



**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc., of
Dade County, Florida**

Firefighter Recruit Survival Guide

Prepared by
Everett Consulting Services
September 2006



**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida (PFA)
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
Phone: 688.3473 Fax: 305.688.5221
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

Dear Firefighter Recruit,

September 2006

Congratulations!

You have entered the first phase of your career in the fire service. You are now accepted in a firefighter recruit class and ready to begin Florida Firefighter Certification training (Minimum Standards). For the next several months you can expect to be challenged physically and academically as you move through the various firefighter training components.

Your primary role as a firefighter recruit is to successfully complete and master the firefighter certification training objectives. You must follow all of the rules set forth by Miami-Dade Fire Rescue and the Fire Academy where your training takes place. It is important that you understand the consequences of failing to comply with all of the rules, regulations and policies that apply to firefighter recruits.

The training you will receive is not unreasonably difficult. Remember that thousands of individuals have successfully completed similar training at fire departments all over the world. The most difficult part will be making up your mind that you want the job and making sure you are well-qualified and capable of meeting the challenge. Do not let anyone or anything deter you from your goal.

Again, congratulations and welcome to the fire service. We hope you are a success as a fire recruit and we look forward to your recruit graduation. We hope that you will become a member of the Progressive Firefighters Association and be a part of our family of fire service professionals.

Sincerely,

Darren Williams
Darren Williams





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Disclaimer

This PFA Firefighter Recruit Survival Guide was prepared to assist you in preparing for the firefighter application process. The information is not legal advice, and is not intended to replace any information or requirements specified by law or the Fire Department or Fire Academy to which you are applying. You must comply with all of the rules, regulations, guidelines and timelines applicable to the fire department to which you are applying.





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

Table of Contents

Page

About Our Organization.....	5
Membership Application	7
Beginning Your Training as a Firefighter Recruit	8
What to Expect in Firefighter Recruit Training	9
Physical Training	9
Written Tests and Practical Exams	10
Disciplinary Procedures	11
Preparing for the Firefighter Minimum Standards Exam	12
Progressive Firefighters Mission Statement	14





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

About Our Organization

The Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc., of Dade County, Florida (PFA) was organized in 1978 due to the recognition of the increasing complexity of problems experienced by our African-American sisters and brothers in our community dealing with the fire service. Thus, the PFA established its main purpose and goal to study and provide viable solutions to serious problems and issues affecting our membership - recruitment, retention and promotion of qualified African-American firefighters, and the numerous problems affecting our community.- health, safety, social, economic and political issues.

The principal founders of our organization were Firefighters David C. James and Charles U. Phillips. Both of these individuals later rose to the ranks of Division Chief and Fire Chief, respectively. These dedicated individuals were plaintiffs in a lawsuit filed against then Dade County and Metro-Dade Fire Rescue Department, due to alleged discriminatory practices, In 1982, a settlement agreement was signed by the County outlining specific actions to be utilized: barrier-free criteria and testing processes, validation of entry-level and promotional tests, establishment of a specialized recruitment to actively recruit Black firefighter applicants, employ a Human Resources Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer, and make every effort possible to recruit and select qualified individuals for any and all exempt positions within the fire department.

On December 31, 1978, PFA incorporated in the State of Florida, as a non-profit community-based organization of African-American fire rescue personnel of Metro-Dade Fire Rescue Department (now known as Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department). The PFA is a local chapter of the International Association of Black Professional Firefighters (IABPFF) and a Lifetime Member of the NAACP.

The International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters (IABPFF) was founded in 1970 to serve as a convening entity for Black fire fighters to address the employment, professional development and community fire prevention concerns for fire service members from across the United States. The IABPFF also serves as the liaison and voice of its membership with other fire service organizations, professional organizations, community leaders and governing bodies. The IABPFF currently has a membership of approximately 5500 men and women from across the United States, the Caribbean and abroad. The IABPFF serves as the umbrella organization for the Black Chief Officers Committee (BCOC) and Black Women in the Fire Service (BWFS).





