



CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT  
PARAMEDIC PHYSICAL ABILITIES TEST ("PPAT")  
APPLICANT MANUAL

SEPTEMBER 2016

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# I. INTRODUCTION

This applicant manual provides information about the Paramedic Physical Abilities Test (“PPAT”) and was prepared exclusively for the Chicago Fire Department. The manual is written for applicants seeking to become paramedics with the Chicago Fire Department, and provides a description of both the PPAT and the associated testing processes in which applicants will participate before, during, and after the administration of the exam.

The PPAT and the accompanying applicant manual are intended for use only in connection with the pre-employment physical abilities testing of applicants seeking to become paramedics with the Chicago Fire Department. The PPAT was developed and validated specifically to evaluate the basic physical requirements of the Chicago Fire Department’s paramedic position.

This manual is proprietary and cannot be copied, reproduced, or further distributed without permission of Avesta Systems, Inc. (“Avesta”).

If you have any questions concerning this manual, please contact Avesta at:

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Questions regarding the PPAT should be directed to the Chicago Fire Department’s Personnel Division at (312) 746-6923.

## II. EXAMINATION OVERVIEW

This section provides an overview of the paramedic physical abilities testing program and the rationale behind (and design of) the paramedic physical abilities test (“PPAT”).

To work as a paramedic for the Chicago Fire Department, applicants must be patient-focused and demonstrate specialized clinical, safety, and scene management skills. In addition to these technical skills, applicants must have the physical capability to perform the physically demanding tasks required of paramedics working in the City of Chicago. The PPAT was therefore developed and validated to evaluate the physical abilities required of paramedics in the Chicago Fire Department in accordance with the federal government’s *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (1978).

The PPAT has two main purposes:

1. To measure applicants’ ability to perform the essential functions of the Chicago Fire Department’s paramedic position that are physically demanding; and
2. To increase the probability that new hires have the physical abilities to perform the job in a manner that reduces the risk of injuries to both employees and patients.

The Chicago Fire Department uses the PPAT to measure and assess various physical abilities required to perform the job duties associated with the paramedic position. The weights and equipment used during the test are designed to simulate the weights and equipment encountered when lifting and transporting patients and equipment in the field.

### **PPAT Development and Validation**

To develop the PPAT and establish its relationship to the paramedic job, the Chicago Fire Department conducted a comprehensive job analysis that included collection and analysis of data from interviews, observations, and questionnaires gathered from incumbents, supervisors, and focus groups. The results of the job analysis showed that paramedics in the Chicago Fire Department spent a great deal of time performing physically demanding work, such as lifting equipment and patients (often weighing more than 200 pounds). Paramedics must regularly lift these patients from various positions and locations (including tight spaces), and carry them various distances on flat, uneven, or graded surfaces, frequently up and down several flights of stairs. Paramedics must also perform CPR, sometimes for long periods of time.

To validate the PPAT, the Chicago Fire Department conducted a validation study demonstrating that the activities performed during the PPAT are representative samples of the physically demanding work regularly performed by CFD paramedics.

### **Note on Usage**

Although all applicants must pass the test to be hired, the PPAT is only one component of the hiring process, and applicants must satisfy all other criteria for employment before obtaining a conditional offer of employment as a paramedic with the Chicago Fire Department.

## **PPAT Format**

Approximately 10-12 weeks before the “official” administration of the PPAT, the Chicago Fire Department will invite eligible paramedic applicants to participate in an “orientation” PPAT, which will be scheduled approximately 8 weeks before the “official” administration of the test. At the orientation session, applicants will see the PPAT stations, receive a detailed explanation of the ten (10) events that comprise the PPAT, and enjoy the opportunity to ask questions of test administrators. In addition, applicants may elect to participate in a practice administration of the PPAT under actual testing conditions. A passing result on the “orientation” PPAT will count as an “official” passing score for employment and hiring purposes. In other words, paramedic applicants who successfully complete the PPAT during the orientation session do not need to return for the “official” administration of the test. Applicants who do not pass the “orientation” PPAT still have the opportunity to challenge the exam at the “official” administration of the test approximately 8 weeks later.

## **Standardization**

The PPAT is given under standardized conditions, meaning that test administrators follow the same instructions and procedures for each administration of the test so that there are no variances in testing practices from applicant to applicant or over time.

### III. PRIOR TO THE TEST

This section describes the steps applicants should take in advance of either an “orientation” or an “official” administration of the PPAT.

