

Battalion Fire Chief

2015/2016



Orientation Guide



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Note: This is the updated and final version of the Battalion Fire Chief Orientation Guide, which was posted on July 30, 2015. Changes to this guide are highlighted in yellow and can be found on pages 3, 4, and 8.

Though this guide will remain on our website between administrations, always check back on the date of a new announcement for any changes specific to the new testing cycle.

I. INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission has prepared this orientation guide for the Battalion Fire Chief promotional examination. The information in this booklet is designed to help candidates understand the testing process and answer many of their questions about how to prepare for the examination. The exam for promotion to Battalion Fire Chief will consist of the five following dimensions:

#	Component	Dimensions
1	Written Multiple-Choice	Fireground Technical Knowledge
2	Oral	Incident Command Oral Exercise
3		Supervision Oral Exercise
4		Administration Oral Exercise
5		Oral Communication

All candidates will be permitted to participate in both the written and oral components.

The exam has been designed on the basis of information obtained from a job analysis of the position of Fire Battalion Fire Chief in the State of New Jersey. The job analysis provides a description of the tasks performed by incumbents and identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities that are required to perform each of these tasks effectively.

We are providing this orientation guide in recognition that a considerable amount of the anxiety associated with participation in the promotional assessment process is related to the novelty of the procedures that candidates encounter. From the information presented in this guide, candidates should be able to get a better understanding of the types of questions they will encounter on each exam component and a systematic method of study which they may use in preparing for the exam.

We encourage candidates to review this guide carefully and to take advantage of any and all opportunities to prepare for the exam.

GOOD LUCK!

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAM

A. Test Date, Time, and Location

Approximately two weeks before the test date, candidates will receive a notice in the mail that shows the date, time, location, and room to which they should report for their examination. The exam will be administered over the course of two days. The Written Multiple-Choice Examination will be scheduled on a weeknight. The Oral component consisting of the Incident Command, Supervision, and Administration exercises along with Oral Communication will be held on a separate date.

The Written Multiple Choice component is scheduled for November 2015 and the Oral component is scheduled for May 2016.

B. Test Security and Candidate Pledge

All candidates will be required to sign a pledge form at the examination center, stating that they understand that the current examination will be administered over different days and that they will not discuss the content of the examination with any other person, study group, or potential make-up candidate. No one is permitted to take personal notes, copy, or remove test material during the administration of the examination.

With the threat of high-tech cheating on the rise, possession of personal communication devices such as cell phones, blackberries, photographic equipment, MP3 players, iPads, apple watches or other similar electronic recording/communication devices is prohibited at test centers. Candidates who are seen with these devices in the test center, even in a power-off mode, **will be disqualified**. The device may also be confiscated to ensure that an attempt was not made to compromise the testing process.

Most candidates scheduled to take the Oral portion of the exam will be sequestered (held in a separate room) either prior to their scheduled test time or after they have taken the examination. This sequester period is required in order to prevent candidates who have taken the exam from interacting with candidates who are scheduled to take the same exam later in the day.

Upon completion of the written testing and oral sequestering process, candidates must leave the testing premises so that other candidates (still involved in the testing) will not be disturbed/distracted by outside conversations. Failure to obey the rules and instruction before, during, and after the examination may result in a candidate's disqualification from the examination.

C. Description of Test Format

1. Written Multiple-Choice Examination

For this examination component, candidates will be asked to assume the role of a Battalion Fire Chief and respond to a variety of questions associated with situationally-based written scenarios and diagrams reflecting or describing typical job experiences that a Battalion Fire Chief in the State of New Jersey might encounter. Scenarios will describe an emergency incident followed by a number of questions asking candidates how they would address issues associated with the resolution of the scenario.

The Battalion Fire Chief Written-Multiple Choice Examination is designed to assess candidate knowledge in four major areas. Below each of these areas are examples of the type of knowledge associated with the category.