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

Our Organization's Leadership

Current Executive Board Members

Darren Williams	President
Keith Bell	Vice President
Nassoma Morgan-Grant	Recording Secretary
Tonya Rozier	Corresponding Secretary
Bessie Bickham	Treasurer
Carlos Lewis	Sgt-At-Arms
Willie Brinson	Board Member
Michael Perry	Board Member
Albert Broadnax	Board Member
Tumaini Jabali	Board Member
Stephen Martell	Board Member

Past Presidents

David C. James (First President and Co-founder)

Charles U. Phillips

Mike Warner

Joe T. Pryor

Michael Myles

Eddie Laden

James Byrd, Sr.

Malik Mateen

Faye Davis

Dwight Prude

Ed Barnes





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

Membership Application

I _____ hereby make application for membership in the Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc., of Dade County Florida.

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle Initial)

Address: _____
(City) (State) (Zip)

Telephone: _____
(Home) (Work)

Date of Application: _____

Date of Hire with Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Children:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Effective _____, I hereby authorize the Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc., Of Dade County, Florida to deduct from my earnings each payroll period the sum of \$15.00. This amount shall be paid to the Progressive Firefighters Association and represents payment of my dues. I understand that these deductions can be only terminated by my giving the Progressive Firefighters Association prior written notice as provided by law.

Applicant's Name (print): _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**



Beginning Your Training as a Firefighter Recruit

Recruit training can be extremely stressful and demanding. It is in your best interest to prepare for the challenges ahead of you and remember these basic rules for success:

- Always, always, always be on time
- Never let anyone or anything deter you from your goal
- Plan ahead for alternative transportation and childcare issues
- Study and prepare in advance –seek help before you fail a test
- Cheating, dishonesty, discrimination, criminal and unethical behavior is totally unacceptable
- Use all resources available to you —study groups, fire service friends, extra classes, etc.
- Review all rules and regulations and abide by them
- Keep a Fire Recruit Journal of all of your activities, appointments and incidents (this is separate from any journal required by your recruit trainers)
- Make copies of all written material given to you for your personal file (if you are terminated from the recruit training academy you will be asked to turn in your Orientation Manual and other materials issued to you. You will have no record of anything should you need legal intervention)
- Exhibit positive interpersonal, communications, team-player and leadership skills
- Keep your personal opinions to yourself and keep your eyes and ears open
- Show respect to every instructor, officer, administrator and recruit class member
- Handle all complaints, issues and concerns in accordance with the grievance procedures provided by the fire department and fire training academy
- Make sure you are responsible for all equipment and material issued to you

Keep focused on your goal.





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

What to Expect in Firefighter Recruit Training

Your first day in the Academy will seem long and test your physical and psychological strength. You will be given rules and regulations to review. You will be asked to perform physical training. And, unfortunately, you may encounter individuals or situations that may make you feel uncomfortable or unprepared. Every task you are given is doable and every situation can be overcome if you remember the rules for success and take the time to prepare.

Physical Training

Firefighter training is physically demanding. In most cases you will be required to run and do push-ups the first day. This should not be a problem if you maintained the level of physical fitness you achieved to pass the CPAT. Be prepared to do a minimum of 50 push-ups the first day and be comfortable running at least 3 miles at a reasonable speed. You probably will not have to run this far the first day, but being in shape will help you get through the rest of the physical training. You should also be comfortable climbing at least 15 flights of stairs as you may have to go to the stadium and run up and down the stadium steps. We don't want you to be surprised – just be prepared!

The key to the physical training is being in shape and knowing your limitations. Your training instructors will push you to the limit and may tell you "they don't think you are cut out to be a firefighter". Do not let this stop you – let this be your motivation to do better and hang in there. The instructors are testing your determination and interest in obtaining the job. No individual was born a firefighter. Everyone had to develop the skills and be committed to getting the job.

Expect some form of physical training everyday. Get used to working with the extra weight from the fire fighting gear and the heat of the summer or coolness of the winter. Make sure you eat properly, stay hydrated and get plenty of rest. If you are tired when you report each day you have already started the process of self-elimination. You have to be alert and rested to compete.