#### **Read this Manual Carefully**

Carefully read and review the information contained in this applicant manual. If you have questions or concerns regarding the PPAT, please direct them to either the Chicago Fire Department at (312) 746-6920, or to test administrators on the day of your “orientation” PPAT.

#### **Watch the Informational Video**

Prior to participating in any administration of the PPAT (“orientation” or “official”), applicants should watch the informational video on the PPAT created for CFD paramedic applicants (available under the “Supporting Information” tab at [www.cityofchicago.org/fire](http://www.cityofchicago.org/fire)), which describes and demonstrates the component events of the PPAT. Applicants may wish to watch the video several times, making notes on procedures and then asking questions of Chicago Fire Department personnel or test administrators in advance of the PPAT.

#### **Consider an Individualized Physical Fitness Training Program**

The PPAT is a rigorous pre-employment physical abilities test. Although many individuals seeking a position as a paramedic with the Chicago Fire Department may be in good physical condition, all applicants are strongly encouraged to pursue an individualized workout and training program that will prepare them for the PPAT – which requires endurance, stamina, flexibility, mobility, and strength (upper and lower body). Indeed, even well-conditioned applicants may not be ready for the specific physical demands imposed by the PPAT, so training and preparation are potential ways to improve an applicant’s chances of passing the test.

Because each applicant’s body and physical condition are unique, neither Avesta nor the Chicago Fire Department can recommend or endorse any specific training program. Moreover, there is no physical training regimen that will guarantee or ensure an applicant passes the PPAT.

Nevertheless, if an applicant wishes to participate in a training regimen, he or she should start with a visit to his or her primary care physician, who will determine if the applicant is healthy enough to begin an exercise program to prepare for the PPAT. Once the primary care physician has determined the applicant is able to engage in rigorous physical activity, he or she should investigate an appropriate course of physician-approved training well in advance of the PPAT.

For informational purposes only (and not as an endorsement or adoption of any specific training regimen associated with the PPAT), applicants are welcome to review the publicly available training materials created by other organizations that have developed pre-employment physical abilities tests (many of which are available online). *See, merely by way of example*, <http://firedepartmenthiring.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CPAT-Preparation-Guide.pdf>. However, applicants should be aware that exercises or activities recommended by these or other sources might not necessarily improve an applicant’s chances of passing the PPAT (although this is certainly the hope).

## IV. ON THE DAY OF THE TEST

This section describes the events that will occur on the day of either an “orientation” or an “official” administration of the PPAT. Regardless of which PPAT the Chicago Fire Department is conducting, applicants should pay close attention to the instructions of both test administrators and CFD personnel on the day of the exam, and should not hesitate to ask questions when prompted to do so.

### Reporting for the PPAT

The Chicago Fire Department will alert applicants in writing of the location, date, and time of the administration(s) of the PPAT they are to attend. Notices will be mailed to applicants approximately 2-4 weeks in advance of an “orientation” PPAT, and approximately 8 weeks in advance of the subsequent administration of an “official” PPAT. Applicants will be directed to report to the testing facility at either 8:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. on the day of the exam, and will be part of a group of approximately 15-20 individuals invited to take the PPAT during that particular testing session. For any administration of the PPAT, applicants should arrive at the testing facility wearing comfortable workout clothing and proper athletic footwear.

### Checking In

Upon arrival at the testing facility, applicants will be directed to a waiting area in which they will check in with CFD personnel and remain until further instructed. At the time of check-in, applicants will be required to present a valid (*i.e.*, non-expired) driver’s license, which is required to work as a paramedic for the Chicago Fire Department. A valid (*i.e.*, non-expired) driver’s license is the ***only*** form of identification sufficient to check in and participate in the PPAT. No other forms of identification will be accepted.

In addition to a valid (*i.e.*, non-expired) driver’s license, applicants should also bring a medical waiver form for participating in the PPAT if this document has not already been submitted to the Chicago Fire Department.

### Waiting to Test and Waiting for Dismissal

Applicants will participate in the PPAT in the order in which they check in. After testing, an applicant will return to the applicant waiting area and remain there until all individuals in his or her group are finished testing, at which point CFD personnel will dismiss all members of the group from the testing facility at the same time.