Fire Size-Up

- Knowledge of size-up factors (e.g., construction, type of building, occupation, etc.)
- Knowledge of structure collapse potential and characteristics
- Knowledge of structure fires

Life Safety

- Knowledge of fire ground safety
- Knowledge of search and rescue
- Knowledge of emergency and strategic evacuation procedures

Fire Technical Knowledge

- Knowledge of fire behavior
- Knowledge of the stages of fire
- Knowledge of the chemistry of fires and the burning processes of different materials

Firefighting Practices

- Knowledge of fireground evolutions, tactics, strategies, and practices
- Knowledge of strategies for performing ventilation
- Knowledge of the use of special tools, equipment and apparatus

This portion of the examination will be based on generally accepted fire department practices/procedures and, but not limited to, the reference materials included on the published reading list. All items will have four response alternatives. In responding to an item, candidates will be asked to choose the *best* response. Candidates will be given credit only for choosing the *best* response. Candidates will have 2.5 hours to complete the multiple-choice test.

2. Oral Exercises

The Oral component of the Battalion Fire Chief examination will be scheduled on a separate test date. The examination will consist of three separate scenarios (Incident Command, Supervision, and Administration) with Oral Communication being measured during all three scenarios.

For this exercise, candidates will be presented with three realistic job-relevant situations for which a new Battalion Fire Chief might be confronted. Candidates will have 60 minutes to study these three scenarios and prepare a presentation for each. For the purposes of this exercise, candidates are to assume the role of a Battalion Fire Chief and assume that their presentation is being made to superior officer or other party. Following the 60 minute preparation period, candidates will be taken to the exam room where they will make their presentation. Candidates will be given a separate 10-minute response period for each scenario. Candidate presentations will be both audio and video-recorded.

All oral scoring guidelines are determined, prior to the examination administration date, by a panel of Subject Matter Experts. Scoring decisions are based on Subject Matter Expert-approved guidelines that address the situations that are presented.

The assessors for all three scenarios will be fire service personnel with Battalion Fire Chief or higher experience. Before actually evaluating any of the interviews, the assessors are given training on the dimensions to be measured and on how to observe and evaluate behavior associated with these job-performance dimensions.

The Battalion Fire Chief Oral Examination is designed to elicit responses associated with the following knowledge, skill and ability (KSA) areas. These areas and an example of some of the KSA statements are:

Incident Command

- Ability to anticipate changing circumstances , conditions and outcomes in an emergency situation
- Ability to anticipate need for additional resources
- Knowledge of hazardous materials and dangerous effects associated with them

Supervision

- Ability to resolve disputes among subordinates and between self and company, peers and others.
- Ability to develop the self-confidence of subordinates
- Knowledge of corrective or disciplinary action

Administration

- Ability to prioritize activities and assignments
- Ability to recognize the critical aspects of a problem
- Ability to act as a liaison with personnel from outside agencies

3. Response Levels, Apparatus Staffing, and Initial Functions

Initial Response: Engine (E1)
Engine (E2)
Ladder (L1)
Battalion Fire Chief (C1)

Each subsequent alarm that a candidate calls will consist of the **identical** response levels as indicated above (i.e., two engine companies, one ladder company, and one Battalion Fire Chief).

If, in addition to the above, candidates want to call on other companies or resources, they must specifically request them.

In each scenario, a candidate should assume that he/she is the FIRST arriving Battalion Fire Chief, arriving with or before any of the initial response companies. A candidates should also assume that he/she will remain in command of the **entire incident** (that is, no higher ranking chief will arrive or relieve them of command, even if they call for them).

Apparatus Staffing:

All engines have: 1 Captain 3 firefighters
All ladders have: 1 Captain 3 firefighters
All Chief's vehicles have: 1 Battalion Fire Chief

D. Suggested Reading List

Please note that the Civil Service Commission intends to use the book list on a limited basis to develop test items. More specifically, while the justification for correct responses may be drawn from materials on the reading list, it is not limited to that material. Justification may also be based on the collective Fire Service experience of Subject Matter Experts. When justification is based on experience, care is taken to ensure that correct answers do not conflict with the sources on the reading list.

