to appeal, the candidate must follow the provided appeal procedures after notification of the rating on this component. Candidates will be required to provide a written explanation of their appeals.

Utilizing all available information and any appeal information submitted by the candidate, a panel of raters (the "Review Panel") will review the appeal and decide whether the candidate's rating is: a) reasonable (remains the same), b) should be raised, or c) should be lowered.

The Review Panel will be trained to conduct the review and may be drawn in part or whole from the group of raters who originally rated the candidate.

Non-situational and scenario questions are not subject to appeal.

H. Civil Service Interview

The Civil Service Commission shall conduct a panel interview of the top three candidates certified to the eligibility list for the rank of Assistant Chief. The Commission will make an informal non-binding recommendation to the Fire Chief.

## **VII. MISCELLANEOUS**

The Human Resources Department will provide orientation for candidates following successful completion of the written test regarding additional promotion components. The orientation may be conducted via live presentation, through distribution of handouts or be web-based.

Any internal raters, assessors, review panelists and other individuals utilized during a testing process will be required to sign a statement stating that they will comply with all of the administrator's instructions including, but not limited to, basing their rating only on the observed performance of the candidate. The statement will also include a declaration that the rater is not in a familial or consensual relationship with the candidate, as defined in the City of Little Rock Administrative Policies and Procedures manual.

The Human Resources Department will provide a copy of the certified list to the Fire Chief as soon as reasonably possible following Civil Service Commission certification. The Fire Chief is then responsible for the distribution of the certified list to all work locations as soon as reasonably possible.

These guidelines shall be effective immediately following approval by the Civil Service Commission.

Previous Promotion Procedure Guidelines for uniform fire classifications were revised and adopted by the Commission: January 25, 2001, May 10, 2001, May 29, 2003, June 23, 2005, December 15, 2005, and September 25, 2008.