

# City of Fort Worth Police Trainee Candidate Exam Preparation Guide

## Introduction

This information is intended to introduce you to the written examination testing process that is part of the City of Fort Worth Police Trainee Selection Process. We realize some candidates may experience a high level of anxiety in such a process, and this information is intended to give you a better understanding of what to expect with the written exam and to lessen your concerns.

This written examination is designed to measure how you would respond to specific situations as well as your thoughts about the job of Police Officer. You do not need previous knowledge of law enforcement to be successful. You really cannot study for this type of test. Instead, you will be evaluated in areas such as judgment, ethics, decision making, customer service, and problem solving. The test will present you with situations that have several options. There are usually five (5) options available for you to select. While you may like several of the options or none of them, you must select the ONE option which best reflects what you believe to be most accurate or what you believe you would do, given the particular situation that is described.

## Sample Items

Let's provide you with a few examples of the types of items you might see on this test. These items are examples only and will not appear on the Fort Worth Police Trainee test.

Some of the following examples put you in the position of a Police Trainee in Fort Worth, then ask you to respond to the scenario. It is **not** required or expected that you have prior police knowledge for these items. It is also not necessary for you to know any of the policies and procedures of the Fort Worth Police Department or how a Police Trainee in Fort Worth would respond. We want to know how *you* would respond, given the situation. We put these items into a police context for a more realistic understanding of your qualities, not your knowledge of police work.

### Example 1:

If you knew that a co-worker was having personal problems that were affecting her ability to get her work completed, you would:

- A) not discuss personal problems at work, and let her work out her problems on her own.
- B) let her know you are willing to complete some of her work tasks if it would give her more time to work on her personal problems.
- C) encourage her to discuss her personal problems with you so that you can help.
- D) encourage her to talk to someone who can help her solve her problems.
- E) focus on your own work as slow workers tend to drag the rest of the team down with them.

### Example 2:

As a rookie Police Trainee, you will join a team of officers, and you will not be sure of how things work. In this situation, you would:

- A) ask a lot of questions even if it annoys others.
- B) watch how others do things.
- C) rely on training and do it that way until someone shows you differently.
- D) ask a supervisor, because they are the ones who will be judging you.
- E) accept that you are likely to make mistakes and just hope that the mistakes are not big ones.

Example 3:

Controlling fear is important for officers. Some people have to control their fear of heights, or enclosed spaces, or even their fear of failure. Suppose that one of your fellow classmates in the police academy has a particular fear that he feels is stopping him from being successful in the academy. What would you do?

- A) I would report to a teacher what he told me.
- B) I would work with him outside the academy to help him overcome his fear.
- C) I would tell him that this line of work may not be for him.
- D) I would recommend that he speak to a counselor.
- E) I would have him speak to a teacher at the academy.

Example 4:

Many police departments have officers ride in cars by themselves. These departments prefer to have only one officer to a car because:

- A) most people who are Police Trainees work better as individuals rather than as a team.
- B) the departments can get more Police Trainees in more areas of the city by having only one to a patrol car.
- C) most calls for service only require a single officer.
- D) it is better for officer safety to have two officers coming to a location from two different directions rather than both officers coming from the same vehicle.
- E) most Police Trainees prefer to be alone.

For some items, a single situation will be described, and several questions will be asked about it. For example:

Example 5:

**SITUATION FOR THE NEXT 2 QUESTIONS:** Suppose that you are a Police Trainee and you are called to a report of a possible burglary at a single family house. As you approach the house, you see a man walking quickly down the sidewalk carrying a hammer and a duffel bag.

Question 1: What would be the first action that you would take?

- A) I would call for back up and attempt to follow the individual until back up arrived.
- B) I would stop the individual and arrest him.
- C) I would stop the individual and arrest him only if he ran or refused to answer my questions.
- D) I would stop the individual and question him about what he was doing.
- E) I would have the individual drop to the ground while I ensured that he was not carrying any weapons, and would then question him about what he was doing.

Question 2: Suppose that when the man saw you he began to run away. What would you do?

