

REVISED EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

OCTOBER 13, 2023

EXAM TITLE: COMMUNICATIONS OPERATOR

EXAM CODE: 3FSAC

EXAM BASE: OPEN

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

FINAL FILING DATE: **CONTINUOUS (MULTIPLE CUT-OFF DATES*)**

The bulletin announcing the above examination has been amended as follows:

***The exam will now be given every six (6) months instead of every four (4) months. The November 30, 2023 cut-off date was cancelled. The July 30, 2024 cut-off date was extended to September 30, 2024.**

Dates printed on Mobile Bar Codes, such as the Quick Response (QR) Codes available at the USPS, are not considered Postmark dates for the purpose of determining timely filing of an application.

If using the United States Postal Service (USPS) for delivery, there is no guarantee that your application will be postmarked and arrive by the final filing date. If your application does not have a postmark and arrives after the final filing date, your application will not be accepted into the examination. Therefore, to ensure timely delivery of your application, it is recommended that you use either parcel service, or certified mail. Using one of these options will provide proof the application was sent prior to the final filing date.



COMMUNICATIONS OPERATOR 3FSAC

DEPARTMENT(S): Department of Forestry & Fire Protection
FINAL FILING DATE: Continuous (See cut-off dates below)
EXAM TYPE: OPEN
SALARY: \$4,090.00 - \$6,373.00
LOCATIONS: Statewide

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT & DRUG-FREE STATEMENTS

The State of California is an equal opportunity employer to all, regardless of age, ancestry, color, disability (mental and physical), exercising the right to family care and medical leave, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, medical condition, military or veteran status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religious creed, sex (includes pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and related medical conditions), and sexual orientation.

It is an objective of the State of California to achieve a drug-free state workplace. Any applicant for State employment will be expected to behave in accordance with this objective because the use of illegal drugs is inconsistent with the law of the state, the rules governing civil service, and the special trust placed in public servants.

FILING PERIOD

Final Filing Date: Continuous

The examination will be administered every **six (6)** months. The cut-off dates are as follows:

March 30, 2024

September 30, 2024

If your application is received after the cut-off date, it will be retained and considered for the next examination administration.

WHO CAN APPLY

Persons who meet the minimum qualifications of the classification, as stated on this examination bulletin.

Once you have taken the examination, you may not retake it for **six (6) months.*

SPECIAL TESTING ARRANGEMENTS

If you have a disability and need special testing arrangements, you **MUST** mark the appropriate box on the State application and submit the [Accommodation Request Form \(STD. 679\)](#) with your application. This can also be found on the California Department of Human Resources website.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this examination, please complete and return the following:

- [Examination/Employment Application \(STD.678\)](#) This can also be found on the California Department of Human Resources website. *You may submit your application by mail or in person.*
- [Supplemental Questionnaire](#) Please make sure to fill out this form completely and submit it with the Examination Application (STD.678). Applications submitted without this document may **not** be accepted into the examination.

SUBMIT BY MAIL OR IN-PERSON:

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
710 Riverpoint Court
West Sacramento, CA 95605
Attention: Examination Unit

DO NOT SUBMIT APPLICATIONS VIA E-mail

Applications postmarked or personally delivered after the cut-off date will be retained and considered for the next examination administration.

All applications must include "from" and "to" employment dates (month/day/year), time base, and applicable civil service class titles. Applications received without this information may be rejected.

PLEASE NOTE

Dates printed on Mobile Bar Codes, such as the Quick Response (QR) Codes available at the USPS, are not considered Postmark dates for the purpose of determining timely filing of an application.

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If using the United States Postal Service (USPS) for delivery, there is no guarantee that your application will be postmarked and arrive by the cut-off date. If your application does not have a postmark and arrives after the cut-off date, your application will not be accepted into the current administration. Your application will then be retained and considered for the next examination administration. To ensure timely receipt of your application packet, it is recommended that you use either parcel service, or certified mail. Using one of these options will provide proof the application was sent prior to the cut-off date.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

To obtain a position on the eligible list, applicants must receive a minimum rating of 70% on the examination. This exam will consist of the following:

PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION - WEIGHTED AT 100%

The performance examination consists of a computer-based test of multi-tasking ability under stress using CRITICAL software. Helpful information about the software can be found at: [CritiCall Test Descriptions](#). The examination will consist of a performance test weighted 100%.

Candidates will be provided: **CritiCall test link**.

Candidates will need the following: Access to internet, Keyboard, Mouse, Speakers/Headphones.

More information regarding the examination will be sent to the email address provided on your application.

Please ensure we have the correct email information on file

PLEASE NOTE: All exam questions are based on the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities listed in this bulletin and the [Communications Operator](#) classification specification, which is located on the CAL HR website. Use this information when preparing for this exam and retain this bulletin for your reference.

