

Physical Abilities Test Applicant Preparation Guide

This guide has been developed to assist you in preparing for the Physical Abilities Test (PAT) and promoting a level of fitness consistent with the essential functions of correctional work. As a Peace Officer, an above average level of fitness is necessary for optimal job performance. The PAT is designed to predict an applicant's ability to perform specific job standards and is physically demanding. The tests are administered in a non-medical environment by non-medical staff. Therefore, it is in your best interest to objectively evaluate your level of physical fitness and to prepare yourself prior to participating in the PAT.

Exercise is a vital component for a healthy lifestyle. A well rounded exercise program should include cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance and flexibility activities. It is recommended that you consult your physician or seek professional medical advice before beginning any exercise program.

The PAT consists of five physically demanding performance tests. Using various exercise equipment, you must demonstrate the following job standards by performing each component:

PAT Component	Job Standard
PEDOL (Physical Exertion Demand on Legs)	Run 500 yards in no more than 2 minutes and 20 seconds in full uniform
Grip Strength	Pick up and carry a stretcher containing a 185 lb person 1/8 mile with the assistance of one other person, then an additional 1/8 mile with the assistance of three people
Trunk Strength	Drag an unconscious person weighing 165 lbs, 20 feet in 20 seconds or less, after running 500 yards
Dynamic Arm	Carry a stretcher containing a 185 lb person 1/8 mile with the assistance of one other person, then an additional 1/8 mile with the assistance of three people
Dynamic Leg	Sprint 100 yards in no more than 19 seconds

Exercise Recommendations for the Physical Abilities Tests

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PEDOL</u></p> <p>Description: Following a one-minute warm up, you must pedal a stationary bicycle 56 to 70 revolutions per minute (RPM) with a very challenging amount of resistance and complete 112 revolutions in two minutes in order to pass this test. Following the test, a one-minute cool down is given.</p>
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Preparation: It is preferable to gradually increase your exercise intensity over several weeks, as tolerated, with a goal of performing at the workload required during the PEDOL. As a counterpart to your regular aerobic exercise (continuous activity for 20 minutes or more at least 3 times per week), consider doing one or more of the following exercises for a combination of 20-30 minutes per day, 2-3 times per week:

- Ride a stationary bike in intervals of 5 minutes with easy resistance followed by 2 minutes with hard/challenging resistance. Repeat this interval for 20 to 30 minutes.
- Ride a road or mountain bike on a level ground for 5 to 10 minutes. Then select a hill to climb that provides a very challenging effort for several minutes. End with a cool-down for 5 to 10 minutes on a level ground.
- Walk/jog/run in intervals, alternating your pace. For every minute at a challenging pace, recover for 2 minutes at a slower, easy pace.
- Hill running intervals – Run up a hill with a steepness that provides a significant challenge as tolerated, then walk down and repeat.
- Stairs or bleacher running.
- Join a step aerobics class progressing to a higher step height as tolerated.
- Wall squat – With your back against the wall, lower your body until your thighs are almost parallel to the floor (“chair” position) and hold for 30 to 90 seconds; repeat 5 -10 times with one minute rest between sets.
- Perform 3 to 4 sets of squats/lunges with at least 15-25 repetitions.



Grip Strength Test

Description: This test measures the strength of the muscles in your fingers, hand and forearm. You must be able to squeeze 34 kg (76 lbs) using a hand grip dynamometer to pass this test.

Preparation: Consider one of the following exercises 2-3 times per week:

- Squeeze a hand-gripper at maximum effort for at least 15 seconds; 3 sets of 8 to 12 repetitions.
- Squeeze a tennis ball or racquet ball at maximum effort for at least 15 seconds; 3 sets of 8 to 12 repetitions.
- Hang from a chin-up bar until fatigue or tolerated, 3 sets of 8 to 12 repetitions.

		<p><u>Trunk Strength Test</u></p>
<p>Description: This test measures abdominal and back strength. You must exert 89 pounds of force using your abdominals (flexion) and 109 pounds of force using your back extensor muscles (extension) to pass this test.</p>		

Preparation: Consider doing a combination of the following exercises 2-3 times per week:

- Crunches – Lay down on your back with knees bent, hands across chest or behind head (only for support). With eyes on ceiling, raise head and shoulders using abdominal muscles only; 3 sets of 15 to 20 repetitions.
- Alternating leg lifts – Lay face down on the floor with legs fully extended. Raise one leg at a time off the floor about 6 inches and hold for 10 seconds, return to floor and repeat exercise with the other leg; 3 sets of 10 to 15 repetitions.
- Trunk extension – Lay face down on the floor with hands loosely placed behind head or neck. Raise upper body to an arched position and hold for a count of 10 seconds. Return chest to floor, rest 15 seconds and repeat 2 more times.

	<p><u>Dynamic Arm Test</u></p>
<p>Description: Utilizing your hands and arms from a straddle position sitting on the floor behind the arm bike, you must pedal at a rapid pace against a very challenging amount of resistance and complete 45 revolutions in one minute in order to pass this test.</p>	

Preparation: Consider doing one of the following exercises 2-3 times per week:

- Do as many push-ups as you can without stopping. Rest 30 to 60 seconds and repeat two more times.
- Upper body ergometer (arm bike) – crank/pedal with your hands against a very challenging amount of resistance for two minutes. Reduce the resistance and continue to pedal for one minute at a slow speed.
- Swim by doing a continuous “free style” arm stroke without using your legs for 2-3 minutes. Rest one minute and repeat two more times.
- Perform seated rows (weight machine); 3 sets of 15 repetitions.
- Perform lat pull-downs (weight machine) or pull ups (chin-up bar); 3 sets of 15 repetitions.
- Perform chest press or bench press (weight machine, free weights); 3 sets of 15 repetitions.
- Perform shoulder press (weight machine, free weights); 3 sets of 15 repetitions.



Dynamic Leg Test

Description: You must pedal a stationary bicycle at a rapid pace for one minute with a very challenging amount of resistance and complete 70 revolutions in order to pass this test.

Preparation: Consider doing one or two of the following exercises 2-3 times per week:

- Sprint at intervals: Run 100 yards at a very fast pace, then walk for 25 yards. Repeat this run/walk cycle continuously 5 times or more.
- Bench stepping – place a sturdy bench or chair against the wall. Step up and down at a rapid pace (step up with right foot, then left foot, back down with right, then left). Continue for 1 minute, rest 15 seconds and repeat 4 times.
- Bicycling – indoor or outdoor cycling at rapid pace. Maintain pace for 2 minutes, then rest for 60 seconds and repeat 2 times.
- Running Bleachers (stadium steps) at intervals – jog/run up and walk down.

General Exercise Tips

- Warming up – Warming up will decrease the likelihood of injury. A proper warm-up should begin with a few minutes of the same type of activity you are about to do at a very light exertion level. For example, if you are preparing to go running, you could first jog at an easy pace or walk briskly for a short distance.
- Stretching – Stretching will improve your flexibility and decrease the likelihood of injury.
- Hydration - Proper hydration is critical. You should drink water before exercise, during the exercise session, and after.
- Rest & Recovery – High-intensity workouts should be followed by 1-2 days of rest before repeating strenuous exercise with the same muscle groups.

Recommendations for Your PAT Date

- Try to get adequate sleep the night before your test.
- Avoid large meals 1-2 hours prior to your test; however, it is advisable that you eat a small meal prior to your test.
- Limit or avoid heavy or stressful physical work within 24-48 hours of your test.
- Dress appropriately for strenuous physical activity (T-shirts, sweats, tennis shoes).
- It is advisable to bring water to your PAT test.