

# FireTEAM

Applicant Handout

Seattle Fire Department  
2019/2020 Firefighter Testing Process



# Introduction

This handout is designed to help you prepare for the City of Seattle Entry-Level Firefighter Testing Process. To be considered for an entry-level firefighter position at the Seattle Fire Department, you will need to successfully go through multiple phases of the department's testing process. This handout discusses two main parts of the testing process including:

- Part 1: FireTEAM Testing System
- Part 2: Oral Board

The information provided in this handout is meant to be helpful and prepare you for the general nature of the process. The handout includes a general overview of each part of the selection process, general strategies for effective preparation and test-taking, and descriptions of procedures and materials you will encounter during each part of the selection process.

**Disclaimer:** The information provided in this handout is meant to be helpful and prepare you for the general nature of the process. It is not meant to advise you of every question that will be asked and some aspects of the process may be modified, if necessary. Additionally, the information in this handout is not exhaustive. We encourage you to act upon whatever additional course of study or strategies you believe will enhance your chances of performing effectively.

# City of Seattle Application Process

Apply to the firefighter position at [www.governmentjobs.com](http://www.governmentjobs.com). Applicants can access computers at Seattle or King County Public Libraries (if needed).

# NTN Overview

## NTN Registration Process

- Visit National Testing Network ([nationaltestingnetwork.com](http://nationaltestingnetwork.com)) to register.
  - Schedule a test via NTN at any convenient Washington Testing location (must test within Washington State).
  - **Option One:** Candidates may complete the FireTEAM exam for the Seattle Administration between October 15 and December 10 in one of NTN's administration centers located in Washington State. There is no cost to the candidate to take this exam; however, the score will only be valid for Seattle, and the candidate will not find out test results until the end of the examination window.
- OR**
- **Option Two:** Candidates who complete NTN FireTEAM between April 15, 2019, and Dec 10, 2019, (within Washington State) are eligible to transfer their current score to Seattle at no cost. The candidate pays for the cost of their exam and can use their score for other jurisdictions.
  - Complete the Work Attitude Questionnaire after registering in the NTN portal.

## Testing Location Details

Our Everett, Spokane, and Olympia testing facilities offer **ALL computer-based testing** (no bubble sheets). Computer-based testing locations have individual computers and headphones. Answers are entered electronically.

All other locations will be a shared video projected on a large screen. Everyone completes the test at the same pace, and answers are dictated onto a Scantron bubble answer sheet, with pencils.

Test as soon as you can. If you wait until the end of the testing period, you may have to drive farther or test at an inconvenient time for an available testing slot. **Complete your test by the closing date: Dec 10, 2019.**

## NTN Washington Testing Locations:

Everett Testing Center  
Kennewick Testing Center  
Olympia Testing Center

Pasco Testing Center  
South Seattle Testing Center  
Spokane Testing Center  
Vancouver Testing Center

## What to Expect at the Testing Center

- **You will receive an email after you schedule your exam with important detailed test center/testing instructions.**
- **You MUST show up on time**, if you are late, you will be considered as a 'no-show.'
- **Please allow ample time for parking.** At most sites, there is parking nearby, but if the testing center is busy, you may need to park a little farther away. Please be prepared to pay for parking.
- **No cell phones allowed in the room.** Candidates bring NOTHING into the testing room.
- **Candidates must know their log-in credentials** (provided to you at scheduling) for testing at a computer location (Everett, Olympia, Spokane).
- **NTN will supply all testing materials needed** (pencils- if applicable, headphones, etc.).
- **This is a standardized testing environment**, which means no talking, no firearms, no cell phones, no jackets, no watches, no water/food, and no personal items of any kind. NTN will provide everything needed for testing.
- **Cheating in any form is prohibited.**
- **No bathroom breaks are allowed during the test.** Should a candidate need to use the restroom, their test will NOT stop.
- Candidates should bring:
  - Themselves, VALID government issued photo ID (**names must match exactly with the NTN roster/your NTN account**), all/any NTN usernames and passwords (these are CANDIDATE created when you schedule your exam, NTN will not have the ability to look up this information or reset it).
  - It is highly recommended candidates know their SSN (last 4 digits) in the event they need to reset a password last minute (this is done via the NTN website by the candidate; proctors cannot assist with this process for security purposes).
  - It is also recommended that candidates bring a copy of the EMAIL confirmation they receive when they schedule their test. This paper will not be allowed in the testing room.

