

DENVER FIRE DEPARTMENT
DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE

Topic No:	1058.00
Date:	01-13-17
Approved:	TAB
Review Date:	01-13-19
Replaces:	New

Topic: Performance Evaluation

PURPOSE: The Performance Evaluation (PE) is a measure of an individual’s ability to physically perform essential functions required in the occupation of firefighting. The Denver Fire Department has established a minimum level of acceptable performance that protects the safety of the firefighter and provides for the appropriate delivery of fire suppression and rescue services for the citizens and visitors of the City and County of Denver. This Department Directive shall serve as a guideline for the administration of the PE and corrective procedures for members failing to meet acceptable performance levels.

SCOPE: Annually, the following personnel shall be required to perform a Performance Evaluation:

- A. All members assigned to fire suppression duties, Operations, and Denver International Airport (DIA).
- B. Any members transferring from a Subdivision to Operations who have not completed the PE within the last calendar year.
- C. Members returning to duty from any absence that exceeds 180 days.

Only members in the final year of the DROP are excused from participating. All other individuals contemplating retirement are still required to participate in the evaluation.

Performance Evaluation (PE)

The Performance Evaluation (PE) is a test of an individual’s ability to physically perform essential functions of firefighting. After Year 3, the Department will establish a minimum acceptable time performance level. This level of performance will protect the safety of the firefighter and will provide for the appropriate delivery of fire suppression and rescue services.

Prior to beginning any portion of the PE, resting vitals will be taken for each firefighter. In order to proceed with the PE, the participants must have a blood pressure lower than 160/100 and a pulse less than 110 beats per minute. All personnel are required to be dressed in a complete NFPA approved personal protective clothing ensemble to participate in the PE. This ensemble includes helmet with ear flaps, Nomex hood, coat, bunker pants, boots, fire gloves, SCBA and face piece. Event 1 is timed separately from the rest of the PE and does not count in the final time. PE evaluation time will begin once the firefighter begins Event #2 and will not stop until Event #10 is completed. During the course of this test, individuals WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RUN AT ANY TIME.

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The 10 events of the PE are:

Event 1: Timed Protective Equipment Donning

This event allows the firefighter to safely don his/her complete set of personal protective equipment in a timely manner. Firefighter is given 2 minutes to don full personal protective equipment (boots, pants, coat, hood, helmet, gloves, SCBA and face piece) and demonstrate the ability to properly 'go on air.' Firefighters will begin this evolution in either their Class B, C, or workout apparel. Participants have the option of starting with or without their footwear on. Time will begin when the firefighter first touches their PPE and will end when they clap their gloved hands together. Failure to completely don in under 2 minutes will be something for the individual's company officer to address and follow up on as this is a CMCB standard.

NOTE: FIREFIGHTER WILL BE ON AIR FOR THE REST OF THE PE AND THEIR EVALUATION TIME WILL BEGIN WHEN THE FIREFIGHTER TOUCHES THE LADDER.

Event 2: Ladder Lift, Carry, Raise and Extension

This event simulates the firefighter's ability to place a ladder in service. Firefighter is to move to a position that places them at the proper lifting point of the 24' ladder, perform a one-person lift; carry the ladder 75 feet to a "marked" raising area, raise the ladder, properly brace the ladder against the wall, extend the ladder three rungs, then position the ladder for the proper climbing angle. Firefighters do not need to secure the halyard during this evolution

MOVE TO THE NEXT EVENT.

Event 3: Forcible Entry

This event simulates the firefighter's ability to gain entry into a locked structure. Firefighter is to walk 75 feet to the forcible entry machine, position to either side of the machine, pick up the sledge hammer and repeatedly strike until the buzzer sounds. For this evolution, the forcible entry machine will be set for 850lbs of force.

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Event 4: High Rise Pack

This event simulates the firefighter's ability to carry a high rise pack to an upper story location. Firefighter is to walk 75 feet to the high rise pack, the high rise pack will be placed onto the firefighters shoulder or their SCBA bottle, carry the high rise pack 30 feet to the simulated stair platform; simulate climbing 3 floors (completely stepping up and down = 1 step) for a total of 30 steps, carry the high rise pack 30 feet back to the marked area, the high rise pack will be removed from their shoulder or SCBA bottle. For this evolution, the high rise pack will be comprised of a 50ft section of 2in hose.

MOVE TO THE NEXT EVENT.

