

Civil Service and Labor Committee Hearing: Optimizing the City Civil Service Exam System
Testimony of Chief Human Capital Officer & Deputy Commissioner Katrina Porter
February 27, 2024

Introduction

Good afternoon, Chair De La Rosa and members of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor. My name is Katrina Porter, and I am the Chief Human Capital Officer and Deputy Commissioner at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). I am joined today by my colleague, Sanford Cohen, DCAS General Counsel.

At DCAS, our commitment to equity, effectiveness, and sustainability guides our work providing City agencies with the resources they need to meet their missions, including offering civil service examinations so that agencies have qualified candidates to fill their vacancies.

With an emphasis on modernization and evolution, our agency has been laying the foundation to innovate, reimagine, and improve the civil service exam administration process. This work has been rooted in our core principles about civil service, building community and increasing equity and access. Over the years, we've opened testing centers in the communities, brought civil service applications online, reexamined credits that help level the playing field for job seekers including our nation's veterans, and we're even examining how we can reduce barriers to municipal employment through reassessing minimum qualification requirements for a huge swath of job titles citywide. We recognize these exams are more than a means to a job but provide New Yorkers from all walks of life a chance to build a purpose-driven career and earn a good paying salary – all while serving their city.

Within DCAS, our Bureau of Examinations manages Civil Service exams and oversees the certification of lists for use by more than 80 City agencies. The Bureau also ensures compliance with civil service rules and regulations regarding appointments made from those lists. And I'm happy to share that we are currently on target to open 225 exams for filing in Fiscal Year 24. On average over the last five fiscal years, DCAS has administered 160 exams per year to more than 93,000 candidates.

We adapt our exam offerings to meet the hiring needs of agencies. Much effort is also dedicated to provisional reduction and avoidance, which includes offering exams in titles with a high number of provisionals as well as titles without provisionals to ensure that there is always a pool of qualified candidates. After many years of working with City

agencies and labor unions, we ended 2023 in substantial compliance with State Civil Service laws regarding provisional appointments.

Moreover, we are incredibly proud of our work to bring our exams into the 21st century, where we have taken tremendous strides in modernizing the examination process. Gone are the days when civil service exam takers took tests with paper and pencil sitting in children's desks at public schools. Thanks to monumental work from our DCAS team, candidates can now apply for exams online using the Online Application System (OASys), which as of last year is also accessible on mobile phones and tablet devices. Candidates can also apply in-person at our Computer-based Testing and Application Centers – commonly known as CTACs – with locations accessible in all five boroughs. And DCAS continues to implement technological advancements where possible to streamline the application and exam process and improve the customer experience.

With that said, let me tell you a bit more about how DCAS is reimagining civil service to support the expanding needs of New Yorkers.

Reimagining Civil Service

We have five principles that guide our modernization efforts:

- Help City agencies fill their vacancies to ensure continuity of operations and services.
- Embrace modern, standardized processes to boost quality and flexibility.
- End costly, inefficient, and ineffective processes.
- Encourage data-enabled decision-making and out-of-the-box thinking.
- Promote engagement with agencies across the City.

We have implemented multiple initiatives and continue to look at opportunities to build upon these accomplishments.

DCAS has increasingly moved to paperless processes for exams. Multiple choice tests are offered at CTACs six days a week using a computerized testing system. Education and experience exams are completed in the OASys system. Both multiple choice and education and experience exams provide instant tentative results on-screen and by email. Appeals and protests are also now submitted and tracked in OASys. Invitations to exam events, communications, payment and waiver submissions, and notifications of results have all moved to digital access.

In addition to these public-facing components, we have also automated much of the work necessary to develop exams, including job analysis and the process to create and approve Notices of Examination.

In addition to these technology enhancements, DCAS is also looking at creative ways to streamline exam offerings. With the development of the NYC Bridge Exam, first piloted in FY22, candidates can apply for one exam, pay one application fee, and take a single test that can be used for multiple titles. We have continued to use the NYC Bridge Exam

each fiscal year since the pilot, with the next NYC Bridge Exam application period scheduled for June 2024.

