

# 2023 FIREFIGHTER

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### REQUIREMENTS

Q1. What are the requirements to become a firefighter (under the 2023 application process)?	A. 1) At least 18 years of age at the time of application, and 2) Graduation from a U.S. high school or equivalent, G.E.D. or equivalent from a U.S. institution, or a California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE) certificate is required, and 3) Achievement of a passing score on the FIREFIGHTER CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT (FCA) in order to be considered in the next phase of the selection process.
Q2. Does a foreign high school diploma satisfy the education minimum requirement to apply?	A. Yes, but you must attach an evaluation from an evaluation agency to your City application stating that the educational standards are equivalent to a U.S. high school diploma. We recognize the following evaluation service agencies: <a href="https://www.naces.org/members">https://www.naces.org/members</a>

### VACCINE MANDATE

Q3. What is the LA City vaccine mandate?	A. In accordance with Los Angeles City Ordinance 187134, candidates must meet the minimum requirement of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or receive an exemption and report their vaccination status prior to appointment by the hiring authority. The ordinance is available at <a href="https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2021/21-0921_ord_187134_8-24-21.pdf">https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2021/21-0921_ord_187134_8-24-21.pdf</a> and <a href="https://per.lacity.org/covid19.html">https://per.lacity.org/covid19.html</a> . <b>The City Personnel Department will verify candidates' vaccination status prior to the interview, this means candidates SHOULD become fully vaccinated or approved for an exemption prior to their interview.</b>
Q4. What is considered being "fully vaccinated"?	A. In accordance with Los Angeles City Ordinance 187134, "Fully Vaccinated" means 14 days or more have passed since a candidate received the final dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series ( <b>Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech or Novavax</b> ) OR a single dose of a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine ( <b>Johnson &amp; Johnson/Janssen</b> ). <b>Please note that a <u>single COVID-19 bivalent vaccine</u> will satisfy the full vaccination requirement.</b>
Q5. Where can I apply for a COVID-19 vaccine exemption?	A. The City Personnel Department will directly email candidates <b>who indicated on their application that they plan to apply for a medical or religious exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine</b> the exemption forms to fill out. Please note that the exemption request will be reviewed upon the receipt of the required documents. <b>If the exemption request is granted it will only ensure an interactive process with the hiring authority.</b> It is possible that the requested exemption may not meet the requirements of the position pertaining to working in the field, and if so, positions in the field may not be available. <b>The approval of the exemption request <u>DOES NOT</u> guarantee that you will be allowed to move forward in the hiring process.</b>

## FIREFIGHTER CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT (FCA)

Q6. What is the FCA?	<p>A. The FCA or Firefighter Candidate Assessment is a computer-based test battery consisting of two parts; a multimedia assessment and a self-description component. In the multimedia portion, candidates respond to audio and video cues on the computer. In the self-description component, candidates define themselves by responding to biographical, situational, and work attitude items. Under the 2023 application process, you must achieve a passing score on the FCA in order to be considered in the next phase in the selection process for the position of Firefighter with the City of Los Angeles. <b>Even though a passing score on the FCA is required, you do not have to wait until you receive your score to apply.</b> The application period is from May 2, 2023 through September 18, 2023.</p>
Q7. Is there a study guide for the FCA?	<p>A. The FCA Preparation Guide which includes information about the Firefighter Candidate Assessment (FCA) is available at <a href="https://joinlafd.org/pdf/FCA_Preparation_Guide.pdf">https://joinlafd.org/pdf/FCA_Preparation_Guide.pdf</a></p>
Q8. Do I need to retake the FCA if I achieved a passing score in 2016, 2018, 2020 or 2022?	<p>A. No. Candidates may use their passing FCA score from 2016, 2018, 2020 or 2022 to satisfy the 2023 FCA requirement. This means that <b>candidates with a passing FCA score taken from 2016, 2018, 2020 or 2022 satisfies the FCA requirement</b> for the 2023 selection process. Candidates who tested and passed in 2016, 2018 or 2020, but did not pass in 2022, <b>DO NOT</b> need to retake the FCA as their previous pass score in 2016, 2018, or 2020 will satisfy the 2023 FCA requirement.</p>
Q9. Do I need to submit an application if I achieved a passing score on the FCA in 2016, 2018, 2020 or 2022?	<p>A. Yes. If you previously achieved a passing score on the FCA from 2016, 2018, 2020 or 2022, <b>you MUST submit a City application from May 2, 2023 through September 18, 2023, but you DO NOT need to retake the FCA.</b> The City Personnel Department will identify your 2016, 2018, 2020 or 2022 passing FCA score after you have submitted an application. If you DID NOT achieve a passing score on the FCA in 2016, 2018, 2020 and 2022, you <b>MUST</b> submit a City application <b>AND</b> retake the FCA.</p>
Q10. How much does the FCA exam cost?	<p>A. The fee for the FCA is \$73, and is payable to the vendor, PSI. See their website: <a href="https://tara.vitapowered.com/LAFD/FCA">https://tara.vitapowered.com/LAFD/FCA</a> for registration information. Payment of fees may be made by credit card (e.g., VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover). CASH, MONEY ORDERS, CASHIER’S CHECKS AND PERSONAL CHECKS ARE <b>NOT</b> ACCEPTED. WALK-IN TESTING IS <b>NOT</b> AVAILABLE</p>
Q11. What if I can’t afford the \$73 for the FCA test?	<p>A. Test fee waivers are available to those of limited means who qualify. Please visit <a href="https://joinlafd.org/index.cfm?section=fcawaiver">joinlafd.org/index.cfm?section=fcawaiver</a>) for information on how to apply for the fee waiver. You must fill out a fee waiver application and submit it to the City Personnel Department as instructed.</p>

