CITY OF LAREDO CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

MINIMUM STANDARDS

FOR ENTRY LEVEL

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City of Laredo is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to evaluating each candidate on a non-discriminatory basis.

All applicants must meet the following qualifications in order to be eligible for and be placed on an employment eligibility list.

A. MINIMUM SCORE

Applicants must score a minimum of 70% or higher on the written examination.

B. YOU MUST BE A UNITED STATES CITIZEN.

C. AGE REQUIREMENT

You must be between the ages of 18 (at the time of the Civil Service Written Examination) and not more than 35 (at the time of hiring for the Fire Academy) years of age.

D. ACADEMICS

A person is eligible for an entry level position in the Laredo Fire Department only if the person has received:

a. A high school diploma from an Accredited High School; or
b. high school equivalency certificate / General Education Development (GED)

E. LICENSE REQUIREMENT/RECORD

Applicants must have a valid driver's license at the time of the written entrance examination. Active duty military members may possess a valid license of their home state at the time of application. All applicants are required to present a valid Texas driver's license at time of employment.

Applicant's driving record must reflect driving habits that are consistent with the safe operation of motor vehicles. You must not have an excessive record of traffic convictions or traffic collisions.

a. During the two (2) year period preceding the civil service written examination, the applicant must not have had his/her driver's license suspended for any reason except for safety responsibility provisions, for example not having insurance, or minor billing issues.
b. The applicant must not have any outstanding traffic warrants/capiases filed against them at any time, either before, during, and/or after the civil service written examination.

c. The applicant must not have had a D.W.I conviction within the last five (5) years from the date of the civil service written examination.

F. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND

The applicant must not have ever been convicted at any time of a felony offense. For the purpose of this requirement, a person is convicted of a felony when, an adjudication of guilt for a felony offense is entered against the person by a court of competent jurisdiction unless:

a. The sentence is subsequently probated and the person is discharged from probation;
b. The accusation, complaint, information, or indictment against the person is dismissed and the person is released from all penalties and disabilities resulting from the offense, or;
c. The person is pardoned for the offense.

Each probated, dismissed, and/or pardoned sentence will be considered by the hiring committee with regard to the nature of the circumstances and possible applicant disqualification.

Applicants must not be currently charged with or under indictment for any felony offense.

Applicants must not have been convicted of a misdemeanor offense of "Class A" within the last ten (10) years.

Applicants must not have been convicted of a misdemeanor offense of "Class B" within the last ten (10) years.

Applicants must not have been charged with any misdemeanor offense greater than a "Class C", the outcome of which is still pending in a court of competent jurisdiction.

Applicants, who are not licensed by the commission, will need documentation that the person has not had the following:

a. community supervision history:
    i. has never been on court-ordered community supervision or probation for any criminal offense above the grade of a Class B misdemeanor or a Class B misdemeanor within the last ten years from the date of the court order; but

    ii. the commission may approve the application of a person who received probation or court-ordered community supervision for a Class B misdemeanor at least five (5) years prior to enrollment if an agency administrator sufficiently demonstrates in writing with supporting documentation that mitigating circumstances exist with the case and with the individual applying for licensure, and that the public interest would be served by reducing the waiting period.

G. DRUG POLICY

CRITERIA

- An applicant who has used any illegal drug while employed in any Fire Department, government, law enforcement or prosecutorial position, or while employed in a position which carries a high level of responsibility or public trust, will be found unsuitable for employment.
- An applicant who is discovered to have misrepresented his/her drug history in completing the application will be found unsuitable for employment.
- An applicant who has sold any illegal drug for profit at any time will be found unsuitable for employment.
    - An applicant who has used any illegal drug (including anabolic steroids after February 27, 1991), other than marijuana, within the last five (5) years.
    - An applicant must currently not be using marijuana or synthetic cannabinoids. If so the candidate will be found unsuitable for employment.
    - An applicant who has used paint, glue or any other products or chemical, including potpourri, for the purpose of intoxication during the three (3) years preceding the Civil Service written examination will be deemed unsuitable for employment.
    - Applicants who have abused or illegally used prescription medication for the purpose of intoxication or recreation, whether prescribed to them or another person or otherwise obtained, on no more than three (3) independent occasions are deemed unsuitable under this cause are not eligible to reapply for a period of five (5) years from the date of last usage. If the applicant is found to have abused a substance under this sub-section on more than three (3) independent occasions, the applicant will be deemed unsuitable for employment under this cause and remain permanently unsuitable.
    - Violations that occurred when the candidate was a minor, as defined by the State of Texas, will not be counted against them in time specific terms.
    - Violations that occurred when the candidate was a minor, as defined by the State of Texas, will be considered during the background investigation. A decision for disqualification may be made by the hiring committee.