Now, let me give you an overview of the civil service exam process.

Overview of Civil Service Exam Process

The City's civil service system is based on State constitutional mandates which require "merit and fitness" to be ascertained by competitive examination. Merit and fitness-based civil service exams have been the gold standard of good government practice for more than a century.

The City of New York has career opportunities in many civil service titles. Over 80% of our positions require an exam to be appointed on a permanent basis. These include titles in law enforcement, social services, administration, and technology, among others.

Exams are used to identify candidates who demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform in-title work. The two types of examinations are:

- **Open competitive exams**, which are available to anyone and include minimum qualification requirements listed on the Notice of Examination.
- **Promotional exams**, which are available only to permanent employees in titles listed as eligible in the Notice of Examination.

The result of an exam is the establishment of a civil service list. This list provides a qualified pool of candidates for City agencies to utilize and select from to fill jobs.

We are proud to administer New York City's civil service system and the role it plays in delivering services and providing a pathway to the middle-class. Today, the City's workforce of more than 300,000 is 58% female, 64% of color, and receives a median salary of just over \$80,000 annually. We are a sought-after employer, receiving nearly 120,000 applications for exams in FY23, and moving from exam administration to results in 219 days, well below the 290-day target in the Mayor's Management Report, and the lowest turnaround time in the most recent five fiscal years.

Next Steps

At DCAS, we are continuously looking at ways to improve exam-related processes. I'd like to highlight two areas currently under review.

First, revising Minimum Qualification Requirements or MQRs:

These are the minimum amounts of education or experience that must be met for a candidate to be considered for a position. Beginning in the Spring of 2023, we have reviewed 90 entry-level titles to determine which have qualifications that can be revised in order to expand the pool of eligible candidates and reduce barriers to employment

within City government without sacrificing quality. In many instances, we are using relevant work experience to substitute for educational requirements. To date, revised MQRs for 17 titles have been implemented and we continue to work with agency and union partners on others.

Second, increasing the use of the education and experience test:

This format makes sense when knowledge, skills, and abilities are demonstrated best through experience, education, and other credentials. This test format is currently available online, and can be completed with desktops, laptops, as well as mobile phones and tablet devices.

In 2022, DCAS kicked off the Computerized Testing Platform (CTP) project, which will allow us to build a modern test authoring and examination system to replace our current one which dates back to 2006. The new system will give DCAS staff more control over the exam development process, a more easily navigated system, and the ability to complete tasks faster. The new system will also provide our candidates with a more efficient and intuitive experience.

Once completed, this new system will allow us to begin exploring a completely online testing platform. However, online testing requires sophisticated software to author and assemble the exam, security features, and live proctors to augment Artificial Intelligence scans. Costs for online testing fluctuate depending on the exam, its duration, and the security components needed. On the plus side, consultant, staff, and space spending to offer these tests would be alleviated by having such a platform.

Conclusion

I hope this overview has provided you with an understanding of the City's civil service examination process, and our ongoing efforts to think outside the box and use technology to create a more efficient and modern system.

Thank you again to the Committee and the Council for this opportunity to speak today, I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

[REDACTED]

From: Kevin Alore <kevin.alore@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:28 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Comittee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

I would like to express the negative impact of the unprecedented scoring for the FDNY Lieutenants Exam.

After studying for over a year for this test (logging nearly 2,000 hours of study time), DCAS chose to unilaterally change the scoring metric and further delay my career goals. It has now been over a year since I took this exam and there is still not an accurate list generated, nor is there any communication or effort shown from DCAS to fix the problem.

Not only did DCAS take nearly a year to create an initial flawed list (based on 85/15 scoring), they took even more valuable time away from my career to create a second flawed list (not assigning 1 point to each question for a 100 question test). This manipulation of the exam scoring caused me to drop nearly 100 names and cost me and many other devoted members even more valuable time.