Do not forget that at some point during the first year you will be required to take a swim test. The test is 75 yards utilizing a non-resting stroke. We bring this to your attention now because swimming is an excellent way to work-out. If you don't know how to swim it is best to learn how before you get in the training academy. Training in advance will minimize the stress of having to learn how to swim in addition to all of the other areas on which you must concentrate.





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

Written Tests and Practical Exams

All of your success lies in your ability to successfully pass the written tests and practical exams. You will be required to take 2 or 3 tests per week, so it is important that you keep up with your studying. The Miami-Dade Fire Academy requires that you achieve an **80% on all examinations.** The Bureau of Fire Standard and Training requires a **70% on the Firefighter Written and Practical Exams.** Please note that the State of Florida does allow State Certified Fire Training Facilities to set their own training standards. You must comply with the standards set by the Miami-Dade Fire Academy while you are in training at the Miami-Dade Fire Academy. Each Fire Academy can set their own standards at or above those established by the State of Florida.

The main key to passing the exams is keeping up with the materials. Do not expect the lecture to give you all the information you will need to pass the tests. Read the chapters and other written materials before the lecture so that you will be able to ask questions on the area you do not understand. Go through and underline important information in your text book. Test questions will come primarily from the written materials. Each instructor will have a different teaching style — some will cover the information better than others. You will still be held responsible for information the instructor does not cover in the lecture if it is in your text book or handout materials. Read, read and read again if you want to pass.

The Fire Academy will give you specific rules on make-up and exams and when they will be given. Do not wait until the last minute to study for a make-up test. As soon as the test is reviewed and you think or know you failed, start studying. Get assistance from your study group or other fire service person that can assist you. Figure out the areas you were weak and ask for clarification from your instructor if there are areas you did not understand. Remember, you may still have to take other exams while you are preparing for your make-up. You now have a double study load.

Practical exams measure your ability to perform physical tasks associated with being a firefighter. You will be taught specific skills throughout your training and you will be expected to successfully perform them under timed circumstances. Get over your shyness and focus on mastering the physical requirements. Again, each instructor teaches differently and you will find some are easier to learn from than others. Do not leave the Fire Academy at the end of the day not knowing how to perform a task you have been taught. What you don't know will only cause frustration when you get home and try to practice and the problem will be compounded the next day because you will also have to learn new tasks the next day. Ask for help. If the Fire Academy and instructors are not helpful to you contact the PFA and we will identify an individual to help you.





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

Disciplinary Procedures

We can't say enough about the rules, regulations and policies that you are expected to follow as a fire fighter recruit. In some cases there have been individuals that passed every test and exam, but were terminated because they failed a basic rule. Probably the most difficult area to understand is that your participation as a fire recruit is governed by Miami-Dade Community College Fire Academy policies and procedures and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue policies and procedures. MDFR is the Sponsoring Agency that pays your salary and pays for your training at the Academy. Review your Student Rights and Responsibilities and make sure you fully understand your rights and grievance procedures as a student at Miami-Dade Fire Academy.

You should familiarize yourself with the following documents immediately:

- Miami-Dade Community College Fire Recruit Training Manual
- Florida State Statutes 633.34 (State firefighter Certification requirements)
- Miami-Dade County Administrative Order 1-86: Non-Discrimination in Employment Services
- Miami-Dade County Rules and Regulations
- Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department Rules and Regulations
- Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department Policies and Procedures
- Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department Standard Operating Procedures
- Florida Statute 112.80 (Firefighters Bill of Rights)
- Rules of the Department of Insurance, Division of the State Fire Marshal, Chapter 4A-35 (Firefighters Standards and Training)
- Rules of the Department of Health, Chapter 64E-2, Florida Administrative Code (Emergency Medical Services)

You can view the Florida Statutes and the Florida Administrative Code on line at several websites. You can simply type "Florida Statutes" in your favorite search engine and select the site you wish to use. This information is and Miami-Dade county information is also available in your local library.

In order to utilize these rules effectively you should become familiar with the Chain of Command you are expected to follow as a firefighter recruit. As you can see, you are last on the totem pole. The individuals above you have the ability to make major decisions about your success as a fire fighter recruit. If you are in any situation where you feel harassed, intimidated or threatened, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the Fire Academy Director.