The entire testing process is likely to take about four (4) hours. Once preliminary instructions from the test administrators begin, applicants are not permitted to leave the applicant waiting area (other than to test) until they are dismissed (as a group) by CFD personnel. Leaving the waiting area or the testing facility without authority or permission will result in failure of the PPAT.

### Warming Up

Warm-up routines are not part of the PPAT, but applicants will have at least fifteen (15) minutes to perform a warm-up routine of their choice (*e.g.*, stretching, aerobic activity, etc.) in

the applicant waiting area before they begin the PPAT. All warm-up routines should be completed before applicants report to the testing area (individually) for their “orientation” or “official” PPAT.

Applicants should use whatever warm-up routine works best for them. Those applicants who need more than fifteen (15) minutes to warm up are welcome to report to the testing facility early to begin these routines (although applicant check-in will not begin until the time specified by CFD – *i.e.*, either 8:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m.). In addition, because applicants participate in the PPAT one-at-a-time, the amount of time between warm-up and testing will vary for each applicant. The last applicant tested will have a considerably longer period of time between his or her warm-up and the actual time of testing than the first applicant tested. Accordingly, applicants waiting to test are welcome to continue warming up in the applicant waiting area to address this concern.

### **Touring the Testing Area During an “Orientation” PPAT**

As distinguished from an “official” administration of the PPAT, an “orientation” PPAT (conducted approximately 8 weeks earlier) includes a component in which test administrators will walk smaller groups of no more than fifteen (15) applicants through the ten (10) events of the PPAT, demonstrating the events and reading detailed instructions that contain specific, step-by-step information about how to perform each event. During these walkthroughs, test administrators will demonstrate proper technique, and applicants are invited to ask any questions they might have of test administrators. This familiarization process before the “orientation” PPAT serves as an introduction to the PPAT for applicants who are unfamiliar with the testing process.

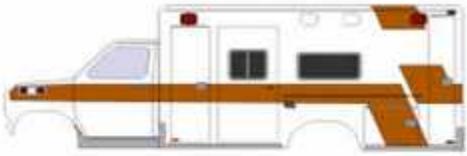
As noted above in Section II, once the group walkthroughs are completed, applicants may elect to participate in a practice (individual) administration of the PPAT under actual testing conditions. A passing result on the “orientation” PPAT will count as an “official” passing score for employment and hiring purposes. In other words, paramedic applicants who successfully complete the PPAT during the orientation session do not need to return for the “official” administration of the test. Applicants who do not pass the “orientation” PPAT still have the opportunity to challenge the exam at the “official” administration of the test approximately 8 weeks later.

## V. DESCRIPTION OF THE PPAT

The PPAT consists of ten (10) events held at six (6) stations around the room. Figure A below shows the six (6) stations, the event(s) held at each station, and the distances between stations. Following Figure A is a detailed description of each of the ten (10) events that comprise the PPAT, although applicants are again encouraged to watch the informational video on the PPAT (available under the “Supporting Information” tab at [www.cityofchicago.org/fire](http://www.cityofchicago.org/fire)) for further depiction and demonstration of the component events of the PPAT.

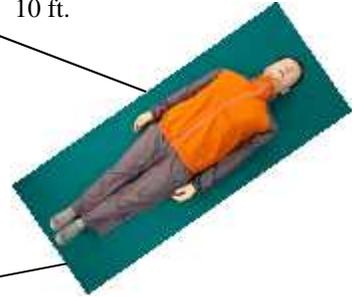
**Figure A**

**Station 4: CPR**  
Event 4: CPR



**Station 5: Manikin Drag End**  
Event 5: Simulated Patient Roll

10 ft.



25 ft.

**Station 3: Manikin Drag Start**  
Event 3: Manikin Drag

**Station 1: Ambulance**  
Event 1: Ambulance Exit  
Event 8: Stretcher Lift  
Event 9: Bag Value Mas  
Event 10: Stretcher Pull

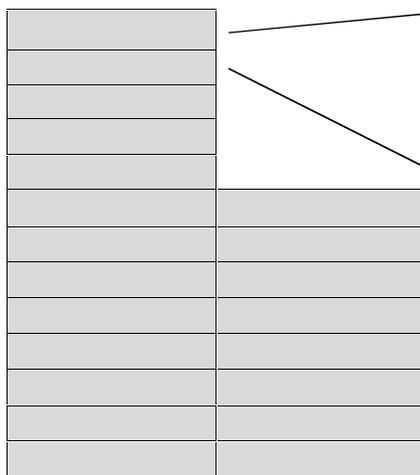
35 ft.