The incorrect scoring that DCAS applied will now cause my promotion to be delayed by yet another entire year (and possibly even more). This has a great impact on being able to sit for the next promotional exam (Captain) and could upend what I anticipated being an ambitious career to one day be a Chief and serve the City of New York to the best of my ability.

It is very disheartening to put this much effort into a civil service exam, hoping to be a leader in the organization of the FDNY, only to have DCAS frivolously manipulate the scoring and severely negatively impact my career.

I implore anyone with authority on this matter to make this right and hopefully salvage both mine and many other devoted members' careers. It is imperative that the promotional list is created based off of the scoring expected according to the notice of examination.

Please do not allow this oversight by DCAS to be accepted. Both myself and hundreds of other members sacrificed a great deal of our time and family life to better ourselves and the FDNY.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Alore

Kevin Alore
B.S. Supply Chain & Information Systems
The Pennsylvania State University | 2014


Kevin.Alore@gmail.com

[REDACTED]

From: AJ Nieves <anieves27@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 10:15 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FDNY LT PROMO

[REDACTED]

Subject: Urgent Request for Prompt Release of Promotional Exam Results

Dear DCAS NYC Officials, I am writing to express my deep frustration and disappointment regarding the prolonged delay in the release of the results for the promotional exam I undertook.

As a dedicated candidate who invested three years of intensive study and sacrificed personal relationships and time for this endeavor, I find it distressing that the outcome is still pending without any transparent explanation for the delay.

The pursuit of becoming an FDNY lieutenant has been my unwavering ambition, and I devoted countless hours to preparing for and excelling in this crucial examination. Regrettably, the extended uncertainty surrounding the results has left me feeling as though my life and aspirations are in limbo, held captive by circumstances beyond my control.

I am extending my lease month to month to month, waiting to pivot myself to live close to where I will eventually be a Lieutenant. I am waiting to have a child with my fiance to make sure we have the money to be able to provide comfortably for my future family, I've been stuck stagnant for 11 years in this department without the chance of promotion, delayed continuously because of COVID and now unexplained grading.

If this is about diversity I am a Manhattan born Puerto Rican born of a single mother. I am #27 on this list and I did the work, why is my life collateral damage to politics?

I implore you to expedite the process of releasing the exam results so that individuals like myself can progress towards achieving our dreams and contributing meaningfully to the FDNY.

Transparency and timely communication regarding the status of the assessment are paramount in fostering trust and respect within the candidate community and the citizens of New York City.

Your swift attention to this matter would not only alleviate the anxieties of many dedicated candidates but also pave the way for deserving individuals to advance in their careers within the department.

I urge you to provide clarity and closure on this issue so that I can move forward with confidence in pursuit of my lifelong goal of serving as an FDNY lieutenant.

Thank you for your understanding and prompt action in resolving this pressing concern.

Sincerely,
STILL FDNY Firefighter Abad Nieves

Abel Collado
Colladoabel3@gmail.com

To the members of the New York City Council,

I am writing to bring to your attention a matter of grave concern regarding the recent FDNY promotional Lieutenant exam. It has come to my attention, and that of many other firefighters, that this exam has been scored incorrectly not once, but twice by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). The significance of this exam cannot be overstated. Many dedicated firefighters, including myself, invested significant time and effort into studying for this crucial step in our careers. The results of this exam hold the key to advancing in rank within the FDNY, a goal that many of us have been diligently working towards.

The fact that the exam has been scored incorrectly not once, but twice, is deeply troubling. This egregious error by DCAS has the potential to have detrimental effects on the careers of numerous firefighters. The uncertainty and lack of clarity surrounding the accuracy of the exam results have caused widespread anxiety and frustration among those who took the exam. Furthermore, the repercussions of these errors extend far beyond individual firefighters. They have the potential to disrupt the functioning of the FDNY as a whole, as promotions are essential for maintaining the chain of command and ensuring the effective operation of the department.