Event 5 and 6: Hand Line Advancement and Pull

These events simulate the firefighter's ability to advance and re-position a charged hand line. Firefighter is to walk 75 feet to the 1 3/4" hose line. Move to a position that places them at the proper lifting point of the charged hand line, pick up hand line, advance hand line 75 feet, get into kneeling position; crawl back 50 feet on hands and knees, keeping one hand in constant touch with the hose line until you reach the first coupling. In a kneeling or sitting position, pull back 50 feet of hose until you reach the nozzle; lower nozzle to ground. **THERE WILL BE NO RUNNING DURING THIS EVENT.**

MOVE TO NEXT EVENT.

Event 7: Overhaul

This event simulates the firefighter's ability to pull ceilings and/or remove debris from above the shoulder level. Firefighter is to walk 75 feet to a position that places them at the proper lifting point of the pike pole, pick up weighted pike pole and walk 30 feet to the marked area. Then raise the pike pole 30 times. Both hands must be below the mark on the pike pole. After 30 complete repetitions with arms fully extended, return to the start point for this event, and place the pike pole into the marked area.

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Event 8: Equipment Carry

This event simulates the firefighter's ability to carry equipment from point to point. Firefighter is to walk 75 feet to a position that places them at the proper lifting point of the equipment to be moved, pick up item(s), carry item(s) 75 feet to the marked area, set equipment in marked area, lift and carry the second item(s) 75 feet back to the first marked starting area, set equipment in marked area. For this evolution, one carry will involve the single item carry of a smoke ejector fan and the second carry will involve a dual item carry involving both a medical kit and an O2 kit at the same time.

MOVE TO NEXT EVENT.

Event 9: Ventilation

This event simulates the firefighter's ability to create an opening for ventilation. Firefighter is to walk 75 feet to a position that places them at the proper lifting point of the equipment hammer, pick up the equipment hammer, walk and position himself/herself on the Keiser Sled, repeatedly strike the I-beam (striking point) of the Keiser Sled until it moves a distance of 3 feet (repositioning feet when necessary), dismount the Keiser Sled.

MOVE TO NEXT EVENT.

Event 10: Victim Rescue

This event simulates the firefighter's ability to perform a victim rescue. Firefighter is to walk 75 feet to a position that places them at the proper lifting point of the 165 lb. rescue mannequin, lift and move the rescue mannequin a distance of 75 feet (going around the cone) and return to the starting point. Once the mannequin's feet cross the line, time is stopped and the firefighter goes off air.

At the conclusion of the test, firefighters will be sent to a rehab station to rehydrate and there they will have vitals taken immediately after they are done and again after a brief rest period.

EVALUATION OUTCOMES

There are 4 possible outcomes for members taking the PE. They are:

1. Successful completion of the PE in the allotted time frame.

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Concluding the test at or under the prescribed time will demonstrate that the firefighter is physically prepared to perform the essential functions of firefighting. As such, no further action will be needed.

2. Members not performing PE due to elevated pretest vitals.

If a firefighter's systolic pressure is greater than 180, immediate notification and evaluation, from a higher medical authority will be initiated along with contact of the Ouch Line. If a firefighter's BP/HR is greater than 160/100 for BPM pulse rate or 110 for their heart rate, they will be instructed to sit and they will be given at least five minutes to rest before they are retested. If their vitals are still high, they will be required to fill out a form acknowledging their elevated vitals and that they were advised to follow up with their primary care physician. These individuals will be required to take the test at a later date. If these results are still abnormal, the individual shall be referred to COSH/OUCHLINE for an evaluation

3. Inability to complete the PE within the allotted time.

- A. Notification of Shift Commander and/or District Chief, Wellness Coordinator, and Immediate Supervisor.
- B. Within 7 days, member will receive mentoring for improvement and programs that the Denver Fire Department has in place to assist them with successfully improving their time. This meeting will be attended by the Wellness Coordinator and the individual's immediate supervisor. Following this meeting, members will be required to sign a form acknowledging their mentoring session and also acknowledging whether or not they plan to take advantage of department resources to improve their time. **AT THIS TIME, PARTICIPATION IN DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS IS VOLUNTARY.** If the member wants to utilize a Peer Fitness Trainer, one will be assigned to contact them. Member will remain on active duty and retest within 14 days.
- C. If member successfully completes the PE retest in the allotted time, no further action will be taken.
- D. If member fails to complete the retest in the prescribed time, but significantly improves their time by a minimum of 20 seconds, they will need to retest again in 30 days. They will still have the option of using department resources to assist them or continue with their own program. Member will remain on active duty.
- E. If a member fails to significantly improve their time, they will have another meeting with their Shift Commander and/or District Chief, the Wellness

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Coordinator, a Peer Fitness Trainer, and their immediate supervisor. The expectations of the Department will be reiterated and the programs in place to assist the individual will be offered again. At this time, **PARTICIPATION IN DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS WILL BE MANDATORY UNTIL SUCH TIME THAT THE FIREFIGHTER SHOWS SIGNIFICANT SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT.** Member will remain on active duty and be retested in 30 days.

