Police Officer Physical Ability Test Preparation Guide



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Metropolitan Police Department Washington, D.C.

ENTRY- LEVEL POLICE OFFICER PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST

Law enforcement is a demanding profession in which police officers risk their lives daily in order to protect the property, lives, and civil rights of others. Today's police officer needs to be ready in body and mind to accept the daily challenges of the job. Officers must be able to respond quickly to crime scenes, conduct searches, make arrests, investigate crimes, handle crowds, mediate domestic disputes, use reasonable force when necessary to defend themselves or others, and relate to a diverse community in Washington, D.C.

In order to ensure that sworn officers of the Metropolitan Police Department are ready to serve effectively in the Nation's Capitol, applicants must pass a Physical Ability Test. The Physical Ability Test has been designed to test the ability of applicants to perform physical tasks that are essential to carrying out the duties and responsibilities of a police officer.

This *Preparation Guide* has been created to assist you in preparing to take the Physical Ability Test. It describes the physical tasks you will be required to perform, as well as the procedures you will be expected to follow when you take the test. You will increase your chances of passing the test if you prepare for the test in advance, and if you follow all of the instructions given to you on the day of the test.

It is recommended that you review the Preparation Guide carefully, follow the directions regarding the clothing to be worn to the test, pay proper attention to your physical well-being before taking the test, and think positively.

I. Test Preparation

It is recommended that you:

- Maintain a well-balanced diet for several days before the test; avoid "junk" food.
- ✓ Get a good night's sleep the night before the test.
- ✓ Avoid alcoholic beverages several days before and on the day of the test.
- ✓ Do not drink a lot of liquids or eat a big meal immediately before the test, but be sure you are completely hydrated the day of the test.
- ✓ Avoid tranquilizers and stimulants, such as coffee, on the day of the test.
- ✓ Practice in advance of the test to make sure you perform the tasks in a safe manner.

II. Test Attire

- ✓ For your protection, you must wear long pants which have belt loops. Very tight pants may cause you problems climbing over the fence.
- ✓ In order for the equipment to fit you properly while you are competing in the test, you must wear a belt.
- ✓ You must wear sneakers or some other type of shoe with soft soles so that you do not slip and you can run properly on a gymnasium floor without damaging it.
- ✓ You should remove all jewelry prior to the test. It is best that you do not wear any jewelry to the test, or that you can secure your jewelry in your vehicle.
- ✓ You will not be permitted to wear gloves, scarves or any type of accessories during the test.

III. <u>Test Components</u>

A. Orientation session

You will first participate in an *PAT Orientation Session* with a group of applicants. You must present a valid driver's license and your *Physical Ability Test Scheduling Notice* in order to be admitted to the orientation session.

First, you will be given some general instructions, asked to sign a *Waiver of Liability and Release of All Claims* form. A sample *Waiver* form is included at the end of this *Guide*.

Next, you will be shown a videotape of a sample applicant taking the physical ability test. The tape will describe each event separately, explain how to perform the required tasks properly, and give you the standards for passing each event and the test. Following the videotape, be sure to ask the Session Monitor any questions you have about taking the test. No question is an unimportant question.

If you wish to withdraw from the test at anytime, please notify any member of the test administration staff immediately.

B. Walk- Thru

Following the *PAT Orientation Session*, your group will be escorted to the gym. You will be shown the entire layout of the Physical Ability Test, and be given specific instructions on how to complete each event. You should listen carefully and be sure you observe each event. Again, it is best to ask questions if procedures are unclear.

C. Test

The Physical Ability Test events are based on a study of essential work tasks performed by police officers in the Metropolitan Police Department. The study revealed that officers must be able to pursue, subdue, and arrest individuals, climb stairs, run, dodge obstacles, drag persons and objects, climb over and under obstacles, and operate a firearm safely. These are the tasks that are simulated in the Physical Ability Test. The skills that you must demonstrate in the test are skills that do not require prior experience as a police officer.

The Physical Ability Test consists of eight different events. The test simulates chasing a single suspect on foot, and encountering circumstances that could arise during the foot pursuit. The first seven events must be completed within the allotted time limit. The eighth event is a separate event and is not timed. You should be sure to pace yourself during the test so that you do not use all of your energy in the first few events.

Prior to participating in the test, you will be outfitted with a protective vest and a police utility belt. You should be sure that the equipment fits securely. If you drop any of the equipment while you are participating in the test, continue on with the test. A description of each event follows:

Event # 1: Patrol Car - Suspect Description

To begin the test, you will sit in the driver's seat of a patrol car with the doors closed and the seat belt secured. A test monitor will sit on the passenger side and ask you if you are ready to begin.

The monitor will then play an audiotape which will instruct you to pursue a fictitious fleeing suspect who is wearing a particular colored shirt. You will then be told to "GO" by the test monitor. Timing begins after the word "go".

You are to unlatch your seat belt, open the car door, exit the car, and proceed to the gymnasium to Event # 2. You may leave the car door open.

Event # 2: Obstacle Run

After you enter the gymnasium, you will weave around a number of traffic cones that have been set up in a single vertical line. You must go around each cone separately. You must not jump over any cones. If you knock any cones down, keep moving. You will then proceed across the gym floor to a set of stairs.

Event # 3: Stair Climb

You will proceed up two flights of stairs, cross the platform at the top of the stairs, and then go back down the other two flights of stairs. You may ascend or descend the stairs one or more at a time, and you may use the railing while going up and down. For your safety, you are not permitted to jump from one flight of stairs to another.