<p>Q12. If I register for the FCA and pay, but later get approved for a fee waiver, will I receive a refund?</p>	<p>A. Yes, if you pay for the FCA and are later approved for a fee waiver, PSI will refund the account used to pay for your registration. Further information will be provided to you if you are determined to be eligible for a fee waiver.</p>
<p>Q13. If I register for the FCA and pay, but I am unable to take the exam, will I receive a refund?</p>	<p>A. No. If you pay for the exam and later decide not to take it, you will not receive a refund. Also, <b>if you do not cancel your appointment at least 24 hours before the scheduled FCA date and time you will forfeit your FCA fee.</b> Information on how to reschedule your exam within PSI’s required timeframe will be posted in the scheduling confirmation emails.</p>
<p>Q14. If I register for the FCA and pay, but I forgot to take the FCA, will I receive a refund?</p>	<p>A. No. You will forfeit your FCA fee if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You do not cancel your appointment at least 24 hours before the scheduled FCA date and time;</li> <li>• You do not appear for your FCA appointment;</li> <li>• You arrive after the FCA start time;</li> <li>• You do not present proper identification when you arrive for the examination.</li> </ul>
<p>Q15. Who can I contact if I am having trouble registering for the FCA?</p>	<p>A. You may email PSI at <a href="mailto:COLAOPS@psionline.com">COLAOPS@psionline.com</a> to notify them of your issue.</p>
<p>Q16. How do I schedule the FCA if I live outside of California?</p>	<p>A. You will register to test and select ‘Request a Seat’ when you get to the scheduling part of the process.</p>
<p>Q17. Do I need a government I.D. to take the FCA?</p>	<p>A. You <b>MUST</b> have a <u>valid</u> State or Federal issued photo identification card with a signature, with you in order to be tested. If you do not have a valid State or Federal issued photo identification card with a signature with you, you <b>WILL NOT</b> be allowed to take the test and you will forfeit the registration fee.</p>
<p>Q18. Can I change my test date?</p>	<p>A. Applicants scheduled for the FCA must contact PSI more than 24 hours before their scheduled appointment at <a href="https://tara.vitapowered.com/LAFD/FCA">https://tara.vitapowered.com/LAFD/FCA</a> to request to be rescheduled.</p>
<p>Q19. How soon after I take the FCA will I receive my score?</p>	<p>A. When you have completed the examination, you will be checked out by the proctor. The proctor will provide you with a printed report which will contain your results. Please keep these results.</p>
<p>Q20. How often may I take the FCA?</p>	<p>A. You may only take the FCA <u>one time</u> during the 2023 testing window. If you do not achieve a passing score on the FCA during the 2023 testing window, you will be invited by email to retake the FCA. This retest window will occur mid-November through December 2023. If you fail the FCA during the retest window, you will not be able to move forward in the 2023 selection process. You may submit a request for e-mail notification when the Firefighter position with the City of LA is offered again. Go to the website and follow the instructions at <a href="https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/lacity/classspecs">https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/lacity/classspecs</a></p>

