

2025 Departmental Promotional Examination for Somerville Principal Fire Alarm Operator

This examination is being administered by the Human Resources Division (HRD) to create an eligible list from which to fill Principal Fire Alarm Operator vacancies in the Somerville Fire Department. Candidates must take and pass this examination in order to be placed on the eligible list.

Written Examination Date: February 15, 2025

Application Period Begins: December 10, 2024

Application Deadline: January 7, 2025

Examination Processing Fee: \$150

Written Examination Locations: Various sites across the Commonwealth

Examination Information

Eligibility: To be eligible for this examination you must be an employee in the Somerville Fire Department with permanent civil service status in the title of Senior Fire Alarm Operator. You are also required to have been employed in the eligible title after certification from a civil service list, on a permanent or temporary civil service basis for twelve months preceding the examination date. A combination of temporary and permanent service can be applied towards meeting this twelve-month requirement. You must have permanent civil service status in an eligible title as of the date of the examination in order to be eligible. Time spent pursuant to a temporary appointment in the title of Principal Fire Alarm Operator will not interrupt the service period in your permanent position.

Note: Pursuant to the provisions of MGL 31§ 9, if less than 2 applications are received from eligible applicants, this examination will be postponed. If the exam's eligible title has been lowered to the entry level rank, the exam will go forward if less than 2 eligible applicants submit applications.

Eligible List: Individuals placed on the resulting eligible list shall be eligible for certification from such list for such period as the administrator shall determine, but in any event not to exceed two years, unless otherwise outlined in MGL Chapter 31 § 25 or the Human Resources Division's (HRD) revocation policy.

Examination Weights: The examination weights are 44% Technical Knowledge, 36% Situational Judgment Test, and 20% Experience/Certification/Training & Education (ECT&E).

Departments – Eligible Title(s):

- Somerville – Senior Fire Alarm Operator

Application: All applications and examination processing fees must be received by January 7, 2025. 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. Candidates who have been approved for an examination fee voucher may record redeeming the voucher on the application. If you have not submitted payment or redemption of an examination voucher of the examination processing fee on or before January 7, 2025, your application will not be accepted.

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.

Current Military Personnel: All military personnel who, in connection with current service, have military orders that indicate their unavailability due to military service on the examination date, must file an application and examination processing fee and request a makeup examination in writing, with a copy of your military orders attached. Please include in your request your email address, daytime base phone number and/or name and phone number of a friend or family member with whom you have regular contact and entrust with your communication. Requests filed after the application deadline must be accompanied by a DD214 showing discharge within six months of the request and dates of active service that include the entire application period. Visit our website for more information: [Military 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 HRD no later than seven calendar days from the original written 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 special testing accommodations due to a documented impairment, or medical condition, you must submit a letter of support from a qualified professional detailing what type of accommodation you require at the examination site, and such letter must be scanned and attached to the application or emailed to civilservice@mass.gov by January 7, 2025. Without such a letter, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to grant your accommodation. This information is requested only to provide reasonable accommodation for examinations and will not be used for any other purposes.

Additional Requirements for Fire Alarm Principal candidates: Visit [Careers | Mass.gov](https://careers.mass.gov) for more information.

Examples of Essential Duties:

Duties: Utilize the Computer-Aided Dispatch System (CAD) to enter calls, process requests, enter all response information, properly entering incident history text, continuously updating CAD to ensure accuracy and availability, and maintain record of on duty personnel and apparatus status; Monitor, report, and repair Fire Alarm equipment as needed; Receive, screen, and prioritize emergency 911 calls, non-emergency calls, and calls for service requiring emergency medical services or fire department attention, under the general supervision of the Superintendent of Fire alarm; Dispatch and coordinate personnel on active incidents; Process requests for public safety services efficiently, courteously, and professionally; Give instructions, information, and directions to the service requester and then relay the information to telecommunications personnel or other entities; Manage and update records with details of calls, dispatches, and messages in a timely manner; Monitor and manage multiple phone lines including Emergency/911, Non-Emergency/Business, Police Direct, etc. and process appropriate response; Acquire and share information using multiple sources; Analyze, classify, and summarize data for dispatch or referral using operational principles, practices, and procedures; Relay information via radio to firefighters during emergency situations (i.e., fires, HAZMAT, rescue operations, etc.), and facilitate incident related radio traffic by monitoring, relaying, clarifying, and interpreting the radio traffic; Coordinate operations with other agencies (i.e. utility companies, Medflight, town inspectors, etc.); Assist the Principal Operator with supervision of the Operating Force in the receipt of alarm information, allocation and dispatch of resources, and monitoring of radio communications and fire traffic; Assign fire alarm operators to various duties as required and ensure all personnel under his/her supervision are properly trained; Oversee that all dispatching is performed in accordance with the Basic Dispatch Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures and assign the initial responses to any incident that is outside of the aforementioned procedures; Evaluate major service requests and institute an emergency action plan during critical situations that goes beyond the normal scope of operations in accordance with agency policies, protocols, guidelines, and procedures; and other related duties as needed.

Examination Subjects: The written examination will be designed to test, where practicable, the following knowledges, abilities and skills that have been established as qualifications for the position: Knowledge of fire-related terminology; Knowledge of relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies; Knowledge of departmental organization and function; Knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources; Knowledge of current and emerging technologies; and the Knowledge of transmission, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.

Situational Judgement Test (SJT): The examination will measure your Judgment and Decision-Making, Accountability, Adaptability, Guiding and Developing Others, Leadership (including Managing Activities and Building Teams), and Interpersonal Skills (including Conflict Management).

Experience/Certification/Training & Education (ECT&E): All candidates must complete the 2025 Principal Fire Alarm Operator Promotional Examination ECT&E Claim application online.

Instructions and a link to the ECT&E Claim will be emailed to candidates prior to the examination date. A confirmation email will be sent upon successful submission of an ECT&E Claim application. Submitting an ECT&E claim in any way other than through the online claim process will result in an "INCOMPLETE" score on this exam component. In addition, candidates who fail to include any supporting documentation to their ECT&E application by the deadline of February 22, 2025, will receive an "INCOMPLETE" score. All claims and supporting documentation must be received within seven calendar days following the examination. Supporting documentation must be scanned and attached to the application or emailed to civilservice@mass.gov no later than February 22, 2025. Documents can be uploaded to your Civil Service account when submitting your ECT&E application. Documents such as educational transcripts that have already been submitted and are attached to your Civil Service account do not need to be resubmitted. A new EVF must be provided for each examination.

Statutory Preference Points: Veterans and disabled veterans will be awarded two points to their passing, overall (general average) examination score. To claim veterans' preference, claim veteran status in the application and attach your DD214 to the application or email it to civilservice@mass.gov. For more information on veteran status refer to the [Military Information](#) section on our website.

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 the [Update Your Account](#).

During the HRD review process or during the life of the applicable eligible list(s), candidates must make original supporting documentation available should the issue of authenticity arise with any submitted document copies.

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

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 about this and other civil service examinations, visit <http://www.mass.gov/civilservice> or email the Civil Service Unit at civilservice@mass.gov

Inquiries may also be made to HRD, Monday through Friday, 8:45am – 5:00pm, at the following numbers:

Boston area: (617) 878-9895

Within Massachusetts: 1-800-392-6178

TTY Number: (617) 878-976