CANDIDATES WHO DO NOT COMPLETE THE PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION BEFORE THE TEST LINK EXPIRES WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education: Equivalent to completion of the 12th grade,

AND

EITHER I

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Experience: Six months of experience in the California State service performing the duties of a Dispatcher-Clerk,

OR II

Experience: One year of experience in dispatching work involving the operation of radio communications equipment/systems,

OR III

Experience: Two years of experience involving a substantial amount of direct and telephone contact with the public and the responsibility to perform numerous tasks simultaneously.

NOTE: Applicants MUST submit the Supplemental Questionnaire which specifies the percentage of time spent per week performing duties involving direct and telephone contact with the public.

ELIGIBLE INFORMATION

Successful candidates from this administration will be merged onto the current, existing eligibility list for the **Communications Operator** classification. Candidates' list eligibility will be abolished 12 months after it is established unless the needs of the Department warrant a change in this period. It is *recommended* candidates apply for this examination if one or more of the following apply:

- You are a Limited Term (LT) hire.
- You have not yet passed probation.
- You are a Temporary Appointment (TAU) hire.
- You are not on the current eligibility list.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION

Accepted applicants are required to have a Keyboard, Mouse, Speaker/headphone, and access to the internet to take this examination. Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Firefox, and Safari are compatible web browsers.

The CritiCall test link will **NOT** work with any mobile device running on a mobile operating system (Android or IOS).

Notice to Safari Users: Audio and video does not play automatically.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

This is the entry, working, and journey level for this series. Employees work under general supervision in a Communications Center following established policies and

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procedures to perform a variety of duties. Duties include operating multi-frequency/channel radio telephone systems and computer-aided transmitting and receiving equipment to receive calls from field units, telephones, or other sources; filling out dispatch logs or typing entries into computer terminals; receiving and transmitting reports of incidents and requests for assistance; answering telephone requests for information; relaying calls for emergency services vehicles, other law enforcement agencies, or other assistance requested by field units.

At the full journey level, employees work under direction and perform all the above and select receivers and transmitters and adjust volume controls; dispatch units or other equipment to specific points as required; provide information as requested or required by officers in the field; and act as a lead person.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

1. Active listening techniques to obtain accurate and detailed information.
2. The use of computers for entering information into a database, generating documents, and communicating with others.
3. The structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar to effectively convey information.
4. The geography of California to identify the location of topography, main highways, counties, and principle cities.
5. Alphanumeric sequences to input pertinent information.
6. Basic arithmetic.

Skill to:

1. Deal effectively and appropriately with frustrated, angry, or otherwise emotional persons over the telephone, radio, and in the workplace to obtain pertinent information.
 2. Effectively convey information verbally to relay information to appropriate parties.
 3. Exercise tact, courtesy, and patience in all contacts to maintain professional relationships.
 4. Read maps quickly and accurately to ensure precise dispatching and monitoring.
 5. Effectively convey written information in English at a 12th grade level or equivalent to produce work product.
 6. Use a computer to search the internet and/or database(s) to obtain necessary information needed for an effective job performance.
 7. Communicate in writing in a manner that is mindful of the needs of the audience for effective correspondence.
 8. Use various computer software and applications to convey information to others.
 9. Type 40 words per minute accurately using a keyboard to complete work in a
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timely manner.

10. Use a computer to create documents in Microsoft Office.

Ability to:

1. Perform multiple tasks simultaneously or in rapid sequence to operate and monitor a multitude of radio frequencies and a variety of highly technical communication systems and equipment.
2. Maintain composure under stress to exercise sound judgement in situations with a high consequence of error.
3. Shift back and forth between two or more activities or sources of information to conduct research, think critically, and multitask.
4. Enunciate clearly using a well-modulated voice for radio transmission.
5. Hear and identify the content of phone and radio transmissions in the presence of significant background noise.
6. Recognize when assistance is needed to know when to ask for support.
7. Work cooperatively with supervisors, peers, cooperators, and the general public to maintain good relationships with the Department.
8. Work independently with minimal supervision to be effective in a rapidly changing environment.
9. Reprioritize urgent assignments with short notice when new assignments are given.
10. Follow instructions precisely for an effective job performance.
11. Employ active listening to attain a more complete and accurate accounting of events by giving full attention to what other people are saying and voicing follow-up questions at appropriate times.
12. Work for long periods of time to ensure continuity of communication functions.
13. Think and act independently in order to react confidently, decisively, and quickly in emergency and non-emergency situations.
14. Function in a highly structured chain of command environment for a successful job performance.
15. Evaluate the content of a narrative or report to discern critical information from incoming calls.
16. Recognize the implications of new information to understand its impact on both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
17. Read written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents to determine their content.
18. Recall a variety of situations and retain accurate information to a level sufficient to document that information into the appropriate system of record.
19. Adapt to changing work patterns to satisfy existing job needs.
20. Recognize when something is wrong or likely to go wrong in order to prevent problems.
21. Type quickly and accurately for an effective job performance.
22. Complete work tasks thoroughly and with attention to detail to ensure accuracy.
23. Reduce complicated information to simple, understandable language and explain it to others.
24. Concentrate on a task over a period of time in order to complete high-priority

tasks without distractions.

