South Sioux City Firefighter Physical Agility Test

This physical test has been designed to assess important physical abilities necessary for effective job performance as a firefighter. These tasks were developed to mirror scenarios that firefighters encounter on the job. These tasks repeat basic skills that do not require training or previous experience as a firefighter to successfully complete.

The selection process is very competitive. Although you are not required to read or use this Orientation and Preparation Guide, we encourage you to do so. The more prepared you are, the more likely you are to pass the test.

There are eight (8) job-related physical agility test components that are timed in a continuous series. The following is an overview of the components/stations of the physical agility test:

Events:

1. Stationary Bike Ride
2. Charged Hose Line Advance
3. Equipment Carry
4. Ladder Heel
5. Ladder Raise
6. Simulated Cot Carry
7. Hose Hoist
8. Victim Drag/Rescue

The following points should help to familiarize you with what will take place on the day of the test.

- Applicants will wear a weighted vest for all components of the test. The vest weighs approximately 30 pounds.
- Applicants are encouraged to wear athletic shoes and appropriate clothing for physically demanding work. You will be performing physical acts that demonstrate strength, agility, and endurance, and it is important to be outfitted in attire that does not hinder your performance. During the Firefighter Physical Agility Test you may get dirty or wet from maneuvering through the exercises. You are encouraged to dress accordingly.
- A safety helmet will be provided at the test site for your use and must be worn for the duration of the Physical Agility Test. Protective gloves are optional and it is the candidate's choice whether or not to use gloves. You may bring your own gloves, kneepads, etc. to use; however, the testing authority reserves the right to inspect all equipment, and to disallow equipment, to ensure that its use does not affect the fair and impartial administration of the Firefighter Physical Agility Test.

- All eight components of the Firefighter Physical Agility Test will be timed in a series. The test has a cutoff time and failure to complete the course in the allowed time will result in disqualification.
- You will not run during the test. Running is defined as any time both feet are off the ground at the same time while you are advancing on the course. You are encouraged to move with haste but shall not run.
- Test monitors will be assigned to time you while on the course. You are allowed to ask the test monitor questions concerning course rules and layout before beginning the course and while on the course.
- You will be allowed as much time as needed to complete each individual component of the Firefighter Physical Agility Test within the maximum allotted time, which is six (6) minutes.
- Unnecessarily dropping, throwing or other intentional misuse of any of the testing props will be grounds to disqualify a candidate.
- It is the expectation of the South Sioux City Fire Department that this orientation guide will provide you with sufficient information to prepare for and succeed in the Firefighter Physical Agility Test. The eight events that comprise the Physical Agility Test are outlined for you on the following pages, along with suggestions for preparing for each event.

Please note that suggestions regarding preparation activities are simply suggestions intended to offer the candidate a means of practicing for the Firefighter Physical Agility Test. The South Sioux City Fire Department cannot be held responsible for injury or expenses incurred during preparation for the Physical Agility Test.

Stationary Bike Ride

Station Description:

A stationary cardio bike will be placed on the apparatus floor for the candidate to mount and ride for no more than three minutes attempting to reach a goal of 50 calories burned. The candidate will have three minutes to accomplish 50 calories burned, or they will fail. The candidate is required to maintain four points of contact throughout the event and will only receive one warning for breaking four points of contact. If the candidate fails the first attempt, they will be allowed to retry after the cooldown period. Once the candidate has completed the 50 calories burned, they will safely dismount the bicycle, and the time for the Physical Agility Test will begin.

Preparation:

The candidate can ride a stationary bike or similar cardio machine that tests the strength of the lower body.

Charged Line Advance

Station Description:

One hundred and fifty feet of 1 ¾ inch line will be connected to a water supply (Fire Engine) source. The candidate will be required to pull the charged hose line for 90 feet. The candidate is not permitted to run but may move quickly and safely in an expedited manner. The candidate will complete this station when both feet cross the marked line.

Preparation:

This station assesses your leg strength and overall cardiovascular endurance. You can prepare for this event by dragging a weighted object across the ground using a rope for a distance of 90 feet.

Equipment Carry

Station Description:

The candidate will carry a Chain Saw & a K12 Rescue Saw for a total distance of 100 feet. The candidate will carry the tool for 50 feet, walk to and around a predetermined point, and then walk back another 50 feet to place the tools back down where they were retrieved from.