I urge the New York City Council to thoroughly investigate this matter and hold DCAS accountable for their errors. It is imperative that steps are taken to rectify this situation swiftly and ensure that the correct exam results are provided to all affected firefighters. As a Hispanic individual, I am deeply disappointed by this turn of events. The curve scoring system implemented by DCAS has disproportionately affected individuals like myself and others. Without this curve, I have a fair chance of being promoted to the position of Lieutenant. However, with the implementation of the curve scoring system, my chances of promotion have been significantly diminished, if not entirely eliminated. Thank you for your attention to this matter. The firefighters of New York City deserve fair and accurate assessment processes that reflect their dedication and commitment to serving the public.

Sincerely,

Abel Collado

February 27th, 2024

Written Testimony of Allen MacSaveny regarding the FDNY Lieutenant Exam

Appointed 1/27/14

Current List Number 255

Hello, I was advised that it would be helpful to share my testimony regarding the FDNY Lieutenants Exam that was administered in December of 2022. This is just my personal story regarding preparing, hoping and waiting for the results of this exam.

This exam was originally scheduled for May of 2020, and obviously had to be delayed due to the pandemic. I started studying in 2019 in preparation for this test, and continued to study throughout the pandemic, to make sure I stayed prepared for the test, whenever the makeup date would be.

Once the new date was announced I ramped up studying, knowing that this would be my one chance to get promoted and start to hopefully move ahead with my career, and I spent countless hours over several years to achieve this goal. Time is finite and mutually exclusive, so all of these hours that could have been spent with family and friends I instead invested into this test. It saddens me to think of the moments I sacrificed in order to study, but I kept telling myself that it would be worth it in the long run. In total it ended up being almost four years of studying.

Now it has been 15 months since taking a 100-question multiple choice test, and I am still unsure of how it was scored, what type of curve is being used, and there is still no timetable for when promotions will even start. It is a pretty horrible feeling having your entire career and future hang in the balance, all while receiving no real transparency as to why promotions off this list haven't commenced.

I hope this issue can be resolved soon, and I appreciate you taking time to read my concerns.

Sincerely

Allen MacSaveny

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Anthony J. Schiavo; I'm a member of the FDNY and I'm writing to discuss the issues regarding the FDNY Lieutenant Promotion exam, as discussed in the February 27th meeting.

I and my fellow test takers have all been negatively impacted by the grading process that DCAS is using for this exam. It seems as though DCAS has decided to arbitrarily use a curve system and possibly make certain questions worth more or less depending on how many test takers got the question correct or not.

Neither option were ever mentioned on our notice of exam as the method that would be employed to grade this exam. Furthermore it seems incredibly odd that a multiple choice question can be worth anything other than 1 point if we chose correctly or 0 points if we were wrong.

Not only is this scoring process hard to grasp but the curve that seems to have been implemented is, frankly, maddening.

I know of a firefighter who scored a 74 on this exam, he has been on the fire department for one year longer than I have. He also has a few awards that can get him extra points on this exam.

All this is fine.

The issue I have with this is that I scored a 90 on this exam, before any seniority and awards were calculated, and now this person, with his 74%, one year of seniority and 3 awards, has seemingly beat my 90%. This person has leaped 40-50 names ahead of me on the proposed list DCAS has put out.

How does this make sense or resemble anything close to fair?

Personally I spent over 3 years studying. I spent hundreds, if not thousands, on materials to study. I, and other people who scored 90 or above, didn't go on trips or out for an enjoyable evening with friends, we studied.

My family and friends all worried about me and my mental health as I studied, because of the lack of information about when the exam would be once Covid delayed it. Myself and other examinees just studied, seemingly without end.

I put in the work and I'm proud of my 90. I accept that people with more time in the Fire Department would get "help" on their score based on the method described in our notice of exam.

This curve is insane.

