



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Raymond Tremer  
III, Fire Captain (PM5027D),  
Harrison

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket No. 2024-1143

**ISSUED:** February 5, 2025 (ABR)

Raymond Tremer III appeals his score on the oral portion of the promotional examination for Fire Captain (PM5027D), Harrison. It is noted that the appellant achieved a passing score of 83.130 and ranks eighth on the subject eligible list.

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, 35.90% of the score was the written multiple-choice portion, 22.04% was the technical score for the evolving exercise, 7.45% was the supervision score for the evolving exercise, 5.71% was the oral communication score for the evolving exercise, 23.20% was the technical score for the arriving exercise, 5.71% was the oral communication score for the arriving exercise.

The oral portion of the first-level Fire Captain 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 Scenario); 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 Scenario). Knowledge of supervision was measured

by a question in the Evolving Scenario, and was scored for that scenario. 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, other than for oral communication, 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. 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. It is noted that candidates were told the following prior to beginning their presentations for each scenario: "In responding to the questions, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score."

On the Evolving Scenario, the appellant scored a 3 on the technical component, a 4 on the supervision component, and a 5 on the oral communication component. On the Arriving Scenario, the appellant scored a 4 on the technical component and a 5 on the oral communication component.

The appellant challenges his scores for the technical component of the Evolving Scenario. As a result, the appellant's test material, video, and a listing of PCAs for the scenario were reviewed.

The Evolving Scenario involved a reported fire at a two-family wood-frame residence where the candidate is the first-level supervisor of Engine 2 and that upon the candidate's arrival, Battalion 2 is establishing command. Question 1 asks the candidate, as the supervisor of Engine 2, what orders they will give their crew to complete their orders from the incident commander (IC). Question 2 states that while Firefighters Franco and Phillips are conducting fire suppression operations, Firefighter Phillips slips down the stairs and his improperly secured helmet is dislodged. He proceeds to hit his head hard and is unresponsive. Question 2 then asks what actions the candidate should take or ensure are taken.

The SME awarded the appellant a score of 3 on the technical component of the Evolving Scenario, based upon a finding that the appellant missed a number of PCAs, including, in part, opportunities to operate in teams of two and ensure any victims found are removed from the building. On appeal, the appellant argues that he “cover[ed] both of those without saying the exact verbiage of the quoted missed opportunities.” He presents that he “did not specifically mention that all teams should be working in pairs of 2 due to it is [sic] automatic that all teams should be working in that team of two.” He maintains that he addressed the removal of any found victims by stating that he would ensure proper head and neck stabilization for the safe removal of Firefighter Phillips, and had him removed to emergency medical services (EMS) for treatment, triage and transport. The appellant further notes that the question does not confirm that there are any victims of the house fire and that the prompt advised that neighbors had not seen any residents of the home. Moreover, he submits that he indicated that he would use the hoseline to protect life and search for potential victims.

In reply, as noted above, candidates were told the following prior to beginning their presentations for each scenario: “In responding to the questions, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.” Here, the appellant’s arguments with respect to the PCA of ensuring that his crew operated in teams of two is effectively an argument that his general actions covered this specific PCA. Given the unambiguous directive that candidates be “as specific as possible” and “not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to [their] score[s],” such an argument must necessarily fail. Further, a review of his presentation confirms that the appellant did not specifically identify this PCA, as required. As to the appellant’s arguments regarding the PCA of ensuring the removal of any found victims, it is noted that this PCA was a response to Question 1, which precedes the injury to Firefighter Phillips. As such, it was intended to specifically cover the removal of any civilians found in the fire building and any statements related to the removal of Firefighter Phillips following the events of Question 2 were insufficient to award credit for this Question 1 response. It is further emphasized that while the scenario prompt does not guarantee that victims are definitely present in the fire building, it also cannot be said to conclusively state that victims will not be found either. The appellant clearly recognized the possibility that victims could be found in the fire building, as he acknowledges that he ordered his crew to search for potential victims. It stands to reason that if victims were found, they would need to be removed from the involved building. Thus, it was reasonable to require candidates to specifically state that they would remove any found victims from the fire building in response to Question 1. Since the appellant does not contend that he did so and a review of his presentation confirms that he did not specifically address this PCA, he was properly denied credit for it.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the appellant

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission further notes that the appellant’s score for this component reflects the credit he received for other relevant actions he points to on appeal, including searching for victims off the line and removing Firefighter Phillips.

has failed to sustain his burden of proof on appeal and his Evolving Scenario technical component score of 3 is affirmed.

### CONCLUSION

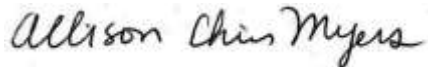
A thorough review of the appellant's submissions and the test materials indicates that the decision below is amply supported by the record and the appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof in this matter.

### 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 ON  
THE 5<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2025




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Allison Chris Myers  
Chairperson  
Civil Service Commission

Inquiries  
and  
Correspondence

Nicholas F. Angiulo  
Director  
Division of Appeals and Regulatory Affairs  
Civil Service Commission  
Written Record Appeals Unit  
P.O. Box 312  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312

c: Raymond Tremmer III  
Division of Administrative and Employee Services  
Division of Test Development, Analytics and Administration  
Records Center