30 ft.

**Station 2: Stairwell**  
Event 2: Stair Climb  
Event 6: Stair Chair Carry

3 x 3 Taped Box  
(At Base of Stairwell)

6ft.



15 ft.

Curl Bar



Spine Board



**Station 6: Spine Board**  
Event 7: Spine Board Lift

2 Flight Staircase: 50" wide  
Stairs: 7.5" high  
13 Steps to First Landing  
8 Steps From First Landing to 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

Described below is information on each of the six (6) stations and each of the ten (10) events that comprise the PPAT. Please refer to Figure A above and the informational video on the PPAT for assistance in following the sequence of activities you will be required to perform:

### **Station 1: Ambulance**

The PPAT begins and ends with events at Station 1, which is the ambulance. The ambulance used for the PPAT has a rear-door (lower-sill) height of 30.5 inches from the ground. When the test begins with Event 1 at Station 1, the manual lift stretcher will already be outside the rear of the ambulance (the doors of which are open) and secured with the safety latch. A manikin weighing 150 pounds will be secured to the stretcher. In addition, a gear bag weighing 24 pounds and a heart monitor weighing 22 pounds will also be on the stretcher (although not secured to it). There will be no shoulder straps on these pieces of equipment.

For Event 1, applicants begin the PPAT while sitting in an ambulance with their seatbelts fastened and the door closed. When the signal is given to begin the PPAT, the applicant releases the seatbelt, exits the ambulance, and walks to the stretcher behind the ambulance to pick up the gear bag and the heart monitor, one in each hand.

### **Station 2: Stairwell**

Station 2 is the stairwell, in which several events take place. The stairwell will be at least 50 inches wide, with two flights of stairs measuring 7.5 inches high per step. The first flight consists of thirteen (13) steps, ascending to a landing that is 8 feet long and 5 feet wide. The second flight consists of eight (8) steps, ascending to a landing that is 8 feet long and 5 feet wide. At the base of the staircase will be a taped square box on the floor two (2) feet out from the bottom step and three (3) feet by three (3) feet in size.

For Event 2, the applicant walks 35 feet to Station 2 (from Station 1), carrying the heart monitor and the gear bag to the base of the staircase. The applicant climbs the two flights of stairs. At the second landing, the applicant completes a right knee lunge, placing his or her right knee on the floor, after which the applicant then turns around and proceeds back down the two flights of stairs.

Upon reaching the ground and facing the same direction (*i.e.*, away from the stairwell), the applicant squats to set the equipment on the floor, releases the equipment, and stands up. The applicant then turns around facing the stairwell (to switch hands), squats, and picks up the equipment again (both pieces). The applicant then climbs the two flights of stairs again. At the second landing, the applicant completes a left knee lunge, placing the left knee on the floor, after which the applicant then turns around and proceeds back down the two flights of stairs.

Upon reaching the ground floor, the applicant squats, sets the equipment on the floor, releases the equipment, and stands up.

At this point, a second test administrator steps in to assist as a spotter. The spotting test administrator starts a metronome set to 96 beats per minute, which the applicant will be able to hear during this portion of the test.

The applicant turns around facing the stairwell (to switch hands) and squats to pick up the equipment again (both pieces). The applicant (still holding the equipment) climbs the two flights of stairs and comes back down to the taped box, stepping in time to the metronome (or faster, if desired). Finally, the applicant squats in the taped box and sets the equipment on the floor (leaving it there to proceed to the next event).

### **Station 3: Manikin Drag Starting Point**

Station 3 is the starting point for the manikin drag. The station will have a transfer tarp laid out with a 165-pound manikin lying face-up on top.

For Event 3, the applicant leaves the stairwell and walks 30 feet to Station 3. Standing at the edge of the transfer tarp closest to the head of the manikin, the applicant squats to grasp the handles on the tarp, stands up, and walks backwards, dragging the tarp and the manikin completely past a cone marker 25 feet away.

### **Station 4: CPR Manikin Location**

Station 4 is the CPR administration area, where a manikin with a CPR rate and depth feedback device will be lying face-up on the ground.

For Event 4, the applicant leaves the cone marker at the end of the Manikin Drag and walks 10 feet to Station 4. The applicant kneels on the ground next to the CPR manikin, places his/her hands in the appropriate position on the rate and depth feedback device, and performs CPR for four (4) minutes at a rate of 100 compressions per minute and a depth of two (2) inches.

