



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of
Henry Cioffi Jr., Fire Lieutenant
(PM1173S), Long Branch

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket No. 2016-²⁸⁹⁴~~2761~~

ISSUED: NOV 16 2016

(RE)

Henry Cioffi Jr. appeals his score for the oral portion of the promotional examination for Fire Lieutenant (PM1173S), Long Branch. It is noted that the appellant passed the subject examination with a final average of 81.840 and ranks second on the subject list.

It is noted for the record that this two-part examination consisted of a written multiple-choice portion and an oral portion. Candidates were required to pass the written portion of the examination, and then were ranked on their performance on both portions of the examination. The test was worth 80 percent of the final score and seniority was worth the remaining 20 percent. Of the test weights, 31.35% of the score was the written multiple-choice portion, 22.49% was the technical score for the evolving exercise, 7.53% was the supervision score for the evolving exercise, 4.28% was the oral communication score for the evolving exercise, 19.23% was the technical score for the arriving exercise, 7.53% was the supervision score for the arriving exercise, and 7.59% was the oral communication score for the arriving exercise.

The oral portion of the Fire Lieutenant examination consisted of two scenarios: a fire scene simulation with questions designed to measure the knowledge of safe rescue tactics and procedures to safeguard citizens, supervision of fire fighters and the ability to assess fire conditions and hazards in an evolving incident on the fireground (evolving); and a fire scene simulation designed to measure the knowledge of safe rescue tactics and procedures to safeguard citizens, supervision of firefighters and the ability to plan strategies and tactics based upon a building's

structure and condition (arriving). Knowledge of supervision was measured by questions in both scenarios, and was scored for each. For the evolving scenario, candidates were provided with a 15-minute preparation period, and candidates had 10 minutes to respond. For the arriving scenario, a five minute preparation period was given and candidates had 10 minutes to respond.

The candidates' responses were scored on technical knowledge and oral communication ability. Prior to the administration of the exam, a panel of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) determined the scoring criteria, using generally approved fire command practices, firefighting practices, and reference materials. Scoring decisions were based on SME-approved possible courses of action (PCAs) including those actions that must be taken to resolve the situation as presented. For a performance to be acceptable, a candidate needed to present the mandatory courses of action for that scenario. Only those oral responses that depicted relevant behaviors that were observable and could be quantified were assessed in the scoring process. Each performance was evaluated by two SMEs who currently are a first level supervisor or higher. If the SME scores differed by 1 point, the score was averaged. If they differed by more than 1 point, the SMEs were required to confer with each other until they agreed on a score. Scores were then converted to standardized scores.

Candidates were rated on a five-point scale, with 5 as the optimal response, 4 as a more than acceptable passing response, 3 as a minimally acceptable passing response, 2 as a less than acceptable response, and 1 as a much less than acceptable response. For each of the scenes, and for oral communication, the requirements for each score were defined.

For the evolving scenario, the appellant scored a 2 for the technical component, a 2 for the supervision component, and a 3 for the oral communication component. For the arriving scenario, the appellant scored a 5 for the technical component, a 4.5 for the supervision component, and a 4 for the oral communication component. The appellant challenges his score for the supervision component of the arriving scenario. As a result, the appellant's test material, video, and a listing of PCAs for the scenarios were reviewed.

The arriving scenario involved a report of a fire in a single-story townhouse built in the 1980s. The involved townhouse is the end unit of five connected units. It is 9:30 AM on a Wednesday in May, with a temperature of 74° F, sunny skies, and no wind. The candidate is the commanding officer of the first arriving engine company and is the first officer on scene. Upon arrival, the candidate notices smoke coming from the front door and windows on side A. Dispatch reports an elderly occupant in the rear bedroom. The supervision question indicated that, during the incident, the candidate observed two of his firefighters being rough with the victim while

rescuing him. This question asked for actions to be taken on scene and after returning to the firehouse.

For the supervision component, the assessors indicated that the appellant missed the opportunity to maintain confidentiality. On appeal, the appellant argues that he did not break a confidentiality agreement by having a conversation with the members at the fire scene.

In reply, the assessor note is not referencing breaking a confidentiality agreement on scene. Rather, it refers to him keeping confidentiality regarding the incident back at the firehouse. The appellant did not state that he would maintain confidentiality, document any actions taken, or keep his superior officer informed. The assessor notes are correct, and the appellant's score for this component will not be changed.

CONCLUSION

A thorough review of the appellant's submissions and the test materials indicates that the decision below is amply supported by the record, and the appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
THE 10th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2016



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