

WRITTEN TEST CANDIDATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

The Firefighter Candidate Testing Center (FCTC) recognizes its responsibilities under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (Government Code sections 12925 et seq.) to provide reasonable, appropriate and effective accommodations to qualified written test candidates with disabilities or specified medical conditions. However, these laws do not require, and FCTC will not provide, an accommodation which would do any of the following:

- Fundamentally alter the measurement of the knowledge or skills the written test is intended to test;
- Afford unfair advantage to the candidate;
- Compromise written test security;
- Propose FCTC provide personal services or devices; or
- Create an undue financial and administrative burden.

Qualifying Conditions

A disability is a physical or psychological disorder or condition that requires special education or related services. For more information about qualified disabilities and medical conditions, see California Government Code section 12926.

Requesting Accommodations

A candidate who seeks an accommodation is responsible for making the request and providing documentation substantiating the need for accommodation. The information that substantiates your request for accommodation will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. FCTC will evaluate each request individually in order to provide an appropriate and effective accommodation. You will be notified in writing of FCTC's decision. Applicants have the right to review their records subject to the provisions of the Information Practices Act.

I. DOCUMENTING THE NEED FOR ACCOMMODATION

FCTC requires documentation from a qualified evaluator regarding the candidate's disability or medical condition, and a description of how the accommodation sought is necessary in order to provide the candidate with an equal opportunity to exhibit knowledge, skills and abilities through the written test. FCTC may also assess the qualifications of the professional supplying the information, the methods used to make the diagnosis of the disability or medical condition, and determine the recommended accommodation.

A. Documentation of Disability or Medical Condition

Documentation regarding the disability or medical condition provides a basis for structuring the accommodation being sought. All candidates requesting a reasonable accommodation

must provide documentation from a qualified evaluator that includes all of the following information:

- Evidence of the existence of the disability or medical condition.
- The nature and extent of the disability or medical condition.
- Whether the disability or condition is expected to change over time.
- The effect of the disability or medical condition on the candidate's ability to perform under standard testing conditions.
- The accommodation(s) recommended and how the accommodation is expected to allow the candidate to attain the same level of performance as non-disabled test takers.
- The following information about the professional evaluator:
 - Name and title
 - Telephone number
 - Professional license type and number
 - A description of the credentials, education and experience that qualifies the professional to make the determination
 - Original signature

The evaluation and supporting documentation shall be valid for a period of five (5) years from the date on which it was submitted to FCTC, except that no further documentation will be required in cases where the evaluation clearly states that the applicant's condition is not expected to change over time in any way that would reduce the need for the requested accommodations. FCTC will give greater weight to a more recent diagnosis if the condition or accommodations are subject to change over time.

B. Required Qualifications for Professional Evaluators

To be considered a qualified evaluator, the professional must meet the following requirements:

1. Possesses sufficient qualifications to evaluate for the existence and nature of the disability or medical condition, and to recommend accommodations.
2. Cannot be the spouse of the candidate, nor related to the candidate by blood or marriage.
3. For a **physical disability or medical condition**: the evaluator must be a licensed health care practitioner who is qualified to make the diagnosis and has expertise pertaining to the disability or medical condition.
4. For a **mental disability or diagnosis**: the evaluator must be a licensed mental health care professional who is qualified to make the diagnosis and has expertise pertaining to the disability or diagnosis.
5. For a **learning disability**: the evaluator must be one of the following:

- a. A licensed psychologist or physician who has a minimum of three (3) years of experience working with adults with learning disabilities, and who has training in all of the areas described below.

OR

- b. Another professional who possesses a master's or doctorate degree in special education or educational psychology from a regionally accredited institution AND who has at least three (3) years of equivalent training and experience in all of the areas described below.
 - Assessing intellectual ability level and interpreting tests of such ability;
 - Screening for cultural, emotional and motivational factors;
 - Assessing achievement level; and,
 - Administering tests to measure attention and concentration, memory, language reception and expression, cognition, reading, spelling, writing, and mathematics.

II. EVALUATION OF THE ACCOMMODATION REQUEST

FCTC is responsible for evaluating requests for accommodation, and will either approve, deny or suggest alternative accommodations. FCTC will evaluate each request on an individual basis, and will consider an applicant's history of accommodation in reaching a determination of reasonableness of the request in relation to the currently identified impact of the disability or medical condition.

The candidate is responsible for sending or having the evaluator send FCTC the documentation specified in Section A, which describes in detail the disability or medical condition and how it affects the candidate's ability to demonstrate his or her aptitude and achievement in the format(s) in which the written test is given. The cost of providing this information to FCTC is the candidate's responsibility.

If FCTC believes the accommodation(s) requested cannot be approved, he or she will consult with the candidate to reach a mutually agreeable resolution, if possible. For an accommodation to be approved, it must meet the following requirements:

- The accommodation requested must be reasonable;
- The accommodation must not fundamentally alter the measurement of the knowledge or skills the written test is intended to test;
- The accommodation may not afford unfair advantage to the candidate;
- The accommodation may not compromise written test security;
- The accommodation may not involve providing personal services or devices; or
- The accommodation cannot create an undue financial and administrative burden to FCTC.

FCTC may provide alternative accommodations other than those requested when they will result in an appropriate and reasonable accommodation. If FCTC rejects or modifies a candidate's requested accommodation for any reason, FCTC will notify the candidate in writing.