I can't fathom how people who scored so much less than I did, because there are more than just the one example I've provided, and who should only have fractions of a point added to their score, based on their awards, are able to so utterly and completely destroy my hard earned 90.

I, and all my other examinees, demand DCAS be transparent with how they've scored this exam. Also we demand that they score this exam as they said it would be on our Notice of Exam.

Fire fighting is an insanely dangerous job. Both fire fighters and fire officers are required to know a lot about a great many topics. Officers are required to know that much more as they will be making the initial decisions that affect the lives of the public and their Fire Fighters. I do not want an Officer leading me who only got the job because of some "curve" when they did not put in the work and do not know what they need to know. The City should only want people in leadership positions within the FDNY who have put in the hard work. Peoples lives, civilian and Fire Fighter alike, depend on people in roles they are qualified to hold.

[REDACTED]

From: Assem Elghaziri <assemghaziri@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 3:16 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm civil verbose and labor committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may inquire,
My name is Assem ElGhaziri with the FDNY. I am writing to address my concern and frustration with the last lieutenants exam administered by DCAS. Their unforthcoming tactics in scoring the grade are inexcusable to say the least. First they came out with a list that had the wrong senior, then a "curve" and now this matter of "band" scoring. None of these things were stated on the NOE. Please do whatever is in your power to get them to score the test traditionally as we have done for decades. Lastly I ask you how you would feel if you studied hard, took a test in school and your teacher graded it in a way that put someone who didn't even get a passing grade ahead of you. This is utterly ridiculous. Thank you for your time in advance.
Stay Cool , Assem El Ghaziri

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Benedict Jacobellis. In January 2014, I became a Firefighter and after the FDNY academy I was assigned to Engine 28/Ladder 11 in Alphabet City. I am a lifelong resident of Staten Island. My parents were both NYC Special Education Teachers for 30+ years. They stressed to me the importance of civil service.

While in college I took FDNY entrance Exam #6019. I received a grade in the high 90's and was excited about the possibility of becoming a Firefighter. Unfortunately, due to a lawsuit Exam #6019 was deemed invalid. I would've been hired off Exam #6019.

Instead of being hired as a Firefighter, I graduated with a BBA and MBA in Finance and Investments from CUNY Baruch and worked Full Time in Finance. In 2012 I took FDNY entrance Exam #2000. Again, I scored in the high 90's. My list number was good enough to put me in the first FDNY Academy class in 2014.

I was thrilled to be hired off Exam #2000. However, due to the previous exam being thrown out I was now in a different retirement tier. My current Tier puts my retirement at a significant disadvantage compared to the Tier I should have been hired into.

Once I was assigned to the Firehouse I tried to learn as much as possible. I would constantly read the Fire Department's Standard Operating Procedures and Manuals to gain clarity, and to become a better Firefighter. Eventually I realized this material that I was constantly reviewing was the same material that needed to be mastered to become a Lieutenant.

On September 16th, 2018 I officially began studying for the FDNY Lieutenant Exam by attending a Study Class with my peers. The FDNY Lieutenant Exam was tentatively going to be offered in the Winter of 2019, or the Spring of 2020. On March 4th, 2020, I signed up for FDNY Lieutenant Exam #569, which was going to be offered in May 2020. Unfortunately, we suffered a worldwide pandemic and this test was put on hold. In preparing for this exam I estimate I spent over 1,000 hours studying. These hours spent studying were time away from my family, obligations, and hobbies. I was fully invested in my future.

After the pandemic was over, I resumed my studying efforts heavily at the end of 2021. FDNY Lieutenant Exam #569 was going to be held on 12/14/2022. Mind you, I began studying for this exam on September 16th, 2018 (with one short break due to Covid). In 2021 and 2022, I studied for approximately 1,500 hours. Again, this was a tremendous sacrifice for my young expanding family.