- A) I would radio in a description of the individual and continue to the location of the burglary.
- B) I would radio in what was occurring and immediately chase the individual.
- C) I would request back up and follow the individual, not making contact until back up arrived.
- D) I would pull my weapon out and demand that the person stop running. If he continued, I would attempt to wound him so that he could no longer run.
- E) I would tell him that I was a Police Trainee and order him to stop running. I would chase him until I could arrest him.

## Administrative Procedures

- **YOU MAY NOT BRING A CELLPHONE, COMPUTER OR TABLET, OR ANY OTHER ELECTRONICS OR COMMUNICATION DEVICES TO THE TESTING SITE. PLEASE LEAVE THEM AT HOME, AT WORK, OR IN YOUR VEHICLE.**
- You should arrive at the testing site before the start of the check-in period to allow enough time for the check-in procedure.
- You may bring a watch or timer, with **NO** alarm and **NO** communication capability.
- We will supply the test booklets, answer sheets, and other materials appropriate for the test.
- You will be permitted to write in the test booklet during the examination administration; however, only answers you have marked on the answer sheet will be scored.
- Sometimes the temperature in a testing environment can be distracting. It is best to consider dressing in layers in case you need to add a layer or take off a layer to adjust to the temperature inside the test room.

## During Testing

- You will probably be nervous. Remember two things: (a) the other test-takers are also nervous, so you're not alone; and (b) being a little nervous can help you by making you more alert and attentive.
- Make sure you carefully listen to and understand all administrative procedures and test instructions.
- Make sure you know how to correctly fill in your answer sheet, including identification information.
- Read each question and answer options completely and carefully before selecting your answer.
- Fill in the answer spaces on the answer sheet completely when you answer a question. Also, erase completely when you change an answer.
- Make sure you answer most, if not all, of the questions in the appropriate amount of time. First, go through the entire exam answering those questions you know the answer to, then go back to those questions you need to spend additional time considering.
- When considering difficult questions, remember you are permitted to write on your exam – cross out those options you know are wrong so you can more easily concentrate on those options you think may be the most correct. Only your answers on the answer sheet will be scored, so make certain you mark your answer on the answer sheet!
- Periodically check your answer sheet to make sure you are responding to the correct question. Avoid careless errors. Take a moment to be sure you have marked the choice you intended to mark and that you are on the right question number on your answer sheet.
- If after careful thought and consideration, you still are uncertain of your answer on a question – make your best guess. There is no penalty for guessing, so don't leave any answers blank.
- Make sure you know how much time is available for the exam and pace yourself accordingly. If time remains, go back and check to make sure you haven't left any answers blank, made two answers to any question, or left stray marks on your answer sheet. This could make the difference between passing and failing.
- Get a good night's rest before the test and feed your brain the morning/day of the test. Taking a test on an empty stomach may affect how well you concentrate and function during the test.

## **Additional Information about Written Examinations**

We have all taken written tests. From the very first days in school, we have had to take written tests. Because we have all taken tests, the familiarity of this process can be a real asset. However, for some people the experience of taking tests, particularly written tests, has not been a positive one. Some people get excessively nervous or forgetful. Others have a difficult time concentrating or are simply not motivated to succeed on this type of a task.

While we cannot change people's personalities or their past experiences, we have provided this document to assist candidates in preparing for our written tests. We recommend that you read through this document and take our advice seriously. We have developed and administered thousands of written tests for hundreds of different positions and organizations. The information contained in this document and the advice we offer is based upon our experience with these tests.

To convey this information, we have responded to questions and concerns that are typical of those from individuals who are about to take one of our tests:

### ***“WILL YOUR TEST BE DIFFICULT?”***

This is a hard question to answer. First of all, we design each of our tests for the specific position and organization with which we are working. As a result, no two tests are completely identical. We, therefore, cannot say that our tests have an “average difficulty level” on some sort of difficulty scale. All of our written tests, however, are written by the same personnel in our firm, with extensive input from subject matter experts in the Fort Worth Police Department.

### ***“WILL THERE BE A PENALTY FOR GUESSING?”***

It is our general practice to not have a penalty for guessing. In other words, it is in your best interest to respond to each and every question, even if you do not know the answer. In those rare situations where we assess a penalty for guessing, it will be clearly stated in the test instructions.