### **Station 5: Manikin Drag Ending Point**

Station 5 is the point by the cone marker where the Manikin Drag ended.

After Event 4 (four minutes of CPR), the applicant walks 10 feet back to the cone marker where the Manikin Drag ended for Event 5. The applicant kneels down, raises one arm of the manikin to facilitate the roll, rolls the manikin completely onto its side towards the applicant, and holds it there for five (5) seconds. The applicant is not allowed to push the manikin – it must be rolled. When five (5) seconds have passed, the applicant then returns the manikin to its face up position by rolling the manikin down from its side to its back (*i.e.*, returning it to the face-up position).

### **(Return to Station 2: Stairwell)**

Event 6 occurs back at Station 2 (the stairwell). A curl bar with 75 pounds of weight tightly secured should will be placed on the ground at least six (6) feet from the base of the staircase. The curl bar will have two grip marks indicated by tape that are each nine (9) inches from the center of the bar (*i.e.*, 18 inches apart).

The applicant walks 55 feet from Station 5 back to Station 2 (the stairwell) to complete Event 6 (the Simulated Stair Chair Carry). The applicant picks up the 75-pound curl bar with one hand on each taped mark, using a palm-up grip. The applicant then carries the bar and moves to the base of the stairs, facing away from the stairs. With the first and second test administrators serving as spotters (one test administrator in front of the applicant and one test administrator behind the applicant as the event proceeds), the applicant walks backwards, carrying the bar up the first flight of stairs (13 steps). At the landing, the applicant turns around and walks backwards, carrying the bar down the flight of stairs (13 steps) to the bottom. The applicant then walks to the location where the curl bar was originally placed and puts it gently back on the ground.

### **Station 6: Spine Board Location**

Station 6 is the location of a spine board that is placed on the ground fifteen (15) feet from the base of the staircase. One hundred twenty (120) pounds of weight will be securely fastened to the spine board at the torso/head position, with the other end of the spine board placed against a wall.

For Event 7, the applicant walks 15 feet from the stairwell to Station 6 to complete the Spine Board Lift. The applicant squats to grasp the weighted (head) end of the spine board and lifts, rising to a standing position with arms extended. The applicant holds the board in place for five (5) seconds, and then gently returns it to the floor.

### **(Return to Station 1: Ambulance)**

The final three test events (Events 8, 9, and 10) all take place at Station 1 (the ambulance). As noted above, the manual lift stretcher will already be outside of and behind the ambulance with the safety latch engaged. Only the manikin weighing 150 pounds will still be on the stretcher. You will recall that the gear bag and heart monitor that were originally located on the stretcher were removed during Event 1.

For Event 8, the applicant walks 50 feet back to Station 1 (from Station 6) and grasps the end of the stretcher furthest from the ambulance, lifting that end of the stretcher off the ground. The test administrator will then retract the carriage of the stretcher until it locks, at which point the applicant holds the stretcher aloft for five (5) seconds. When the test administrator gives the signal, the applicant pushes the stretcher into the ambulance and secures it.

For Event 9, the applicant enters the ambulance from the rear door and connects the 340(L) oxygen tank to the regulator. The applicant removes the bag valve mask (“BVM”) from its bag and secures it (using 84 inches of 2.0 millimeter plastic tubing) to the regulator and oxygen tank. The applicant then places the BVM on the face of the manikin (which is still on the stretcher) and squeezes the BVM to simulate providing five (5) breaths. After five (5) breaths, the applicant turns off the regulator and places the BVM and oxygen tank on the bench seat of the ambulance.

For Event 10, the applicant exits the ambulance through the rear door, returns to the foot of the stretcher, squeezes the handle to release the stretcher, and pulls it out of the ambulance until it catches on the safety stop. The applicant then holds the stretcher for five (5) seconds, after which the test administrator releases and locks the carriage. When the test administrator gives the signal, the applicant lowers the carriage to the floor. When the wheels of the stretcher touch the ground, the clock stops and the PPAT is finished.

## VI. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PPAT

During either an “orientation” or an “official” administration of the PPAT, Chicago Fire Department personnel will escort individual applicants to and from the testing area, although no CFD employee or other employee of the City of Chicago will be present in the testing area while an applicant is participating in the PPAT. Instead, independent test administrators will time, monitor, and score the PPAT, moving with the applicant to the various stations around the room and providing standardized instructions as the test proceeds.