- 1. The Fire Chief's Handbook, 7th Edition (2015)**
Edited by Richard A. Marinucci;
Publisher: PennWell - (800) 752-9764
- 2. Fire Officer's Handbook of Tactics, 4th Edition (2012)**
by John Norman;
Publisher: PennWell - (800) 752-9764
- 3. Safety and Survival on the Fireground (January 1992)***
by Vincent Dunn;
Publisher: PennWell - (800) 752-9764
- 4. Managing Fire and Emergency Services (2012)**
Edited by Adam K. Thiel & Charles R. Jennings;
Publisher: International City/Council Management Association – (770) 280-4171
- 5. Hazardous Materials: Managing the Incident, 4th Edition (2014)**
by Gregory G. Noll, Michael S. Hildebrand, Glen Rudner & Rob Schnepf;
Publisher: Jones & Bartlett Learning - (800) 832-0034
- 6. Building Construction for the Fire Service, 5th Edition (2015)**
by Francis L. Brannigan and Glenn P. Corbett;
Publisher: Jones & Bartlett Learning - (800) 832-0034

Although, the CSC suggests that candidates review the reading/reference list, preparation for the examination should not be restricted to the above reading/reference material. Since some test items will require open ended responses, candidates will also have to rely on the application of knowledge and the application of administrative and supervisory principles.

*Though the CSC is aware of a new 2015 (2nd) edition, because item development will begin before its release in August, the current 1st edition will be used for this administration.

E. Administrative Logistics

Candidates should ensure that they arrive at the test site on the correct day and time as indicated on their notification cards. Candidates are advised to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled time to ensure that all necessary administrative procedures can be conducted prior to the scheduled start time. Candidates should bring their Notification Card, two forms of identification (including one photo ID), two pencils, two pens and a highlighter to the Examination Center.

Be aware that this is a closed-book exam. Candidates will not be permitted to bring this Orientation Guide or the reading list reference materials to their test site. In addition, candidates will not be allowed, under any circumstances, to make or receive telephone calls and text messages. Again, cellular phones and other electronic devices are prohibited in the examination center.

CANDIDATES SHOULD MAKE SURE TO MAP OUT A ROUTE TO THEIR TEST CENTER IN ADVANCE AND PLAN TO ARRIVE AT THE EXAMINATION CENTER EARLY, SINCE NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED LATE.

1. The Written Multiple-Choice Examination

All candidates will be given the appropriate test materials at the same time. Once instructions have been given, the test material will be distributed to all candidates (there is no preparation period). Upon completion of the Multiple-Choice test, candidates will return all test materials to the test administrator, and may leave the test site.

2. The Oral Examination

Due to the number of jurisdictions participating in this administration, the Oral component will be administered over multiple days with alternate test forms being used. Candidates will only be required to attend the day their jurisdiction is being tested. When administered, one-half of the candidates for a given day will report in the morning and have the exercises administered to them. When finished, the morning group will be sequestered while the afternoon group registers. Once the afternoon group is registered, the morning group will be released.

Once candidates begin the test they will not be allowed to leave the test site for any reason until the administrators have released them. While at the testing site, candidates will not be allowed to move about without the specific approval of the administrators. Access to bathrooms is restricted and all candidates must receive approval and be escorted to and into the bathrooms. Anyone not following these rules may be disqualified. **Absolutely no exceptions** will be permitted.

F. Final Scoring

1. Exam Score

The Battalion Fire Chief promotional exam will consist of five dimensions and are weighted as follows:

Test Component	Dimensions	Weight
Written Multiple-Choice	Fireground Technical Knowledge	36.53%
Oral	Incident Command	26.15%
	Supervision	13.64%
	Administration	14.12%
	Oral Communication*	9.56%

The scores for each dimension will be standardized, weighted, and combined to formulate each candidate's overall examination score.

The final score is a sum of the weighted standardized overall examination score plus the weighted standardized seniority score. The component weights for the final exam score are 70% for the overall examination score and 30% for the seniority score. A more detailed description and explanation of the score calculation process will be given to candidates during the examination review period that follows the release of the eligibility lists.

The scoring criteria for this examination has been determined prior to the administration date by a panel of Subject Matter Experts using generally approved fire command, administrative and supervisory practices as well as reference materials. Scoring decisions are based on the situations that are presented. Only those responses, which depict relevant behaviors that are observable and can be quantified, will be assessed in the scoring process.

All scores are standardized and only candidates with passing examination scores will have their overall test score weighted 70% and seniority score weighted 30% in determining the final score. Candidates will be ranked based upon this final score.