Event # 4 Suspect Drag

You will then proceed to a "dummy", which weighs approximately 165 pounds. You may drag the dummy by grabbing the handle on the upper torso of the dummy and walking forwards or backwards. You may also carry the dummy, or partially carry and drag the dummy. Be sure to choose the approach that is best and safest for you. You must drag the dummy approximately twenty-five (25) feet. The dummy's feet must completely pass through a double set of orange cones, which are placed about 10 yards away from the start point of the event.

Event # 5: Barricade Duck

You will then proceed to two tables that ate placed together lengthwise. You must crawl under the tables. If you upend the tables, you should still continue with the test.

Event # 6: Fence Climb

You will proceed to a chain-link fence which is approximately six feet high and eight feet wide. You must climb over the fence in the center section. You may not hold on to the outer poles for support. For safety reasons, you may want to climb over the fence by placing your feet in the links. You will be permitted as many attempts to climb the fence as you need, up until the time limit for the test expires.

Event # 7: Suspect identification

After climbing the fence, you will proceed to a table at which are seated four "suspects" who are dressed differently. You will pick up the tag belonging to the suspect who matches the description given to you while you were sitting in the patrol car. You will then place the tag on a table located just past the finish line. Timing stops when you cross the finish line. Once you cross the finish line, you may not go back and repeat any of the prior events.

Event # 8: Weapon Dry Fire

After you cross the finish line, you will pick up a service weapon and dry fire the weapon one time with each hand. You must hold the weapon with both hands, arms extended. This event is not timed. You must successfully fire the weapon once with each hand.

Note: During the Walk-Thru, you will be shown how to dry fire the weapon, and be given a chance to do so with each hand. The service weapon will not be loaded.

You can prepare for this event by squeezing a tennis ball or racquet ball in your hand one finger at a time. You should do this exercise with all fingers and both hands. If you plan to do this exercise to prepare for the test, do it often and as far in advance of the test as possible. Do not do this exercise on the day of the test because the strength in your fingers may diminish for the test.

D. Test Results

You must complete events one through seven successfully, and in the proper sequence within the time limit, identify the correct suspect, and successfully dry fire the weapon with each hand separately.

After the *Physical Ability Test*, you will be given a Test Results Notice advising you of whether you passed or failed. If you have passed the test, you will advance to the next station.

If you have failed the *test*, you will be given another opportunity to take the *Physical Ability Test* within the time limit stated on your *Test Results Notice*.

Law enforcement is both a demanding and challenging profession. Maintaining your physical fitness throughout your entire career will be the key to protecting yourself, the officers with whom you work, and the persons who live and work in Washington D.C.

Be a Part of Something Special!

Join the Metropolitan Police Department!



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

OFFICIAL WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS

POLICE OFFICER PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND COMPLETELY. THEN SIGN AND DATE THE FORM ON THE REVERSE SIDE

- 1. I declare and represent that I received a *Police Officer Physical Ability Test Preparation Guide* and read the sample Waiver of Liability Form contained therein. I further declare and represent that I am now in good health, that I am familiar with and understand the nature of the Police Officer Liability Test being conducted by the District of Columbia Government, that I am physically a medically fit for the participation in said test, and that my personal attire is safe and fit for participation in said test. With respect to all matters pertaining to my participation in said test, I personally assume any and all risks of injury, including death, damage, or loss which I may sustain as a result of participating in any activities associated with said test.
- 2. I hereby consent and agree to all of the following terms and conditions:

A. Acknowledgement of Risk

As a participant in the Police Officer Physical Ability Test, I recognize and acknowledge that there are certain risks of physical injury. I agree to assume the full risk of any injury, including death, damage or loss which I may sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with or associated with said test.

B. Waiver of Liability and Release of All Claims

I do hereby for myself, heirs, executers, and administrators, and other parties claiming under or through me, fully waive, relinquish, release, and forever quit-claim and discharge the Government of the District of Columbia and all of its elected officials, officers, agents, employees, servants, monitors, and examiners from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions, and causes of action, and causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related in any way to any loss, damage, or injury (including death) that may be sustained by me while participating in the Police Officer Physical Ability Test, or upon the premises where said test is being conducted, whether said loss, damage, injury

or death results from the negligence of the Government of the District of Columbia and its elected officials, officers, agents, employees, servants, monitors, or examiners, or is otherwise caused.

C. <u>Indemnity and Defense</u>

I do hereby agree, for myself, heirs, executors and administrators, and other parties claiming under or through me, to indemnify and hold harmless and defend the Government of the District of Columbia and it selected officials, officers, agents, employees, servants, monitors, and examiners from any and all claims, suits or demands, actions, or causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related in any way to loss damage, or injury (including death) that may be sustained by me while participating in the Police Officer Physical Ability Test, or upon the premises where said test is being conducted.

D. <u>No Trespassing</u>

I do hereby declare, acknowledge, and understand that I am granted a conditional license to be present upon the premises where the Police Officer Physical Ability Test is being conducted only to the extent and for the duration necessary for me to participate in said test, and I unequivocally agree not to trespass upon parts of these premises where my presence is not required for my participation in said test. I further agree to leave these premises promptly following my completion of said test activities.

E. Other

I understand that the test administration staff may remove me from the test if they believe that I might endanger myself or be an endangerment to others.

I give my permission to the District of Columbia to use photographs, videotapes, or other visual records of me that are made during the course of the Test.

declarations and I fully understand and agree to them.	
Signature	Date
Printed Name	Social Security Number

I hereby certify and declare that I have read all of the foregoing terms, conditions, and