## FireTEAM Test Overview

FireTEAM Testing System was developed to measure specific aptitudes important to firefighter and emergency response occupations. You will be taking five testing components. The first is the Work Attitudes Questionnaire that you will complete online when you apply. The following four components: a Human Relations Video Test, a Mechanical Test, a Math Test, and a Reading test, will be taken at a testing location.

Character is important in the fire service. You will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement stating that you have not and will not violate test security through coaching or exchange of specific information about test items. Breach of this agreement is subject to prosecution under federal copyright law and would be viewed as an unacceptable integrity failure for an employee or prospective employee.

If testing at a location where there is video projected (not online), the answer sheet you will use is machine scored. Only mark one answer for each question and fill in the bubble completely. If you mark more than one answer, you will get the question wrong.

Regardless of where you test, if you don't know the answer to a question, the best strategy is to guess, because you may get it right anyway, and you will definitely get it wrong if you don't answer.

### FireTEAM Video-Based Human Relations Test

64 Items Total (Approximately 60 Minutes)

FireTEAM focuses on teamwork and human relations. It was specifically designed for the fire service. Test items were developed through rigorous research with many panels of experienced fire service professionals. Experience is not required to answer the questions in this test. Common sense is always your best guide. You will watch a video segment and then choose the BEST course of action in a multiple-choice format.

If at a testing location where the video is projected, the items play without stopping. After each question is presented, you will have a brief period to mark the answer you think is best before the next question is presented. You will see each question only once.

If at an online testing location, the items play without stopping. After each question is presented, you will have a brief period to select the best answer using the mouse.

You don't need fire service experience to answer these questions. FireTEAM is not intended in any way to test knowledge of policies or technical aspects of the job. Any such information that may be needed to answer a question is provided in the test. You are not expected to know anything other than what is stated. Base your answers only on information given in the test and your own common sense.

## FireTEAM Human Relations Test Instructions

These are the instructions for taking FireTEAM. These instructions will also be presented to you on video at the time of the actual testing.

*This is a human relations video test that has two parts. In Part I, you will see video scenarios depicting firefighters. Each scenario is followed by a question with four answers. In part II, you'll be asked your opinion about firefighters you saw in Part I. This is a human relations test focusing on teamwork and public relations. It's a test of your common sense.*

*You don't need experience to answer these questions. This is not a test of your knowledge of any particular policy, codes, or technical aspects of the job. Any information like that, that may be needed to answer a question, will be provided in the test. For instance, at times it is stated that certain personal protective equipment is required. You are not expected to know anything other than what is stated. Base your answers only on information given in the test and your own common sense.*

*This is a test. It is not in any way intended as training or as an example of how firefighters and rescue personnel should handle their jobs. Firefighters may or may not be demonstrating good performance. Sometimes, you will see firefighters who make poor choices about what to do. Answer each question based on everything you have seen and heard in the video up to that point. Choose the BEST option from the four available answers. Don't get stuck thinking about answer choices that are not available to you.*

*Also keep in mind, there are no trick questions. Although all the answers may not be equal in terms of common sense, they would all be choices available to the firefighters in the scenarios. In no case is an answer wrong because the choice would not be possible.*

*Pay attention to the behaviors and actions of the firefighters and supervisors you see in the scenarios, and consider how it would feel to work with these individuals. In Part II, you will be asked your opinion about many of the characters that you saw. Keep this in mind as you watch Part I.*

## FireTEAM Mechanical Reasoning Test

25 Items (30 Minutes)

FireTEAM Mechanical Test is a multiple-choice mechanical aptitude test presented on video. You will see an introduction to a simple system, in the form of an animated brick making factory, and then be asked questions about the factory. Most of the questions are about basic mechanical objects such as valves, and principles such as water pressure. You will also be asked to answer trouble shooting type questions and observe system operations for problems. All of the questions can be answered based on common sense and observation of how everyday objects work. FireTEAM Mechanical Reasoning Test is also timed.

If at a testing location where the video is projected, the items play without stopping. After each question is presented, you will have a brief period to mark the answer you think is best before the next question is presented. You will see each question only once.

If at an online testing location, the items play without stopping. After each question is presented, you will have a brief period to select the best answer using the mouse.

## FireTEAM Math Test

18 Questions (14 Minutes)

The FireTEAM Math Test is based on the basic math skills one would need to be a successful firefighter. Questions are presented aloud, so you must listen carefully.