Please note that appointments made from the eligibility lists are conditional, pending results of the appeal and make-up processes.

* Oral Communication will be tested during each of the three oral scenarios (Incident Command, Supervision, and Administration) and given its own independent score for each one. The weight for Oral Communication will be divided equally among the three scenarios. Therefore, each scenario's oral communication weight will be 3.18% ($9.56 / 3 = 3.18$).

2. Seniority Score

To a base score of 70.000, one point is added for each year of eligible service up to a maximum of 15. The maximum score for the length of service component is 85.000.

Ten additional points are given for record of service. The record of service component is reduced by disciplinary suspensions occurring within five years of the closing date, by the following rules:

.0025 times the number of days suspended, up to three years from the closing date, and

.00125 times the number of days suspended, from 3 years to 5 years from the closing date.

The maximum possible seniority score is 95.000.

EXAMPLE: BATTALION FIRE CHIEF PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATION

Captain Brown was made permanent in the Captain title on March 22, 1996.

The closing date for the Captain announcement was September 30, 2004.

Brown was suspended for 3 days in 2002, and 2 days in 2000.

a.	3-22-96	Date of regular appointment
b.	9-30-04	Closing date of announcement
c.	8 years, 6 months, 8 days	Time from a - b
d.	8 years, 6 months, 3 days	Minus 5 suspension days
e.	No reduction for layoffs or leaves of absences	
f.	70.000	Base seniority
g.	8 years = 8.000	Points for seniority based on years
	183 days = 0.501	Months converted to days (1 day = .0027397)
	8.501	Subtotal
h.	78.501	Subtotal f + g = length of service component
i.	10.000	Added for record of service
j.	0.0075	3 days suspended within the last 3 years times 0.0025
k.	0.0025	2 days suspended over 3 years up to 5 years times 0.00125
l.	9.990	i - (j + k) = record of service component
m.	88.491	(h + l) = Brown's total seniority score

III. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION POLICIES

A. Examination Make-Up Policy

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 4A: 4-2.9, make-up examinations for public safety promotional examinations may be authorized only in cases of:

- I. Error by the Civil Service Commission or appointing authority.
- II. Death in the candidate's immediate family as evidenced by a copy of the death certificate; or
- III. Catastrophic injury or illness requiring an extended convalescent period provided the candidate submits a doctor's certification containing a diagnosis and a statement clearly showing that the candidate's physical condition precluded his or her participation in the examination, as well as documentation from the candidate's employer noting the candidate's related leave from work.
- IV. Military leave, which will be handled as stated in NJAC 4A:4-2.9(c).
- V. Exoneration from pending disciplinary or criminal charges will be handled as stated in N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.9(d).

Make-up requests must be submitted in writing, with supporting documentation, to: NJCSC Public Safety Make-Up Exam Unit, P.O. Box 310, Trenton, NJ 08625-0310 within 5 days upon receipt of your Notification Card.

NOTE: All requests for medical make-up examinations must be accompanied by the Civil Service Commission's Medical Authorization for Make-up Examination form (DPF-728), completed by the treating physician. The Medical Authorization for Make-up Examination form can be obtained through the Make-up Unit or from our website at: <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/about/publications/forms/>

Additionally, your treating physician must provide a separate detailed letter containing a diagnosis and statement clearly indicating why your physical condition will prevent you from taking the examination as scheduled. This letter should include the date the injury/illness began, the date of your last office visit, and the earliest date you can take the test. Information on your leave time from work because of your illness/injury should also be included. The documentation must be on official letterhead, written in layman's terms and legible. If insufficient, untimely, or illegible information is provided, your request will be denied.

B. ADA Accommodations

Candidates with special situations/ADA concerns must contact Marty Berrien at (609) 292-4144 extension: 199-1001, upon receipt of their examination notification in order to request/discuss

special needs, even if you have already been approved for ADA accommodations with CSC in the past.

Candidates with a first-time request for ADA accommodations must check the ADA Assistance box on their application. You will subsequently be contacted for information regarding your special need(s).