Preparation:

This station assesses core body strength, grip strength and overall cardiovascular endurance. You may prepare for this event by carrying 2 - 30 lb. dumbbells for a distance of 100 feet.

Ladder Heel

Station Description:

The candidate will raise a 14-foot Roof ladder by 'walking it up' using a hand-over-hand technique, touching each rung. The ladder will be lowered in the reverse manner. The candidate must 'walk' the ladder all the way to a vertical position and all the way back down to the ground touching each rung of the ladder. The candidate must not drop the ladder or grasp the rails of the ladder at any time.

Preparation:

This station assesses basic coordination and upper body strength. You may prepare for this exercise by 'heeling' a ladder up against the side of a fixed structure.

Ladder Raise

Station Description:

The candidate will raise the fly section of a 24-foot extension ladder using the halyard. The ladder is secured in the erect position with two proctor firefighters. The candidate will use the hand over hand technique to extend the fly section of the ladder to the tallest point of the ladder. The candidate will then lower the fly section down using the hand under hand technique and lock the ladder in place on the lowest available rung. The candidate will only advance to the next station when given the okay by the proctor.

Preparation:

To simulate the ladder raise exercise, you can tie a rope securely to a weighted bag and place the rope over a sturdy horizontal bar that is eight to ten feet above the ground. Then you can use the same movements as you would in the ladder raise to bring the weight to the top of the bar and slowly lower it back to the ground.

Simulated Cot Carry (On Stairs)

Station Description:

The candidate will carry two fifty-pound dumbbells, one in each hand, up 11 stairs. The candidate will walk forward, facing the top of the stairs and then descend the stairs maintaining facing forward. The candidate will then ascend the 11 stairs again, turn around, and face the bottom of the stairs while descending. Once you have both feet planted on the ground, you may place the dumbbells on the ground, do not drop them, and advance to the next station.

Preparation:

To simulate this event, walk up and down a staircase while carrying light dumbbell weights. Carry dumbbell weights, start with less weight and work up to heavier weights.

Standing Hose Hoist

Station Description:

The candidate will lift one 2 ½ in hose roll using a rope, that has already been secured to the roll, using the hand over hand technique, until the hose roll is all the way up, and the proctor tells you one repetition is complete. You will then lower the hose roll, using the hand under hand technique, all the way to the floor until the proctor tells you that the hose roll is down. You will complete this lift and lower for a total of three (3) repetitions.

Preparation:

Candidates can practice dragging a weighted object and pulling objects towards them using the hand over hand technique.

Victim Drag/Rescue

Station Description:

The candidate will drag a human form dummy weighing 170 pounds (weight dummy and clothing) for 30 feet, around a cone, and then back across the starting point for a total distance of 60 feet. There are three methods by which the candidate may move the dummy:

1) Drag the dummy by the drag strap.
2) Lift the dummy from behind and lifting the dummy up to your chest and walking backwards.
3) A recue strap will be placed on the dummy if candidate wishes.

It will be unacceptable to drag the dummy by any limb or drag by holding onto clothing. In order to complete this station, the candidate and the dummy must both completely cross the finish line.

Preparation:

This station assesses lower body strength and endurance. You may prepare for this event by dragging a weighted object using a rope.

Scoring

The Physical Agility Test is a timed, pass or fail test. Any candidate that completes the course in 6 minutes (6:00) or less will pass this stage of the selection process. Candidates are allowed one warning per station and will not be warned a second time during that station. If the candidate receives a second warning during that station, it will result in disqualification. Unnecessary dropping or throwing of equipment will result in the disqualification of the candidate and the candidate will not be allowed to re-test. Candidates are allowed one re-test after disqualification for warnings. The Firefighter Physical Agility Test will be demonstrated before the candidates execute the test. Candidates are encouraged to ask all questions during this time.

Candidates that are required to re-test, will be allowed a one-half hour, (30 minutes) cooldown period. This cooldown period will not exceed one hour. Once the one hour has elapsed, or the candidate is ready to retry the test, the candidate's vitals will be rechecked, and the candidate will be allowed to re-test if vitals are within acceptable limits. If the candidate fails the second Firefighter Agility Test, the candidate will be disqualified from the Firefighter Agility Test and will fail the Candidate process.