To determine whether you qualify under the Laredo Fire Department's drug policy, please answer the following questions. **If you answer "YES" to any of these questions, you should NOT apply for employment with the Laredo Fire Department.**

- You are currently using marijuana or synthetic cannabinoids.
- Have you used any other illegal drug (including anabolic steroids after February 27, 1991) in the past five (5) years?
- Have you ever sold, delivered, distributed, or possessed any illegal drug for profit or benefit?
- Have you ever used an illegal drug (no matter how many times or how long ago) while in a law enforcement or prosecutorial position, or in a position, which carries with it a high level of responsibility or public trust?

H. Applicants must be of good moral character and shall not habitually associate with those of questionable moral character.

I. MILITARY

Applicants must not have been discharged from military service under less than honorable conditions including, specifically:

a. under other than honorable conditions;
b. bad conduct;
c. dishonorable;
d. Any other characterization of service indicating bad character.

Based on the Local Government Code 143.025, an additional five points shall be added to the examination grade of an applicant who served in the United States armed forces, received an honorable discharge, and made a passing grade on the examination.

J. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Applicant must have a history of meeting financial obligations. An applicant's poor or bad credit history, failure to pay just debts, delinquency on outstanding loans, or bankruptcies, or repossessions, and foreclosures will be considered. The type and number of debts, reasons for credit problems, and extenuating circumstances, including cases of identity theft, will be considered on a case-by-case basis due to the number of variables involved.

The applicant shall not have a history of knowingly issuing checks with insufficient funds within the last five (5) years preceding the date of the Civil Service written examination. Applicant obligated to child support payments must be current on all payments

K. Applicants must not be a member of any organization that advocates the overthrow of our government by force or violence or which advocates or engages in unlawful conduct directed at individuals or groups based upon the individual's or group's race, sex, religion, national origin, age, skin color, sexual preference, disability, or conduct otherwise commonly known as "hate crimes".

L. Applicants must not have been discharged from any fire department or law enforcement agency, have resigned to avoid suspension or discharge, or have resigned during a disciplinary investigation without a final judgment having been rendered and:

a. Not had a certificate issued by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection Standards and Education previously revoked.
b. An application from a person who has resigned or has been terminated from the police academy due to a lack of proficiency in an academic or skilled area will not be eligible to apply within one (1) year of the date of resignation or termination.
c. An applicant who has been terminated from any commissioned or cadet position within a fire department enforcement agency for disciplinary reasons, having resigned to avoid suspension or discharge or, having resigned during a disciplinary investigation without a final judgment being rendered, will be permanently disqualified.

M. COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS

An applicant failing to cooperate fully with and keep all scheduled appointments, failing to supply the needed documents within the specified time limits, failing to provide added personal information as needed, or failing to update changes within ten (10) days of the change will disqualify an applicant from the hiring process for a minimum of six (6) months.

N. FALSE STATEMENTS/OMISSIONS OF MATERIAL FACT

a. Applicants must be truthful and honest in their response to all inquiries relative to their suitability for employment.
b. Applicants found to have withheld material information, and/or practiced or attempted to practice deception or fraud in their application, examination, or appointments are deemed unsuitable from the current eligibility list.
c. Any misstatements and/or omissions of material fact during the application process are also cause for disqualification from the current eligibility list.
d. If an applicant is deemed unsuitable for this rule based on a previous finding of false statement/omission, the applicant will be deemed permanently unsuitable for employment.

O. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Applicants must demonstrate maturity, dependability, integrity, good work ethic, and loyalty to their past and present employers. The applicant's employment history must not indicate instability; excessive tardiness or absenteeism; inefficiency; failure to follow directions, policies or procedures, and rules and regulations; poor working relationships; negligent work habits.

a. In the last five (5) years preceding the date of the civil service written examination, applicants must not have been terminated, asked to resign, or resigned from any previous employment for engaging in inappropriate or unlawful behavior, including but not limited to any of the following:
    i. Theft
    ii. Assault
    iii. Threats
    iv. Disorderly Conduct or Other Breaches of the Peace

    Applicants deemed unsuitable under this cause are eligible to reapply for subsequent entrance examinations.

b. Applicants must not have been terminated, asked to resign, or resigned from any previous employment for engaging in inappropriate or unlawful behavior, including but not limited to any of the following:
    i. Any Felony Offense
    ii. Sex Crimes
    iii. Sexual Harassment
    iv. Discriminatory or Retaliatory Acts
    v. Any Offense Involving Acts of Moral Turpitude
    vi. Applicants deemed unsuitable under this cause are permanently unsuitable.

Applicants must not have been employed or engaged in an illegal occupation. Applicants deemed unsuitable due to employment in an illegal occupation remain permanently unsuitable.

P. Once the applicant successfully achieves a passing score on the civil service written entrance examination, the applicant must then successfully pass each of the following phases:

PHYSICAL FITNESS

Applicants are required to pass a fitness evaluation (physical agility course), which will be conducted after he/she successfully passes the entrance examination. The evaluation is to determine physical agility and duty fitness for Fire Service duties.