C. Post Examination Review Policy

A detailed review policy will be provided at the examination center. Subsequent to the date of the written examination, candidates who participated in the examination process will be provided the opportunity to review a copy of the exam with the correct answers identified. An appointment to review the Written Multiple-Choice exam must be within 5 days of the administration. To review the Oral component scoring, candidates will be given the opportunity upon receipt of their final score for the exam.

D. Examination Cancellation Policy

In the event that circumstances force cancellation of the examination administration, the Civil Service Commission will attempt to contact your department head, as soon as that decision has been made. In the case of inclement weather, please call CSC's Information Center to find out the status of the examination or listen to your local radio station for further information. To contact the Civil Service Commission's Information Center, call (609) 292-4144. A cancellation message will also be posted on the CSC's homepage at: <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/>

E. Study Groups

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission is not affiliated with any "study group" in the business of preparing individuals for examinations, nor does the Civil Service Commission recommend participation in any "study group." Further, the Civil Service Commission does not have authority to control or regulate the activity of "study groups." No "study group" has been involved in the development or review of Civil Service Commission examinations and, at no time has any examination material been provided to such groups. Finally, the Civil Service Commission is not responsible for any claims made by "study groups" or the manner in which they represent themselves for advertisement purposes.

IV. CONCLUSION

This preparation guide represents an attempt to familiarize candidates with all aspects of the Written and Oral components, including the items, materials, logistics and evaluation approach. It also provides some suggestions for preparation. The suggestions provided here are not exhaustive — we encourage candidates to engage in whatever additional preparation strategies they believe will enhance their chances of performing effectively on the exam and on the job.

We hope that this guide has been helpful to you.

V. SAMPLE MATERIALS FOR EACH COMPONENT

The following pages contain examples of materials from the Written Multiple-Choice Examination and the Oral components. The following examples are provided as samples so that you may become familiar with some of the types of materials and response formats that you will encounter. The actual assessment materials will be different from the ones presented here. These problems are merely illustrative of the kinds of problems which you may face during the Battalion Fire Chief examination.

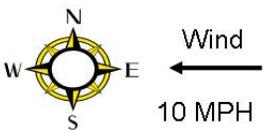
A. Sample Items from Written Multiple-Choice Test

NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION BATTALION FIRE CHIEF EXAMINATION

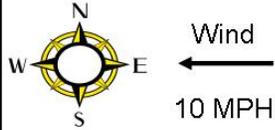
It is a Friday morning (7:00 a.m.) in January with a temperature of 31 degrees Fahrenheit and overcast skies. The wind is blowing from the east to the west at 10 MPH and it has begun to snow heavily. You have been dispatched to a report of a fire at twenty-two (22) Adams Street. You are the first arriving officer on the scene and establish command.

Adams Street Plaza is a strip mall of lightweight steel bar joist construction built in the 1980's. The building consists of four (4) adjoining stores. The entire building measures 100 feet by 35 feet. Each store measures 25 feet by 35 feet and has an HVAC unit directly overhead. The fire originated in twenty-two (22) Adams Street, which is a convenience store in the middle of Adams Street Plaza. Side A faces a parking lot, beyond which is Adams Street. Side B faces a furniture store and Side D faces a vacant store. Side C faces access way for deliveries, beyond which is a fence. There is a hydrant located in the front of the building between the parking lot and Adams Street on Side A. The water supply is adequate.

Upon arrival, you notice smoke and flames through the store front windows near the Side B wall.

<p>Battalion Fire Chief Side A View Diagram 1 of 3</p>		<p>Temperature 31 Degrees Fahrenheit</p>	<p>Symbols:  Smoke Inside Windows  Fire</p>
			

Battalion Fire Chief
Overhead View
Diagram 2 of 3



Temperature
31 Degrees
Fahrenheit

Symbols:



Hydrant



HVAC unit

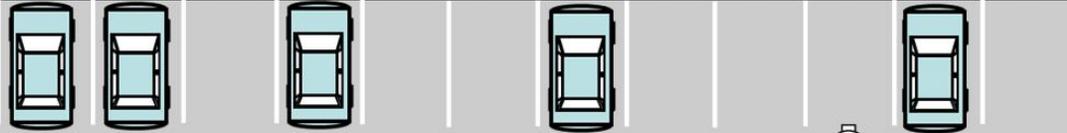
100 Feet

Side C



35 Feet

Walkway

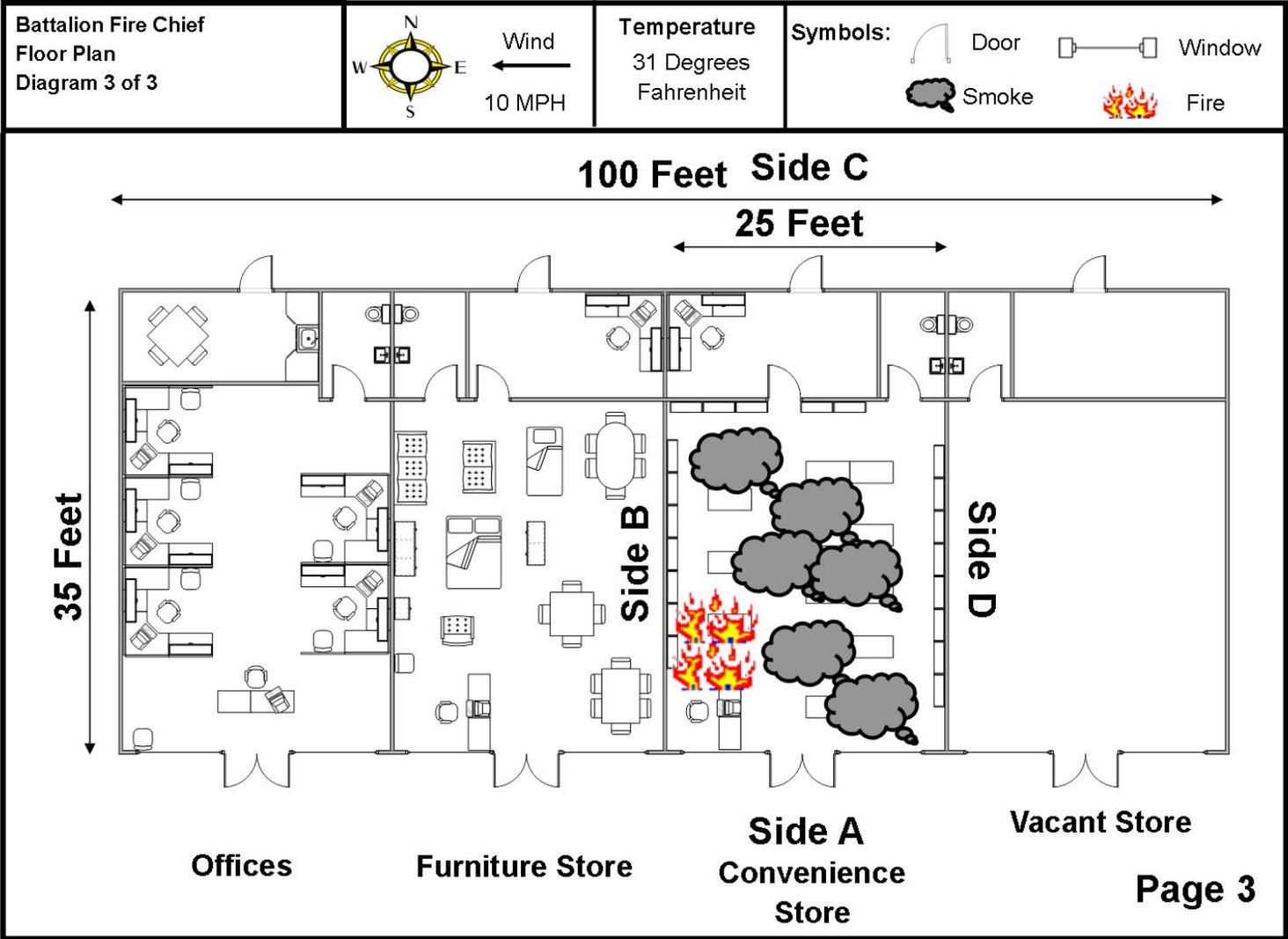


Parking Lot Side A



Adams Street

Page 2



1. Based on this scenario, which should be the **MOST** accurate size up?
 - (a) The interior sizeup, because interior firefighters can determine potential for fire spreading due to wind conditions.
 - (b) The interior sizeup, because interior firefighters can see the location and extent of the fire better than the outside sizeup.
 - (c) The exterior sizeup because the incident commander must make an initial report to dispatch based on these his observations outside.
 - (d) The exterior sizeup because interior firefighters will not be able to radio a sizeup while attacking the fire.