<p>Q21. I received a passing score on the FCA. What is the next step?</p>	<p>A. You also need to submit an application at <a href="https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/lacity">https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/lacity</a> by September 18, 2023. The next step is waiting to be selected in a Stratified Random Sample to participate in the interview. Please see Question #28 the “Interview” section on page 5 for a description of the Stratified Random Sampling strategy we use to move candidates forward in the selection process.</p>
<p>Q22. If I submit the City of Los Angeles Firefighter application before registering for the FCA, do I need to update my application later to include my FCA score once I receive it?</p>	<p>A. No, you do not need to update your application with your FCA score. This will be completed by the City of Los Angeles Personnel Department.</p>
<p>Q23. When is the next test?</p>	<p>A. The LAFD hiring needs and City funding of positions dictate when tests are scheduled. <b>The application filing period and FCA registration are both open May 2, 2023 through September 18, 2023. Interviews are anticipated to begin during the application filing period. After September 18, 2023, we do not anticipate accepting applications again until 2024.</b></p>
<p>Q24. If I am currently in the background portion of the selection process, should I register and take the new exam?</p>	<p>A. While there is a new test window in 2023, the administration of the 2022 Firefighter exam is still ongoing. There are many candidates who have been and are participating in the various stages of this selection process that was initiated in 2022. Candidates should continue participating in this process.</p> <p>All candidates in the 2022 exam may also compete in the upcoming 2023 selection process, if they so choose. As indicated on the 2023 Firefighter job bulletin, if you received a passing score on the FCA in 2016, 2018, 2020 or 2022, you DO NOT need to retake the FCA, but you must reapply to be in the 2023 process as well.</p> <p>Being a Firefighter with the Los Angeles Fire Department is a highly desirable and rewarding career, so the selection process is extremely competitive. Each candidate/applicant must decide how s/he/they can be most competitive, and that may include competing in both the 2022 and 2023 Firefighter exam administrations.</p>
<p><b>INTERVIEW</b></p>	
<p>Q25. Can I change my interview date if I am going to be out of town?</p>	<p>A. If you are unable to appear at your scheduled interview time, please call (213) 473-9060. Under Personnel Department Policy 19, candidates in OPEN exams may request a late test only if they are unable to take it as scheduled because of religious beliefs, an error by Personnel Department staff, or military commitment.</p>

<p>Q26. Will I be selected to interview sooner if I receive a high FCA score?</p>	<p>A. No, only a passing score is required. We cannot advise on when you will be invited to the interview. However, candidates who apply early may be invited for an interview during the filing period.</p>
<p>Q27. What is Stratified Random Sampling (SRS)?</p>	<p>A. Being a Firefighter with the Los Angeles Fire Department is a highly desirable and rewarding career, and there are always many thousands of applicants competing for only a few hundred Firefighter jobs. Because the LAFD’s hiring needs do not require thousands of applicants to be processed, applicants are selected to move forward in the selection process using stratified random sampling.</p> <p>The stratified random sampling method involves randomly sampling from the applicant pool to produce a smaller group of applicants that is demographically proportionate to the original pool of applicants. For example, if 10% of the total number of applicants are Female Hispanic, 10% of the smaller group of applicants invited to interview will be from the Female Hispanic group. Regarding the number of applicants that will be drawn from the applicant pool, consideration will be given to the number of candidates necessary to be examined that would result in a sufficient number of eligibles on the list to satisfy the hiring needs of the Fire Department.</p> <p>Applicants who are not invited to interview will be considered in the next rounds of sampling under this job bulletin. As for the 2022 administration, all eligible applicants were sampled.</p>
<p>Q28. What was my interview score?</p>	<p>A. It typically takes up to 6-weeks to process and send out scores. Candidates are encouraged to check their email on a regular basis.</p>
<p><b>BACKGROUNDS</b></p>	
<p>Q29. I got the same score on the interview as my friend and we have the same background. Why is he moving forward when I am not?</p>	<p>A. Each candidate is rated separately and evaluated on their individual choices, judgments and behaviors. A candidate may think they have the same background as a friend but in fact everyone is an individual.</p>
<p><b>CPAT / EMT</b></p>	
<p>Q30. Is a paramedic certification better than an EMT certification?</p>	<p>A. A valid EMT certification is required by the background investigation to be considered further in the selection process. Paramedic certification, which requires more training and is beneficial, is not required. However, it may be considered in identifying those applicants in the 2023 process using a Selective Certification.</p>

