

2026 MUNICIPAL FIREFIGHTER EXAMINATION

If you currently have a Civil Service Online Account DO NOT create a new account to apply for this examination.

Utilize the Government Jobs Help & Support to access your account. [Online Employment Application Guide | Massachusetts Civil Service Applications](#)

Test takers with two accounts may cause delays with properly recording your application and notifications from civil service such as notices to appear, or job opportunities. If you have questions, please email civilservice@mass.gov.

This examination is being administered by the Human Resources Division (HRD) to establish an eligible list from which to fill Firefighter vacancies in Civil Service Fire Departments. This examination consists of two components which make up your total score; a written examination 50% and an entry level physical ability test (ELPAT) 50%.

Written Examination Period: October 2-10, 2026*

Application Open Date: June 22, 2026

Application Deadline: August 31, 2026**

Examination Processing Fee: \$75.00

*The original examination date of October 2nd will be utilized for all statutory purposes and referenced throughout this posting in *italics*.

**There is no late fee for applications. Applications will not be accepted after August 31, 2026.

Refunds: There will be no refund of the examination processing fee unless the examination is cancelled by HRD.

Written Examination Location(s): Various sites across the Commonwealth

Note: Candidates will receive an email approximately two weeks prior to their scheduled ELPAT date and time. Testing will begin on August 3, 2026, and will continue through early 2027 until all candidates have been scheduled and have had the opportunity to take the ELPAT.

Entry Level Physical Ability Test (ELPAT) Examination Location: 571A Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749

Candidates who do not pass both the written examination and the ELPAT, will result in failure of the examination and will not be placed on the eligible list.

Examination Information

Examination Requirements:

Age Requirement: As of the posting of this notice, candidates must be at least 19 years of age on or before August 31, 2026, for all civil service fire departments as defined in [Massachusetts General Law \(MGL\) Chapter 31, Section 58](#). An exception may apply to current military personnel serving on active duty on the date of examination and requesting a military makeup examination. It is your responsibility to review any upper age requirements for [Fire Departments Covered by Civil Service](#) on our website. Please be advised that the list of communities is subject to change and inquiries about age requirements should be directed to the communities in question.

Application: The examination processing fee includes payment for both examination components; the written and the ELPAT. All applications and examination processing fees must be received by the application deadline. You will receive two confirmation emails when you have completed the process: one email confirming your application has been received, and one email confirming your payment has been received. Your application is not complete until you have received both confirmation emails. If you have not submitted payment of the examination processing fee before the application deadline, your application will not be accepted.

Fee Waiver: The examination processing fee may be waived for candidates who have received certain state or federal public assistance, or unemployment insurance during any portion of the twelve months leading up to the original examination date, *October 2, 2026*. Fee Waiver Forms are available on our website ([Fee Waiver Form](#)). This form should be completed and supporting documentation must be scanned and attached to the application. All fee waiver forms must be submitted on or before August 31, 2026.

Current Military Personnel: Any current military personnel requesting a makeup opportunity, please [click here](#) for more information.

Makeup Examination: With the exception of current military personnel, as described above, no candidate has a right to a makeup examination due to personal or professional conflicts on the testing date. Candidates are advised to consider this before applying for the examination. If you file an examination application by the application deadline but are

unable to appear for the examination on the examination date due to an emergency or unanticipated hardship, you may request a makeup examination by filing a written request with verifiable documentation to the Human Resources Division (HRD) no later than seven calendar days from the examination date. HRD reserves the right to approve or deny your request. HRD may require an additional examination processing fee upon approval of your request.

Reasonable Accommodations: If you need reasonable accommodations due to a documented impairment, or medical condition, you must fill out the [Testing Accommodations Request Form](#) and submit supporting documentation as outlined on the form from a qualified professional detailing what type of accommodation you require at the examination site. The form and supporting documentation must be scanned and attached to the application or emailed to CS-ReasonableAccommodations@mass.gov no later than four weeks prior to the examination date. Without such a letter, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to grant your accommodation. This information is requested only to provide reasonable accommodations for examinations and will not be used for any other purposes.