B is the correct response because at the initial stage of a fire, the inside sizeup is more accurate and useful than the sizeup made from outside the building; the fire officers inside the structure are closer to the fire and obviously, can see more of it than someone standing outside.

2. The firefighters begin their attack in the convenience store. Immediately, smoke and steam bank down to the floor causing limited visibility. Based on this information and the scenario narrative, what stage is the fire in?
 - (a) Incipient stage
 - (b) Free burning stage
 - (c) Smoldering stage
 - (d) Extinguished stage

B is the correct response because once the attack commences, the smoke and steam will bank right down to the floor until properly vented.

3. The HVACs on the roof of this building are an example of a(n)
 - (a) impact load.
 - (b) repeated load.
 - (c) live load.
 - (d) dead load.

D is the correct response because Live Loads are any loads other than dead loads. An elevated water tank is a dead load. The water in the tank may be there for years but it is a live load.

B. Sample Item from the Incident Command scenario

**NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
BATTALION FIRE CHIEF EXAMINATION**

Incident Command – Form A

You arrive on the scene where a first alarm crew is responding to a warehouse fire. The warehouse is 200 feet by 200 feet and contains the excess stock from a local furniture outlet. One of the threatened exposures is a 5,000-gallon pressure tank. The fire is burning in the northeast corner of the warehouse, and the pressurized tank is located near the seat of the fire.

Question 1: What actions should you take to address this incident?

Question 2: The fire has encroached on the 5,000-gallon pressure tank causing it to explode. There are numerous mayday reports. **Based on this new information, what actions should you now take to address this incident?**

Please note that you have 60 minutes to review all three oral exam booklets. Be sure to budget your time accordingly.

In responding to the questions, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.

Please note that you must answer ALL the questions within the 10 minute response period.

C. Sample Item from the Supervision scenario

**NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
BATTALION FIRE CHIEF EXAMINATION**

Supervision – Form A

There is a captain under your command who has been a rising star. He has taken advantage of many opportunities to contribute to and move up in the department. Recently, you have noticed some minor rule infractions on his part. Today, for example, while on the fire ground, you observed him wearing a cracked face shield that you had ordered him to replace last week. Later, you questioned him and he replied that he had checked with the supply room, but was unable to find a replacement. He added that just like everything else, it's on order, and then he walked away from you.

Based on the text, The Fire Chief's Handbook, and your experience, answer the following question:

Question 1: What steps should you take to resolve this situation with the Fire Captain?

Please note that you have 60 minutes to review all three oral exam booklets. Be sure to budget your time accordingly.

In responding to the questions, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.

Please note that you must answer ALL the questions within the 10 minute response period.

D. Sample Item from the Administration scenario

NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION BATTALION FIRE CHIEF EXAMINATION

Administration – Form A

You have been assigned as a new Battalion Fire Chief in your jurisdiction. Your predecessor, recently retired Battalion Fire Chief Tim Connelly, who was in charge of Station 6, was from the old school of firefighting in terms of station training. He felt that after-hours were meant for fellowship and for talking through the events of the day. Training was a necessary evil that occasionally broke through the routine.

As part of your new assignment, you have been asked by Fire Chief to investigate the quality of station training in the Department, beginning with Station 6, and to compare the amount and quality of training there with that of the other five fire stations in the department.

Based on the text, The Fire Chief's Handbook, and your experience, answer the following questions:

Question 1: What steps should you take to investigate the levels of training at Station 6?

Question 2: What information should be used to compare the training level of Station 6 to the other five stations?

Please note that you have 60 minutes to review all three oral exam booklets. Be sure to budget your time accordingly.

In responding to the questions, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.

Please note that you must answer ALL the questions within the 10 minute response period.