



PRE-EMPLOYMENT POLYGRAPH - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q *“Why do you require firefighter applicants to take a pre-employment polygraph?”*

A A polygraph test is a tool to verify you are who you claim to be and to confirm your truthfulness on your application for employment, personal history statement and any other information provided by you throughout the selection process. It also assists us in identifying applicants who display honesty, accountability and overall suitability for employment with the Calgary Fire Department.

Q *“What questions will I be asked?”*

A The questions you will be asked will be similar to, if not the same as, those questions asked in the Personal History Statement. The questions will cover your driving and insurance history, alcohol and drug use, credit history, school and employment habits, integrity and criminal activity/associations.

Q *“How long will it take?”*

A This varies per individual. Plan to be on-site for approximately two to four hours.

Q *“How does the polygraph work?”*

A Polygraphs are sensitive recording devices. They typically measure changes in a person’s breathing rate, heart rate, blood pressure and perspiration. Throughout questioning, signals from the sensors that are connected to the body will record these changes. So when a person knowingly tells a lie or otherwise attempts deception, it appears in the polygraph chart tracings. The examiner will explain in detail how the polygraph works and will answer any questions you may have before the test.

Q *“Will my nervousness affect the results (i.e., make it seem like I’m lying)?”*

A It is natural for an applicant to be nervous at this step in the process. The examiner can recognize the difference between someone who is simply nervous and someone who is being intentionally deceitful. The important thing to remember is to disclose everything when completing your Personal History Statement initially, and then disclose everything to the examiner during your polygraph test.

Q *“What if I forgot to include something on my Personal History Statement?”*

A Anything you remember later can be added by submitting it to the Recruitment Office in writing up to two days before your polygraph appointment.



Q *“What if I remember something during the polygraph that I didn’t disclose in my Personal History Statement and didn’t tell the Recruitment Office about before my polygraph test?”*

A Tell the examiner all that you remember. They will make note of any additional information you provide and will include it in their report. It’s better to ensure you have a successful polygraph in terms of honesty rather than trying to hide something because you know you forgot to provide it initially. All additional information will be reviewed by Recruitment personnel and an assessment will be made whether you move forward in the process.

Q *“How should I prepare?”*

A There is not much you can do to prepare for the polygraph. If you have been truthful in providing recruiting personnel with full details prior to this point, you should have nothing to be concerned about. Get a good night’s rest, eat and take in plenty of fluids the day of your test.

Q *“Does the examiner decide if I’m successful or not?”*

A The role of the examiner is to assess the truthfulness of your responses during your test. The examiner does not indicate if you will be moving forward in the process.

A To have a successful test means exactly that – you have successfully completed the polygraph evaluation and the examiner has obtained conclusive results. The examiner will tell you if they were able to attain successful results which are based strictly on your honesty during the testing procedure.

A The examiner will forward a report of the results to the Recruitment Division, where the content of your report will be assessed and decision will be made whether you move forward in the process.