### **Scoring the PPAT**

The PPAT consists of ten (10) events, but is timed as one aggregate event. Applicants have twelve (12) minutes to complete the entire test (all ten events). An applicant can take as long as he or she wishes to complete any individual event (except for the four-minute CPR event), but failure to complete the whole test within twelve (12) minutes results in failure of the PPAT.

### **Completing the PPAT**

If an applicant fails to properly complete any single test event, the applicant fails the entire PPAT. During an “official” administration of the PPAT, the test administrator will not allow the applicant to continue past the event he or she is unable to complete. However, during an “orientation” PPAT, the test administrator will allow an applicant who cannot complete an event to move on to the next event. This is because one of the main purposes of the “orientation” PPAT is to enable applicants to gain knowledge of the equipment and physical activities associated with all test events in the PPAT.

Similarly, if an applicant exceeds the allotted time of twelve (12) minutes during an “official” administration of the PPAT, the test administrator will stop the exam, unless the applicant is in the process of completing the final event (in which case the applicant will be allowed to finish). However, during an “orientation” PPAT, the test administrator will allow the applicant to attempt and complete all ten (10) events, even if the allotted time of twelve (12) minutes is exceeded. Again, this is because one of the main purposes of the “orientation” PPAT is to enable applicants to gain knowledge of the equipment and physical activities associated with all test events in the PPAT.

### **Failing the PPAT**

Applicants may not run at any point during the administration of the PPAT. Applicants may walk quickly between events, but running during the PPAT is prohibited and will result in failure of the test.

In addition to running, not properly completing a test event, or taking more than twelve (12) minutes to complete the entire PPAT, there are a number of other situations that may lead to failure of the PPAT, including:

- The judgment of a test administrator that starting or continuing the PPAT would result in injury or health risk to the applicant;
- The judgment of a test administrator that an applicant is in pain or injured;
- The judgment of a test administrator that an applicant is behaving as if he or she is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs;
- An applicant's inability to understand instructions;
- An applicant's unwillingness to follow instructions;
- An applicant's refusal to comply with corrective instructions;
- An applicant's performance of activities in an unsafe manner;
- An applicant's failure to cease and desist performing activities in an unsafe manner upon request;
- Unprofessional language or behavior; or
- Any other scenario in which the judgment of a test administrator suggests that an applicant may be in jeopardy of injury or health risk.

Test administrators will remain vigilant and alert for any of the above, and will end the PPAT upon identifying a situation that may lead to an injury or a health or safety risk.

Finally, applicants may also voluntarily withdraw from the PPAT at any time. However, voluntary withdrawal results in failure of the test.

### **Passing the PPAT**

For both an "orientation" and an "official" administration of the PPAT, the Chicago Fire Department will inform applicants of their individual test results in writing on a later date. Accordingly, test administrators are prohibited from giving applicants any information regarding PPAT results at any time. This means that test administrators are not allowed to tell applicants either the total time taken on the exam or the results of the exam (*i.e.*, pass or fail). Applicants should therefore avoid asking for this information from test administrators at the conclusion of the PPAT, as only the Chicago Fire Department is empowered to communicate information regarding individual applicant results (and will do so in writing on a date following the PPAT).

## VIII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following are questions frequently asked by applicants regarding the PPAT:

### Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”):

Q: How will I know where and when the Chicago Fire Department is holding the PPAT?

A: **The Chicago Fire Department will inform you in writing of the date, time, and location of both the “orientation” and the “official” PPAT.**

Q: What should I bring with me to the PPAT?

A: **You need to bring a valid (*i.e.*, non-expired) driver’s license with you to check in with CFD personnel prior to participating in the PPAT. You should also bring a medical waiver form for participating in the PPAT if this document has not already been submitted to CFD.**

Q: Are any other forms of identification acceptable?

A: **No. Only a valid (*i.e.*, non-expired) driver’s license is an acceptable form of identification for the purposes of taking the PPAT. This is because you must have a valid (*i.e.*, non-expired) driver’s license to work as a paramedic for the Chicago Fire Department.**

Q: What should I wear to take the PPAT?

A: **You should wear comfortable workout clothing and proper athletic footwear to participate in the PPAT.**

Q: Approximately how long will the entire testing process take?