Credit for Employment/Experience: Pursuant to the provisions of [MGL Ch. 31, § 22](#), individuals may apply to receive credit for employment or experience in the position title of Municipal Firefighter. You must claim this credit by completing the applicable section of the application. All claims must be verified by supporting documentation, which must provide specific details of any employment or experience you have in the examination title as a Municipal Firefighter, including dates of service and, if part time, total number of hours worked. The supporting documentation must be on original letterhead with an original signature from the hiring authority where the employment or experience occurred. Credit for employment or experience is applicable only to individuals who achieve a passing score on the examination and cannot be added to a failing examination score. Claims must be submitted during the application period; supporting documentation must be scanned and attached to the application or sent to civilservice@mass.gov. Supporting documentation must be submitted no later than October 2, 2026.

Preference Claims for Municipal Firefighter:

Candidates can submit a claim for the following preferences:

- **Residency Preference:** Your mailing address is not necessarily the same as your residency preference claim on the application. To qualify for residency preference in a particular municipality, you must be able to prove at the time of consideration that you resided in said municipality from October 2, 2025, through *October 2, 2026*, and select the specific municipality on the application and/or claim residency preference in a civil service municipality in which you graduated from a

public high school. For more information regarding residence preference please see [MGL Chapter 31, section 58](#)

- **Veteran's Preference:** For information, visit [Veteran's Preference Information](#).
- **Disabled Veteran Status:** For information, visit [Disabled Veteran's Preference Information](#).
- **Preference for the Children of Certain Officers/Firefighters:** The son or daughter of a Firefighter or Police Officer employed in Massachusetts who was killed or died of injuries received in the performance of duty, or who was permanently disabled as a result of injuries received in the performance of duty, is entitled to certification preference . If you believe you are eligible for this preference, you must claim this credit by completing the applicable section of the application.
- **Selective Certification for Emergency Medical Technicians:** If a municipality requires that a Firefighter hold Emergency Medical Technician certification at the Basic or Paramedic level prior to appointment, the municipality may request that competition for that vacancy be limited to persons holding such certifications. Proof of possession of a current certification as an Emergency Medical Technician, issued by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services, must be submitted to qualify for this selective certification. Although you may supply this proof at any time during the life of the eligible list, it is recommended that you submit it at the time of the examination or immediately upon qualification so that you do not miss out on a potential opportunity.
- **Selective Certification for Bilingual/Gender Firefighters:** If municipality requires that a Firefighter be fluent in a second language (e.g., Spanish, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, etc.) or are a specific gender, the municipality may request that competition for that vacancy be limited to persons who have such skills. You will need to prove your language fluency at the time of consideration.
- **Ability to Select Employment Locations:** Candidates will have the opportunity to select employment locations beyond residency preference. Submission of location choices will not affect your residency preference choice and can be updated at any time. All candidates that pass the examination will be given the opportunity to select employment locations at the time that score notices are released.

Notice to Appear: Notices to Appear including date, time and location of examination will be emailed to candidates approximately two weeks prior to the examination date.

Identification at the Examination Site: At the examination site, candidates must present current and valid photo identification with signature (e.g., driver's license, passport, military ID).

Typical Qualifications

Examples of Essential Duties for a Municipal Firefighter: Firefighters often perform risky and physically demanding duties under emergency conditions. Firefighters work under supervision, often as a member of a team, to respond to fires and other emergencies. Firefighter duties may include, for example: connecting, pulling, and operating hose lines; operating a pump; positioning and climbing ladders; emergency rescue and lifesaving; ventilating smoke-filled areas; using and maintaining tools and equipment; training; and fire station activities.

Written Examination: The written examination consists of three subtests: the Written Ability Test (WAT), the Life Experience Survey (LES), and the Work Styles Questionnaire (WSQ). The WAT is administered to measure cognitive abilities that have been identified as essential to performing the duties of a Firefighter. The WAT includes areas of verbal expression, verbal comprehension, problem sensitivity, deductive reasoning, inductive reasoning, and information ordering. The LES consists of a series of multiple-choice questions related to candidates past history and experience of potential relevance to successful performance of entry level Firefighters. The WSQ is designed to assess certain motivational, value-related and attitudinal characteristics that are of potential relevance to successful performance of entry level Firefighters. Candidates must receive a passing score on the WAT (Ability) section of the examination in order to have the WSQ (Work Styles Questionnaire) and LES (Life Experience Survey) sections scored. The Preparation Guide for the Municipal Firefighter examination recommends spending one hour and fifteen minutes on the Ability section, before continuing to the rest of the examination. For more information regarding the written examination and access to the Preparation Guide, please visit [Preparation Guides & Reading Lists](#).

