



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Ellison Lucien, Fire
Fighter (M9999F), Statewide

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

CSC Docket No. 2025-1427

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: May 20, 2026

Ellison Lucien appeals the denial of his request for a make-up examination for the Fire Fighter (M9999F), Statewide, open competitive examination.

By way of background, 8,724 applications were received for this examination and 8,564 candidates were scheduled to be tested. Test sessions were held in December 2024 and January 2025. The appellant was scheduled to be tested on December 12, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at Bergen Community College in Paramus. However, the appellant did not appear at the designated time at the test site. In a make-up request sent via email on December 13, 2024, the appellant indicated that he “was stuck in traffic for two hours, which was completely beyond my control,” and as a result, he “arrived three minutes past the 15-minute grace period.” In a letter dated December 26, 2024, the Division of Administrative and Employee Services denied his request as it did not “fall within departmental guidelines for granting a make-up/reschedule for a Public Safety exam.”

On appeal, the appellant explains that he arrived late at the test site due to “severe disruptions due to a natural disaster in the area. The hazardous weather conditions caused multiple vehicle accidents along my route which led to significant traffic delays.” He presents that “the resulting road closures and gridlock left me stuck in traffic for over two hours, making it impossible for me to reach the exam venue on time despite my best efforts.”

In a subsequent submission, the appellant emphasizes that he “encountered significant and unforeseen traffic disruptions due to severe weather conditions that

caused multiple accidents and gridlock on Garden State Parkway North. Despite my best efforts to arrive on time, these conditions caused me to reach the test center 30 minutes late.” He presents:

I want to clarify that the hazardous weather, which caused traffic standstills and multiple collisions, significantly affected road travel that day. To support my appeal, I aim to provide more context about the conditions on December 12, 2024. The night before and the morning of the exam, the region experienced severe weather, including heavy rain over 2 inches and wind gusts between 40–60 mph, as reported by CBS New York. These dangerous weather conditions continued into the exam day, causing ongoing flooding, debris, and traffic delays. Additionally, real-time traffic reports from 511NJ and public updates on social media documented significant delays along the Garden State Parkway Northbound between Exit 140 (Union Township) and Exit 150 (Bloomfield), caused by multiple accidents and volume-related congestion around 4:00 PM. These conditions severely delayed my arrival despite my efforts to plan ahead and leave early. I am currently seeking formal documentation from the New Jersey State Police and NJDOT to confirm the traffic conditions that day.¹

He argues that his request should be granted given that “natural disasters and weather-related disruptions are listed as valid reasons for a make-up examination under *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.9(a).”

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-6.3(b) provides that the appellant has the burden of proof in examination appeals.

As indicated in the 2024 New Jersey Firefighter Administration Guide, *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.9(a) provides that make-up examinations may be authorized only in cases of: 1. Error by the Civil Service Commission or appointing authority; 2. Serious illness or disability of the candidate on the test date, provided that the candidate submits a doctor’s certificate specifying that the candidate was not able to take the test on that day for medical reasons; 3. Documented serious illness or death in the candidate’s immediate family; 4. Natural disaster; or 5. Prior vacation or travel plans outside of New Jersey or any contiguous state which cannot be reasonably changed, as evidenced by a sworn statement and relevant documentation; 6. When required for certain persons returning from military service; or 7. Other valid reasons.

¹ It is noted that to date, the appellant has not provided any documentation regarding traffic conditions on his scheduled test date, December 12, 2024.

With respect to the appellant's claim that he was unable to appear at the test center at 6:00 p.m. on the test date "due to a natural disaster in the area," it is noted that a review of available information finds that while a storm was forecasted to affect New Jersey on December 11, 2024, *i.e.*, the day before the appellant's scheduled test date,² a natural disaster was not declared in New Jersey on December 11 or December 12, 2024 as a result of this storm. In addition, a review of available historical weather data observed at Newark Liberty Airport finds that on December 11, 2024, less than an inch of rain was recorded, and on December 12, 2024, no precipitation was observed.³ Furthermore, a review of available information does not find any evidence of significant traffic delays or multiple accidents on the Garden State Parkway Northbound between exits 140 and 150 on December 12, 2024. Moreover, the appellant has not presented any documentation to support his claims.

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.8(c) requires that candidates be at the examination site at the designated time. It is noted that candidates who are no more than 15 minutes late may be admitted to the examination. *See N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.8(c)1. In this regard, the Notification to Appear for Examination, which was sent to candidates on November 7, 2024, in the section, "Arrival Time," informed candidates, in pertinent part, to "plan to arrive early on to the test center to allow for check-in and instructions. Take into consideration any unexpected delays. Candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled test time will not be tested. This rule is strictly enforced, and there will be no exceptions." Thus, it is the candidates' responsibility to ensure that they arrive at the test center at the designated time. As indicated above, the appellant was scheduled to be tested on December 12, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at Bergen Community College. A review of the Center Supervisor report finds that he appeared at the test center at 6:30 p.m., *i.e.*, 30 minutes after the designated time. As indicated above, appearing at the test center after the designated time is not a valid reason for an examination make-up.

A thorough review of the record finds that the appellant has failed to support his burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

² *See, e.g.*, <https://www.nj.com/weather/2024/12/nj-weather-bomb-cyclone-could-unleash-thunder-storms-up-to-50-mph-winds-today-latest-forecast.html>.

³ *See e.g.*, <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web/quickdata>; and <https://www.climate.gov/maps-data/dataset/past-weather-zip-code-data-table>.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON
THE 20TH DAY OF MAY, 2026



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