COMPLETE BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

An extensive check of the applicant's personal/work/criminal history will be performed by a Laredo Fire Department designee. All of the information pertaining to the candidate will be considered by a hiring committee which will determine if the candidate should be disqualified.

POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION

All applicants are required to submit to a polygraph examination and demonstrate their veracity in responses to all personal history, employment, criminal activity, and personal habit interrogatories presented in the Polygraph Questionnaire. Satisfactory demonstration of this requirement will be based on a polygraph examiner's report of "No Deception Indicated." The following guidelines shall apply to the manner of testing:

a. Each applicant is required to complete an approved "Pre-Employment Polygraph Questionnaire" prior to undergoing the examination.
b. The polygraph examination has the sole purpose of verifying the applicant's truthfulness in the responses provided in the approved questionnaire.
c. Current or former law enforcement, corrections, or security officers are required to respond to additional questions relating to their conduct as a law enforcement, corrections, or security officer.
d. Polygraph examinations are conducted by a licensed polygraph examiner.
e. Applicants whose original polygraph results are found to be other than "No Deception Indicated" are re-examined within thirty (30) days if desired and at the expense of the candidate. In order to appeal, the applicant must submit a written notice of appeal addressed to the City of Laredo Fire Chief within five (5) calendar days of notification of disqualification.
f. Subsequent polygraph examinations are conducted by a different polygraph examiner, to be determined by the Laredo Fire Department hiring committee.
g. All candidates whose results are found to be other than "No Deception Indicated" and refuse to take the polygraph re-test will be disqualified.
h. If after the re-test of the polygraph the results are found to be other than "No Deception Indicated" the results will be considered in conjunction with all other information pertinent to the candidate. The hiring committee will decide based on this information whether the candidate will be disqualified or continue with the hiring process.
i. If after the re-test of the polygraph the results are "No Deception Indicated" the results of the re-test will be accepted.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION

All applicants are required to undergo a psychological examination administered by a licensed police psychologist who is licensed by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists or by a psychiatrist licensed by the Texas Medical Board selected by the Laredo Fire Department to determine mental/emotional fitness for duty. The psychological examination must be conducted pursuant to professionally recognized standards and methods. The examination process must consist of a review of a job description for the position sought; review of any personal history statements; review of any background documents; at least two instruments, on which measures personality traits and one which measures psychopathology; and a face to face interview conducted after the instruments have been scored. Any applicant who is not deemed fit after this examination, must wait a minimum period of one (1) year from the date of disqualification before becoming eligible to reapply or as otherwise indicated by the psychologist.

Appeals for the Psychological Examination are required to meet the same standards as outlined above. Review of personal history statements, background documents and the use of at least two instruments, on which measures personality traits and one which measures psychopathology. The results of the original psychological examination will be forwarded to the examiner for review prior to the re-examination.

In order to appeal, the applicant must submit a written notice of appeal addressed to the Director of the Fire Fighters' and Police Officers' Civil Service Commission of the City of Laredo, Texas within ten (10) calendar days of notification of disqualification.

ORAL BOARD AND EVALUATION DAY INTERVIEW PROCESS

All applicants are required to participate in an oral assessment conducted by an oral interview board comprised of Fire Service Officers and Training Staff from the Laredo Fire Department. The Oral interview is a continual process as information becomes available. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate during the interview process requiring the applicant to respond to queries related to his/her background, investigation findings, as well as his/her responses to hypothetical scenarios and related issues.

All applicants are required to participate in an Evaluation Day as part of the interview process. The Evaluation Day is a series of events that are designed to test the participant for both mental and physical fitness for the Fire Service. A team of Fire Service personnel will assess, evaluate, and award a graded score for their individual performance.

The overall score in the Evaluation portion of the interview process will determine if the candidate successfully passed or failed the interview process.

MEDICAL EXAM

All applicants are then required to submit to a medical evaluation conducted by a Texas Medical Board licensed physician selected by the Laredo Fire Department. The physician must be familiar with the duties appropriate to the type of license sought. The individual must be declared by the physician to be physically sound and free from any defect which may adversely affect the performance of duty appropriate to the type of license sought and show no trace of drug dependency or illegal drug use. The physician will determine the applicant's medical fitness for duty.

Upon an applicant's successful completion of all of the aforementioned phases, he/she may be made a "conditional offer" of employment.

MANDATORY ACKNOWLEGEMENT

The applicant acknowledges, as a condition of employment, that he/she must successfully pass during the academy all City of Laredo Fire Department written and practical exercise exams.

The applicant also acknowledges, as a condition of employment, that during the academy the applicant will be tested, must pass, and be Texas state certified in the following:

- (EMT) Emergency Medical Technician, (EMT-P) Paramedic, and National Registry
- Texas Commission of Fire Protection (TCFP) Basic Firefighter
- Texas Commission of Fire Protection (TCFP) Aircraft Rescue Firefighting
- Texas Commission of Fire Protection (TCFP) Hazardous Materials Technician

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