- F. If a member fails to significantly improve their time and they were completely compliant with their prescribed plan, they will remain on active duty and be retested again in 30 days. If a member failed to comply with any portion of their prescribed plan, they will be placed on modified duty and assigned to the Safety and Training Division for 30 days. Their assignment will be to focus on getting themselves prepared to be successful in completing the PE.
- G. If a member still has not shown signs of significant improvement after their 3rd retest, member will be deemed unable to safely work in Operations or DIA and assigned to the Administration Division. Requests for accommodation to a non-suppression assignment may be considered.

4. Failure to complete the PE due to an injury or illness.

- A. Notification of Shift Commander &/or District Chief, Wellness Coordinator, and Immediate Supervisor.
- B. The Ouch Line shall be contacted and the situation must be reported. If required, the member will be transported for treatment at COSH or Concentra. At that point, the department's modified duty procedure will be followed. Members are expected to adhere to any work restrictions placed upon them.
- C. As their restrictions allow, individuals are expected to work with the Department's Physical Therapist and Peer Fitness Trainers to prepare for the PE.
- D. As a condition of returning to full duty, the firefighter must retake the PE. If they successfully complete the evaluation in under 10:47, no further action will be necessary and they will return to the fire house.
- E. If a member completes the PE, but fails to finish in under 10:47, the Shift Commander and/or District Chief, Wellness Coordinator and Immediate Supervisor will be immediately notified. The member **WILL** be returned to active duty status and return to the step three processes.

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SAFETY PRECAUTIONS DURING THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Firefighter safety is the top priority during the administration of the PE. As such, firefighters and the conditions under which they are performing the evaluation shall be monitored at all times.

A. Environment

The assessment will not be administered at times when environmental conditions, such as extreme temperatures or moisture are present. Firefighters must not be tested in an environment where the temperature is below 45 degrees Fahrenheit, the Apparent Heat Index (temperature and humidity) is greater than 95 degrees Fahrenheit, sustained wind is greater than 20mph, or there is a measurable amount of rain (light drizzle only if working surfaces are safe to walk on and props, tools and test equipment can be kept dry). Standing water on the course must also be dried before beginning the test.

B. Personnel

Due to the strenuous nature of the assessment, personnel performing the evaluation shall be monitored at all times. This monitoring shall begin with the initial set of vitals at the start of the assessment and end after the firefighter is released from the rehab station. If an evaluator observes that a participant is physically struggling to complete the assessment, the PE will be terminated and the individual will be checked to ensure they can return to work. This will be counted as a failure to complete the test and the participant will be subject to the procedure for a participant that fails to complete the PE due to an injury/illness.

If an unsafe act is observed at any time, the PE will be stopped, the participant will be counseled on the safety concern and the evaluation will be restarted (from the beginning) at a later time. Unsafe acts include, but are not limited to: improper lifting and carrying techniques and improper striking techniques.

C. Equipment

All equipment shall be maintained in proper working order to ensure that each firefighter is tested under the same general conditions. However, in some instances, it will be necessary to use props. All props shall be periodically checked throughout the course of a test day to ensure they are properly calibrated.

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The required equipment for the PE shall include:

1. 24ft Extension Ladder
2. 165lb Rescue Mannequin
3. Forcible Entry Machine/Prop w/ Sledge Hammer
4. Keiser Sled w/ Special Hammer
5. 50ft of 2" Hose Assembled as a High Rise Pack
6. Weighted 6' Pike Pole
7. O2 Bag (with an O2 cylinder inside)
8. Medical Bag (w/ approximately 30lbs of weight inside)
9. Ventilation Fan
10. 150' 1 3/4" Charged Hand Line With Nozzle
11. 4 Cones
12. B 8" Step Box for high-rise pack evolution

PREPARATION FOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Prior to taking the Work Performance Evaluation, personnel are advised to view the Department video demonstrating each station of the PE. As part of the video, suggested exercises will be demonstrated to assist firefighters with preparing for the assessment.

Members are reminded that while these tasks may not be difficult by themselves, the cumulative assessment can be strenuous. Personnel are advised to engage in a physical fitness program to help prepare for the evaluation. The Department has Peer Fitness Trainers and Physical Therapists that can assist with developing plans or addressing any physical issues that may result from preparing for the PE.

On the day of the Performance Evaluation (PE), it is strongly recommended that personnel refrain from drinking energy drinks and/or consuming large amounts of caffeine (coffee, sodas, etc.). Consuming these drinks can affect your vitals and potentially affect your evaluation.

It is important to fully hydrate 24 hours before the test and up to the actual performance of the evaluation.