25. Remain fair and unbiased when applying local, state, and federal laws, or department policies and procedures.
26. Utilize effective time management to prioritize workload.
27. Sit for long periods of time to perform job duties.
28. Identify complex problems and review related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
29. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternatives to reach better solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
30. Adjust future actions to adapt to the needs, expectations, or actions of others.
31. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
32. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions.
33. Think critically about alternatives by using logic and reasoning to judge the relative costs and benefits of potential actions.
34. Identify problems or issues which impact the progress of work projects or assignments.
35. Compare the similarities and differences among sets of letters, numbers, objects, pictures, or patterns to come to a conclusion.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE

Veterans' Preference will be granted for this examination, pursuant to Government Code section 18973.1, effective January 1, 2014 as follows: 1) Any veteran, widow or widower of a veteran, or spouse of a 100 percent disabled veteran, who achieves a passing score in an entrance examination, shall be ranked in the top rank of the resulting eligibility list. Any veteran who has been dishonorably discharged or released is not eligible for Veterans' Preference. 2) An entrance examination is defined, under the law, as any open competitive examination. And 3) Veterans' Preference is not granted once a person achieves permanent civil service status. Veteran status is verified by the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR). Directions to apply for Veterans' Preference are on the Veterans' Preference Application (Std. Form 1093), which is available at [CAL HR Veterans Information](#).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
(916) 894-9580

CALFIREexams@fire.ca.gov

TDD is Telecommunications Device for the Deaf and is reachable only from phones
Equipped with a TDD Device

1 (800) 735-2929 (TT/TDD) 1 (800) 735-2922 (Voice)

STS is Speech-to-Speech Service for persons with a speech disability and is
reachable at

1 (800) 854-7784 (California) or 1 (800) 947-8642 (Nationwide)

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GENERAL INFORMATION

For all examinations (with or without a written feature), it is the candidate's responsibility to contact the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, (916) 894-9580, three weeks after the cut-off/final filing date if he/she has not received a progress notification or notice to appear.

If a candidate's notice of oral interview or performance test fails to reach him/her three days prior to their scheduled appointment due to a verified postal error, he/she will be rescheduled upon written request.

Applications are available online at CalHR, local offices of the Employment Development Department and the testing Department on this job bulletin.

If you meet the requirements stated on this bulletin, you may take this examination, which is competitive. Possession of the entrance requirement does not assure a place on the eligible list. Your performance in the examination will be compared with the performance of the others who take this test, and all candidates who pass will be ranked according to their scores.

The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection reserves the right to revise the examination plan to better meet the needs of the service if the circumstances under which this examination was planned change. Such revision will be in accordance with civil service laws and rules and all competitors will be notified.

General Qualifications: Candidates must possess essential personal qualifications including integrity, initiative, dependability, good judgment, and ability to work cooperatively with others; and a state of health consistent with the ability to perform the assigned duties of the classification. A medical examination may be required. In open examinations, investigation may be made of employment records, and personal history and fingerprinting may be required.

Eligible Lists: Eligible lists established by competitive examination, regardless of date, must be used in the following order: 1) sub-divisional promotional, 2) Departmental promotional, 3) multi-Departmental promotional, 4) service-wide promotional, 5) Departmental open, 6) open. When there are two lists of the same kind, the older must be used first. Eligible lists will expire in one to four years unless otherwise stated on the bulletin.

If High School Equivalence is Required: Equivalence to completion of the 12th grade may be demonstrated in any one of the following ways: 1) passing the General Educational Development (GED) Test; 2) completion of 12 semester units of college work; 3) certification from the State Department of Education, a local school board, or high school authorities that the candidate is considered to have education equivalent to graduation from high school; 4) for clerical and accounting classes, substitution of business college work in place of high school on a year-for-year basis.

Confidentiality and Security: Pursuant to Government Code Sections 19680(c) and 19681(b) it is unlawful to copy and/or furnish confidential examination material for the purpose of either improving or injuring the chances of any person or to obtain examination questions or other examination material before, during, or after an examination. Every person violating these provisions is guilty of a misdemeanor, and adverse action will be pursued. This may result in the person being barred from competition in future examinations, withheld from certification lists, or cancellation of eligibility for employment in State civil service.

How to apply for Veterans' Preference: The California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) has information on how to apply for Veterans' Preference at [CAL HR Veterans Information](#), and the Application for Veterans' Preference Application for (CalHR 1093).