If at a testing location where the video is projected, you will be asked to write your answers on your answer sheet in the space provided, and then later you will be given time to bubble those answers in.

If at an online testing location, the items play without stopping. For the first part of the Math Test, after each question is presented, you will have a brief period to type your answer into the text box. The last part of the Math Test requires that you select the best answer using the mouse.

Questions relate to calculating basic subtraction, division, and multiplication. The last section asks you to figure proportions. If testing with an answer sheet, after all the questions are presented, you will be given time to bubble in the answers you have written. All answers must be bubbled on your bubble answer sheet to receive credit.

## FireTEAM Reading Test

15 Questions (6 Minutes)

For the FireTEAM Reading Test, you will be asked to answer multiple-choice reading questions. This test is designed specifically for firefighters, a job requiring on-going study of difficult and technical materials. The test is based on actual job materials. You will be required to read a passage and choose the words that best fit in the blanks. You will have 6 minutes to complete the Reading Test.

If at a testing location where the video is projected, you will fill in the bubbles on your answer sheet that correspond with the correct answer. If at a computer-based testing location, you will select the correct answer from a drop-down menu.

Here is an example using a sentence from the paragraph above:

Example		Choices			
		A	B	C	D
This test is designed ___1___ for firefighters, a ___2___ requiring on- going study of difficult and technical materials.	1.	never	specifically	usually	as
	2.	job	test	vehicle	suspect

### Correct Responses:

For each of the blanks, only one of the answers provided makes sense. The only answers that make sense in the above example are:

1. b (specifically)
2. a (job)

### Test Taking Tips

FireTEAM includes multiple-choice questions. To get the highest score, always select the best choice listed, even if more than one seems good to you. Be sure to read all answers before deciding your final answer. Don't focus on a choice that is not given to you. Don't get distracted by thinking of other possible responses that are not among the choices presented. Don't get stuck on the idea that you want to combine two responses. Show your judgment by picking the one answer that, by itself, is better than any other answer, by itself.

Prepare yourself physically and mentally for your exam as you would prepare yourself for any special assignment that requires concentration. Get the amount of sleep that will leave you most alert. It's also a good idea to eat a nutritious and hearty meal to help you stay focused throughout your exam. Unusual changes in your routine may cause you problems during your exam. For example, consuming more caffeine than usual may make you jittery; less than usual may leave you listless. Try to remain calm and relaxed before and during your exam. If you feel anxious, take a few moments to calm yourself down.

Here are some additional tips to help you during FireTEAM. These simple procedures will help you avoid marking the wrong answer when you know the right one.

- 1. Listen to the instructions.** Before you begin the exam, it is important that you read and/or listen to all instructions carefully. Ensure you know how to correctly fill out the answer sheet. Specific instructions will be provided at the test site.
- 2. Read all of the answers before choosing one.** The most common answer people choose is **a**, whether it is right or not. That is because they think the first answer looks okay, so they stop reading. Don't make the mistake of not reading all answers before making a selection. Even if **a** looks like a really good answer, one of the other answers may be better. When you read the other alternatives, you may think of something you had missed at first.
- 3. Use process of elimination.** If you aren't sure of the correct answer use process of elimination. Eliminate answer choices that you know are definitely wrong. Then focus on selecting the best answer from the choices remaining.
- 4. Do not read something into the question that is not there.** On a situational question, assume that everything is normal unless the question tells you differently. Assume that the pavement is dry; visibility is good; your supervisor is competent; and citizens are behaving normally. When something is amiss, the question will tell you. Stick to the facts of the questions.
- 5. Answer every question.** There is no penalty for guessing. Even if you don't know the correct answer, you have one chance in four of choosing the right one. If you can eliminate one or two of the alternatives, your chances are even better.

6. **Fill out your answer sheet correctly.** In marking the answer sheet, be sure to fill in the blank that corresponds to the answer you have chosen. If you skip a question, make sure you skip to the right space on the answer sheet. If you mark the wrong answer and want to change it, erase your first mark completely. Remember to only mark *one* answer for each question.
7. **Ask your Test Proctor.** A test proctor will be available during the exam to help you with the testing procedures; however, he or she will not explain the meaning of any question, define words, or give information which may be of help in answering a question.

### FireTEAM Practice Test

For more information and practice answering questions from each part of FireTEAM, you can take the FireTEAM Practice Test by visiting [www.ergopracticetests.com](http://www.ergopracticetests.com). This valuable information is compiled by National Testing Networks' testing experts who are also the developers of FireTEAM. Make sure you're ready for FireTEAM by reviewing a complete discussion of right and wrong answers for the practice questions. You can take the basic practice test twice for \$24.99 or take the extended practice test twice for 38.99.