Entry Level Physical Ability Test (ELPAT): The ELPAT is designed to assess a candidate's capacity to perform the tasks ordinarily performed by a Firefighter while on the job. This is accomplished by requiring the candidate to perform a series of events that both simulate firefighting activities and depend on the physical abilities required to perform the Firefighter's job. The exercise training program presented in the [Firefighter Physical Ability Test Preparation Guide](#) provides candidates with the information they need to improve their level of physical fitness by conditioning the individual muscles and muscle groups involved in the tasks performed by a Firefighter. Candidates can view the PAT preparation video here [Massachusetts Physical Ability Test \(PAT\) Firefighter Video](#)



Municipal Firefighter candidates who pass the written examination, ELPAT, and receive a conditional offer of employment from a municipality will be instructed on how to apply for the Physical Ability Test and other screening processes.

Please direct any questions regarding the qualifications listed below or any additional requirements to the appropriate municipality.

- **Medical Examination:** All candidates who receive a conditional offer of employment must pass the medical examination. Candidates must pass the medical examination before participating in the Physical Ability Test. Candidates may also be required to pass a psychological evaluation before appointment.
- **Physical Ability Test (PAT):** The PAT is a test of the candidate's aerobic capacity and physical capability to perform various tasks required on the job. The [PAT Preparation Guide](#) is available on our website.
- **Driver's License:** A candidate may need a valid Massachusetts motor vehicle operator's license before appointment.

Candidates selected for this public safety position will be subject to a background investigation conducted by the hiring department.

It is your responsibility to review the [Certification Order of Lists](#) on our website. Upon request, candidates must provide original supporting documentation to verify any copies submitted and claims made.

Updating Information: Candidates are responsible for maintaining accurate contact information. Failure to keep your records current may jeopardize opportunities for employment. For information on how to update your information, visit [Update Your Account](#).

Note: Although the online application system allows candidates to elect to receive notification by email or regular mail, please be advised that HRD utilizes only email for all notices to candidates.

Private School or Service: HRD does not recommend or endorse any private school, service, or publisher offering preparation and/or publications for examinations and is not responsible for their advertising claims.

Supplemental Information:

Women, minorities, veterans, and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

For more information or inquiries about this and other civil service examinations, visit www.mass.gov/civilservice or email the Civil Service Unit at civilservice@mass.gov

The Civil Service Unit's office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:45am – 5:00pm, except holidays. Inquiries may also be made to the Civil Service Unit during these hours at the following numbers:

Boston area: (617) 878-9895 or (617)-878-9700
Toll-Free Within Massachusetts: 1-800-392-6178
TTY Number: (617) 878-9762

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: I took and passed the 2025 Firefighter examination; do I need to take the 2026 Firefighter examination to remain eligible?

A: All eligible candidates who took and passed the 2025 Firefighter examination were placed onto the eligible list for up to two years. Individuals may take the 2026 Firefighter examination to extend their eligibility for an additional two years.

Eligible List: Candidates who participate in multiple examination administrations within a two year period after November 20, 2024, will have their highest score prevail. The eligible list will have the highest score listed and the highest score will expire two years from the date you were placed on the eligible list

Q: I can't attend my scheduled ELPAT date, can I reschedule?

A: With the exception of current military personnel who cannot be in Massachusetts on the scheduled date of the ELPAT, no candidate has a right to a makeup examination due to personal or professional conflicts on the testing date. If you are unable to appear for your scheduled ELPAT date due to an emergency or unanticipated hardship, you may request a makeup date, by sending an email to elpat@mass.gov with verifiable documentation to the Civil Service Unit no later than seven calendar days from the originally scheduled date. The Civil Service Unit reserves the right to approve or deny your request and may require an additional examination processing fee upon approval of your request. Such requests will be processed on a first-come first served basis.

Q: What happens if I do not attend my scheduled ELPAT?

A: You will automatically fail the Firefighter examination and will not be placed on the eligible list.

Q: What are the ELPAT events?

A: The [Firefighter Physical Ability Test Preparation Guide](#) details each event. Candidates can view the PAT preparation video here [Massachusetts Physical Ability Test \(PAT\) Firefighter Video](#)

Q: What date will my ELPAT be scheduled for?

A: You will have about two weeks' notice before you are scheduled to take the ELPAT.

Application Period begins June 22, 2026, and the deadline is August 31, 2026