- Recruit Training Bureau Officer-in-Charge (OIC)
- Lead Instructor
- Recruit Training Instructors
- Class Leader
- Squad Leader
- Recruit





Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com

Preparing for the Firefighter Minimum Standards Exam

Once you have successfully completed all of the firefighter training requirements at the Fire Academy you will be required to take the State Exam. The exam is in two parts— a written test and a practical exam. The exam is administered by representatives from the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training and a passing score is 70% on each part.

The written test will be similar to the test you have taken in the Fire Academy. The test will focus primarily on the information contained in the Essentials of Firefighting text book and any other books or information approved by the Bureau (see the end of this section). Use your study notes to prepare and read and re-read your textbooks and hand-outs. Work together in study groups and develop practice exams using questions developed from your textbook and other materials.

The practical exam will measure your ability to perform the essential tasks of a firefighter. Once again, the practical exams will be similar to the practicals you took in the Fire Academy. The practical exam will focus on your skills in the following general areas (*this information is for general overview purposes and should not be considered a depiction of the actual State Firefighters Certification Exam*):

- Proper donning of your SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) and facepiece
- Proper operation of the SBA cylinder valve (Detailed information on the proper donning of your SCBA is not in your textbook—refer to lectures and demonstrations)
- Proper donning Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment
- What to do in the event of facepiece or breathing tube failure
- Proper operation of the P.A.S.S. (Personal Accountability Security System) Device
- Ropes, knots and hoisting
- How to apply a hose clamp
- Hose loading and hose rolling
- Pulling preconnected and non-preconnected hose lines from various hose loads
- Advancing hose up a ladder
- Connecting and disconnecting hose to/from appliances
- Inspecting and replacing gaskets
- Make a hydrant connection
- Make various hose lays
- Advance hoselines up a stairway
- Extend a section of hose using a properly applied hose clamp
- Operate and handle an attack line
- Ground ladder carries, raises, lifting and lowering techniques fly positioning, placement, climbing angles, heeling, conscious victim rescue, and leg lock application





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

- Ladder placement for entry and exit of a window; ventilation; access to a roof, and rope rescue
- Overhaul—opening walls, opening ceilings, removing casings and baseboards
- Salvage—inspecting, spreading and folding salvage covers, cleaning equipment, constructing a catchall
- Rescue of an unconscious and conscious victim using a ladder
- Ventilation—horizontal, vertical, hydraulic, positive pressure, negative ventilation
- Portable fire extinguishers—identify appropriate extinguishers and application procedures for different classes of fire
- Use of proper resource materials (Emergency Response Resource Guidebook) during hazardous materials incident

All of the Performance Objectives for the State Exam can be viewed at www.fldfs.com/sfm/bfst/Standard/PerformanceObjectives_2005-0101.pdf.

These are some of the materials you should review for the State Exam:

Essentials of Firefighting (4th edition) (IFSTA)
First Responder (6th edition) (J. David Bergeron)
Initial Response to Hazardous
Materials Incidents (1992) (National Fire Academy)
 Basic Concepts (Student Manual)
 Concept Implementation (Student Manual)
Florida Statutes (633.30 through 633.352)
Florida Administrative Code Rule 69A-37
Excluding: 69A-37.0371
69A-37.0515
69A-37.0525

After you have completed the State Exam you will have to wait for your exam results. You may have passed one test and not the other. You can sign-up for a re-take exam by contacting the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training at 11655 NW Gainesville Rd. Ocala, FL 34482-1486 or call (352) 369-2800. You will only have one opportunity for a re-take without having to go through the training again. The good news is once you pass the test your certification is good for three years at any fire department in Florida. Your continuous employment keeps your certification active.

Good Luck!
We look forward to seeing your fire recruit graduation.





**Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc.,
of Dade County, Florida
926 Rutland Street, Opa-Locka, Florida 33054
www.progressivefirefighters.com**

Progressive Firefighters Mission Statement

The mission of the Progressive Firefighters Association, Inc., of Dade County, Florida (P.F.A.) is to empower our members to positively impact fire and rescue services in the Black community, in the areas of career development, fire prevention and safety, social, economic and community development.

“Please join us in serving our community”