A: **The testing process will likely take about four (4) hours. You will be directed to report to the testing facility at either 8:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m., and will be among of a group of approximately 15-20 individuals invited to take the PPAT during that particular testing session. Although applicants will participate in the PPAT in the order in which they check in, applicants must then remain in the applicant waiting area until all individuals in their group have finished testing, at which point CFD personnel will dismiss all members of the group at the same time.**

Q: Can I leave the testing facility once testing begins?

A: **Once you check in, you cannot leave the testing facility until you are dismissed with the other members of your group by CFD personnel. Leaving the testing facility without authority or permission will result in failure of the PPAT.**

Q: May I use gloves, a kneeling pad, or my own stopwatch during the PPAT?

A: **You may not use gloves, a kneeling pad, your own stopwatch, or any other equipment not provided by test administrators during the PPAT.**

- Q: Do I have to perform each event during the PPAT exactly as the test administrator instructs, or can I perform it in the way I usually do it?
- A: **You must perform each event exactly as instructed. For example, many paramedics use straps on equipment bags. There are no straps on the equipment bags in this test and you must carry them as directed by test administrators and as shown in the instructional video on the PPAT.**
- Q: How is the PPAT scored?
- A: **The PPAT is a pass/fail exam consisting of ten (10) pass/fail events that are timed as one aggregate event. Applicants have twelve (12) minutes to complete all ten (10) test events. Applicants may take as long as they wish to complete any single event (except the timed CPR event), but failure to complete the entire test within twelve (12) minutes results in failure of the PPAT.**
- Q: If I complete all of the events, how will I know whether I passed the PPAT?
- A: **Following the test, the Chicago Fire Department will inform you in writing whether you passed or failed the PPAT.**
- Q: Can the test administrator tell me my official time on the PPAT?
- A: **The test administrator is not permitted to reveal your official time on the PPAT.**
- Q: If I complete all of the events, can the test administrator tell me whether I passed the PPAT?
- A: **The test administrator is not permitted to reveal whether you passed or failed the PPAT.**
- Q: May I withdraw from the PPAT or stop the test once I have started?
- A: **You may voluntarily withdraw from the PPAT at any time, but withdrawing from or stopping the test results in failure of the PPAT.**
- Q: How will CFD receive my results on the PPAT?
- A: **The test administrator will provide your results (recorded on a standardized scoring sheet) to Chicago Fire Department personnel. CFD will then inform you in writing on a later date whether you passed or failed the PPAT.**
- Q: If I pass the PPAT, will the Chicago Fire Department automatically hire me as a paramedic?
- A: **Successful completion of the PPAT is not a guarantee or even an offer of employment. The PPAT is only one of the required steps in the selection process. Applicants for the paramedic position must satisfy all criteria for hire before receiving a conditional offer of employment from the Chicago Fire Department.**
- Q: Is there any consequence or penalty for failing the “orientation” PPAT?
- A: **There is no consequence or penalty for failing the “orientation” PPAT. Applicants who fail the “orientation” PPAT will be invited to return approximately eight (8) weeks later to participate in the “official” administration of the exam.**

Q: What happens if I fail the “official” PPAT?

A: **Applicants who fail the “official” PPAT are no longer eligible for employment as a paramedic with the Chicago Fire Department during the current hiring cycle.**

Q: If I fail the “official” PPAT, can I reapply to become a CFD paramedic on a later date?

A: **When there is a need to hire new paramedics, CFD selects applicants to take the PPAT from a randomized eligibility list onto which applicants previously placed themselves by indicating an interest in the paramedic position. If you fail the PPAT, you can apply to become a paramedic again only when CFD “opens” or creates a new eligibility list following the exhaustion of names on the current list.**

Q: Will CFD or Avesta tell me how I can prepare or train for the PPAT?

A: **Because each applicant’s body and physical condition are unique, neither Avesta nor the Chicago Fire Department can recommend or endorse any specific training program that will guarantee that an applicant passes the PPAT. You should consult with your primary care physician before beginning any exercise routine or program.**

If you have questions or concerns that are not addressed above, please direct them to either the Chicago Fire Department at (312) 746-6920, or to test administrators on the day of the “orientation” PPAT.

## IX. FEEDBACK ON THIS MANUAL

Avesta would greatly appreciate your feedback on this manual, as well as any comments, questions, or problems arising as the result of the information and materials appearing herein. Please direct any communications to Avesta at:

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