### ***“SUPPOSE THAT I DO NOT UNDERSTAND A QUESTION OR, PERHAPS, DO NOT KNOW THE MEANING OF A WORD ON ONE OF THE TEST ITEMS. HOW IS THIS HANDLED?”***

Your opportunity to ask questions during the testing process is severely restricted. The test monitors are present only to ensure a regulated and fair testing process. They do not know the test questions or answer and cannot answer questions concerning test item content. For example, they cannot interpret a test item for you. In those rare circumstances when you might encounter a word with which you are unfamiliar, you will simply have to guess as to its meaning.

Furthermore, if you do not understand a question or, perhaps, you are confused with respect to one or more of the options to an item, you will simply have to make your best judgment. Again, for the vast majority of our tests, there is no penalty associated with guessing, other than the possibility that you may get the answer wrong.

Also, remember that you are to select the best choice possible. We design our tests such that all options appear to be the correct choice. However, you are to select the best choice from among the alternatives.

### ***“WILL I HAVE TIME TO FINISH THE TEST?”***

We design our tests so that over 99% of the candidates will have sufficient time to complete the test. It is in your best interest not to “rush” through the test. On the other hand, you must work diligently and aggressively. That is to say, if your mind wanders or you become “stuck” on one item for a prolonged period of time, you may experience difficulty getting through the entire test in the allotted time.

If you need to use the restroom, or have some other emergency, please inform one of the test monitors. Any time that you take using the restroom or away from the test itself is lost. That is to say, we do not give you any extra time should you need to use the restroom or have any other type of emergency. Should you need to leave your desk or table, turn your answer sheet over and place your test booklet on top of the answer sheet.

Unless otherwise stated during the test instructions, we allow candidates to visit the restroom one at a time. Under no circumstances will candidates be allowed to speak to one another once the testing process has begun. This includes **all** areas of the testing facility, including the restrooms, testing room, and registration areas. This also means that even if you have completed the test, if you are in or around the testing facility, you may not speak to another candidate.

### ***“WHAT MATERIALS CAN I BRING TO THE TEST?”***

Unless you are notified by a representative of our firm or the people in charge of the testing process in your jurisdiction, you may not bring anything to the test except a basic watch (e.g., no computer or communication capabilities). Do not, for example, bring calculators, notebooks, reading material, or other materials to the test facility. We will supply you with the tests, answer sheets, pencils, or other materials that are appropriate for the test. We do advise that you bring a watch, however, since this may assist you in keeping track of time.

We also ask that all pagers, cell phones, or similar communication devices be turned off. Typically, we collect these devices and return them to you upon completion of the test, so it is best to simply leave them at home, at work, or in your vehicle, rather than bringing them to the test site.

### ***“HOW CAN I BE ASSURED THAT THE TEST IS SCORED ACCURATELY?”***

If you erase an answer, be certain to completely remove all carbon from the space or the grading machine may pick up the poor erasure as a double answer. Double answers are graded as wrong answers. Also, make sure that you have an answer to each question. Omitted answers are counted as wrong answers. You should check your answer sheet for misplaced answers and omitted answers before you leave the testing room.

It is very important to **MAKE CERTAIN THAT ALL ERASURES ARE COMPLETE AND THAT YOU HAVE ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH QUESTION!**

***“DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE ON TAKING THE TEST? FOR EXAMPLE, ARE THERE ANY TRICKS TO TAKING A WRITTEN TEST?”***

The fact of the matter is there are no tricks to taking tests. There is no easy way to be successful on a written examination. Most people know that, but they still cling to superstitions or urban legends about the test technique that says a person should always go with their first guess, or look for patterns in the answers and so forth.

Do not look for “tricks” or easy solutions to doing well on the written test. There are no easy ways to be successful on a written test. Make sure your erasures are clean and that you have answered only one answer for each question. Periodically check to make certain that the number of the answer on your answer sheet corresponds to the number of the question in your booklet. These are the only tricks we know that work.

**IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY THAT REQUIRES ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TESTING, YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY CONTACT THE INDIVIDUALS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION WHO ARE COORDINATING THE TEST!**

Good luck.