#### The Basic FireTEAM Practice Test

- 5 Human Relations video items and explanations
- 12-item Mechanical Aptitude Test and explanations
- 15-item Reading Test
- 7-item Math Test

#### The Extended FireTEAM Practice Test

- 20 Human Relations video items and explanations
- 12-item Mechanical Aptitude Test and explanations
- 30-item Reading Test
- 14-item Math Test

## Oral Board Overview and Preparation

The second part of this selection process will consist of an Oral Board. To move forward to the oral board, you must successfully pass FireTEAM. During the oral board, you will interact directly with a panel that will ask questions, listen to your answers and observe your behavior. There is nothing to be gained, and much to be lost, by trying to pretend you are someone other than who you are. You do, however, want to show yourself to your best advantage.

Provided below are tips to help you prepare for the oral board component of the selection process.

### Oral Board Tips

Here are some key things to remember as you prepare for the oral board component.

- **Arrive early.** This is one of the easiest and most effective ways to minimize stress.
- **Prepare.** You may be able to do well without preparing, but you can always do better with preparation. Remember, you are competing against others who are also very good and you need to do your best to stand out as excellent. The more prepared you are, the more relaxed and confident you will be. There are many ways you can prepare.
  - **Understand the job.** Understanding the job itself is the most important way to improve your competitiveness. The more you understand about the position and the Seattle Fire Department, the better you will be able to answer potential questions relating to the job and organization.
  - **Minimize how much you will need to “wing it.”** An interview is like an emergency response. You never know precisely what the demands will be, but the more you have practiced what you can, the easier it is to improvise and adapt. You will always have to demonstrate flexibility and on-the-spot thinking. Try to develop your thinking as much as you can in advance. Learn as much as you can about the job. Think about how you would handle job challenges.
- **Credentials.** Credentials, such as degrees, are an important part of your resume and preparation for an interview. The best way to make your credentials seem impressive is not simply to mention them in isolation, but to bring them up in relation to your answer on a question. For instance, you may say, “While getting my degree, I took several courses related to this position. I learned about the importance of . . . . .,” and then discuss how what you learned is connected with your answer to a question. This shows how you can apply what you have learned. But remember, panelists usually don’t like being told repeatedly during interviews of specific credentials. You may not bring your resume to the oral board.
- **Dress in business attire.** Dress and behave as you would for a formal presentation. If you are considering a casual “come as you are” style, think about how your competition will be dressed. Remember, you are the focus of the interview.

- **Don't pretend.** Represent yourself honestly and don't try to fake it. Don't spin your experience to sound like something it's not. Don't use words you don't know as that is a quick way to cast doubt on your credibility, intelligence and integrity. It is easy for panelists to identify candidates who have memorized answers to questions that they don't really understand or believe.
- **Display confidence.** Demonstrate your confidence in being able to take on the new position. Imagine the most effective and confident individual you can think of and embody his or her demeanor.
- **Show that you can communicate openly.** Answer questions directly and be sure to use eye contact.
- **Don't self-deprecate or apologize for your answers.** Even if you don't think you've answered a question well, don't put yourself down. Apologizing for your answers will make you look less confident and competent. All you need to do is answer all interview questions the best that you can.
- **Think aloud.** Whatever your answer to a question is, the panel may understand it better if you think aloud. Considering options demonstrates critical thinking, an important skill for all positions.
- **Imagine yourself in the panel's place.** Be friendly and respectful to the panel; they are trying to do a good job, just like you. Don't act offended or defensive if they ask for information that you think they should already know. This is your chance to show how gracious you are in public situations and how easy you might be to work with.
- **Don't make assumptions.** The panelists are considering large amounts of complex information about many candidates. Don't assume anyone has memorized anything from your resume or file. If something is important for understanding what you are saying, just tell them.
- **Be concise in your communication.** Sufficient time is provided in the interview to communicate the necessary answers to questions asked. If you use more than your allotted time, you will be taking time from others and placing stress on the panel.
- **Relax as much as you can.** Try to maintain physical relaxation and use appropriate gestures. Smile - don't act like you are in pain and don't feel you have to fill every silence. Answer questions and then wait for the next question. At the end of the interview, thank the panel.
- **Do your best.** The most important thing is to represent yourself honestly and do your best.