<p>Q31. Does the EMT certification have to be issued in California?</p>	<p>A. A valid EMT certification is required by the background investigation to be considered further in the selection process. A valid EMT certificate is required prior to hire. Local candidates are required to submit a current, valid California State EMT license. Candidates from out of state must submit a current National Registry EMT / or higher certification. If you have an out-of-state certification, you qualify for California certification. For more information go to <a href="http://www.emsa.ca.gov/EMT">http://www.emsa.ca.gov/EMT</a>.</p>
<p>Q32. Does the CPAT have to be issued in California?</p>	<p>A. A valid Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) is required by the PIQ/CAP baseline fitness to be considered further in the selection process. A valid CPAT is required prior to hire. The City of Los Angeles will <u>only accept the Candidate Physical Ability Test</u>. Local candidates can find agencies and test centers at <a href="https://www.caljac.org/recruitment/for-apprentices/testing">https://www.caljac.org/recruitment/for-apprentices/testing</a>. Candidates from out of state must submit a current CPAT from the CPAT National Testing Network /International Association of Firefighters. For more information go to <a href="http://nationaltestingnetwork.com/publicsafetyjobs/cpat_info.cfm">http://nationaltestingnetwork.com/publicsafetyjobs/cpat_info.cfm</a></p>
<p>Q33. When do candidates need to obtain the EMT and CPAT by?</p>	<p>A. Based on a candidates ranking on the eligible list after the interview, candidates with the highest scores will move forward to the pre-background and CAP baseline fitness assessment. Candidates who possess a <b>valid EMT certification and CPAT</b> will then be considered for a field investigation.</p>
<p><b>DRILL TOWERS</b></p>	
<p>Q34. When are the Drill Towers (Fire Academy classes) scheduled to begin?</p>	<p>B. Drill Towers are scheduled based on LAFD hiring needs and City funding. We anticipate continuous hiring for this position in the near future.</p>
<p>Q35. How many candidates will be chosen for each Drill Tower?</p>	<p>A. The LAFD determines how many firefighter trainees are scheduled for each Drill Tower, based on LAFD hiring needs and City funding.</p>

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

<p>Q36. How long does the whole process take to become a Firefighter?</p>	<p>A. The Firefighter selection process is a multi-step process that may take up to 6 months to a year.</p>
<p>Q37. How do you decide which candidates move forward for the medical examination and psychological evaluation?</p>	<p>A. After the Field Investigation is completed, a final review of qualifications is completed by a panel of LAFD representatives, and then the Fire Chief makes the final decision.</p>
<p>Q38. If I pass everything, when do I get hired?</p>	<p>A. Candidates are usually hired for the next available Drill Tower after they have passed all portions of the selection process and have provided valid EMT and CPAT certification.</p>
<p>Q39. Everyone in my family is a Firefighter. I know the job and I was very prepared. Why wasn't I selected in the final review of qualifications process?</p>	<p>Q. Each candidate is evaluated on their individual performance, choices, judgments and behaviors. A candidate may be well qualified, but the level of competition for this examination is extremely high and only a small number of the most qualified candidates are selected by the LAFD to move forward in the process.</p>
<p>Q40. What does it mean by 'original' birth certificate?</p>	<p>A. Candidates born in the United States must provide an original, or certified copy of their birth certificate issued by a governmental agency. The certified copy of the birth certificate will usually have a "purple" stamp verifying the information by the county where the candidate was born. A registrar's raised, embossed, impressed or multicolor seal and signature are present on all certified birth certificates, and it also contains the date it was filed with the registrar. Hospital or "abstract" birth certificates are not acceptable. A birth abstract is a computer summary of the information related to the birth. United States citizens born abroad must furnish a birth certificate issued by an American embassy or consulate.</p>
<p>Q41. My Non-Select Letter says I cannot appeal the decision- why not?</p>	<p>A. A non-select letter indicates the candidate participated in the selection process, and was not selected to move forward in the process by LAFD. Non-Select candidates have not been disqualified, so there is no appeal process. Candidates who applied in 2022, and received a Non-Select Letter, may reapply in the 2023 examination process.</p>
<p>Q42. What is the LAFD Tattoos, Scarification, and Branding Policy?</p>	<p>A. Candidates that have tattoos shall keep the tattoos covered consistent with official LAFD Tattoos, Scarification, and Branding Policy. For more information go to <a href="https://joinlafd.org/pdf/tattoos-scarification-and-branding-policy-2022_v2.pdf">https://joinlafd.org/pdf/tattoos-scarification-and-branding-policy-2022_v2.pdf</a></p>

## **Key Websites**

Personnel Website... <http://per.lacity.org/>

Apply Online... <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/lacity>

Register for FCA... <https://tara.vitapowered.com/LAFD/>

Background  
Standards... <http://joinlafd.org/index.cfm?section=backgroundstandards>

LAFD Website... <http://www.joinlafd.org/>