FDNY Lieutenant Exam #569 was on a computer, given at the Jacob Javits. When I was going to CUNY Baruch College every time an exam was given on a computer, I received my results immediately. When I was preparing to enroll in graduate school, I had to take the GMAT. At the GMAT testing site, once I finished the exam, and hit submit, I received my unofficial results. These results were then confirmed over the next few days, and shortly after I received my official GMAT results.

Why did we not receive the results of the FDNY Lieutenant Exam immediately? In fact, today is 443 days since I took Exam #569. I am still unsure of my score. I received a 96 on FDNY Lieutenant Exam #569. I believe I received an additional point from a protested question, which would give me a 97. However, the protested questions have not officially been released.

I invested almost 2,5000 hours into becoming an FDNY Lieutenant. Preparing for the FDNY Lieutenant Exam was a greater challenge for me then competing college and graduate school.

Unfortunately, today I am questioning if my effort was worth the sacrifice. On Exam #569, I am list number #52 out of #1,678. I believe I should be around #40 due to my score and seniority factors. Traditionally in the FDNY, the first 60 people on the Lieutenant's list are promoted in the first class. I should've been an FDNY Lieutenant already. I wonder if I'll ever become an FDNY Lieutenant. I don't even know my official score yet. I don't even know if my list number is correct. The last communication I received from DCAS was on October 16th, 2023. There is no transparency from DCAS. What is taking so long? When will this list become official? Why are people who failed the exam on the list?

In conclusion, this whole testing cycle has been a disaster. I began studying for this exam on September 16th, 2018. I took the FDNY Lieutenant Exam #569 on December 14th, 2022. Today, March 1st, 2024 I am still unsure of my grade. Many of my colleagues within the FDNY invested a considerable amount of time in preparation for Exam #569. We hope there is someone out there that can make this right and understand how much effort goes into preparing for this exam. DCAS, FDNY, NYC and anyone else involved should all be ashamed. If this was academia, or private business we would've had our scores immediately. Instead, 443 days of uncertainty and counting.....

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ben Jacobellis

██████████

Benedict.Jacobellis@gmail.com

[REDACTED]

From: Brandon Coons <b2coons@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 8:45 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FDNY lieutenants Exam

[REDACTED]

I am writing to inform you that I sacrificed 3 years of my life studying and preparing for this examination. Originally I was told I was 1 of 900 who passed outa the 4,000 who took the exam. I was 700 in the list and likely to get promoted.

Than I find out that DCAS decided to curve the list. 25 points were given correct answers which I originally got correct. I dropped 117 names to 817 which has typically been past the cut off.

The NOE clearly states you must get a 70 to pass. I am very upset over this and feel wronged.

Thanks for all that you do. I know it's a tireless and tough job you guys take on.

Thank you,
Brandon Coons
Real Estate Salesperson
Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty
[350 National Blvd. Suite 2-E](#)
[Long Beach, NY 11561](#)
o. 516.670.1700

[REDACTED]

Download My Agent App to search all Long Island and Queens: <https://app.sir.com/sirbrandoncoons>

From: Brandon Giangaspro <bgiangaspro@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 8:59 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm civil service and labor committee

Wanted to give ny testimony about the Lt exam test.. Dcas did not grade it the way it was suppose to be graded, the way all previous promotion exams in the fdny has been graded.. I studied for 3 years and sacrificed a lot of time with my family, that day paid off as I scored a 91. But then the worst case imaginable happened and they did not grade the test right. I was number 240 on the mock list, I gained 2 more points from the questions overturned... I thought for sure I would be close or under 200. But instead the list that came out had me at 308.. I studied so hard to get wet promoted and study for captain. List number I should be I would make it to take the captain test, list number on the wrong Dcas list I will not make it.. I urge you to force dcas the grade the test the correct way so everyone who put in the hard work gets what they deserve

[REDACTED]

From: Brendan Mulligan <brendanmulligan19@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 1:37 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Hello, my name is Brendan Mulligan, and I work with the FDNY. I'm emailing today in regard to the grading of the FDNY Lt exam. I scored a 79/100 on the exam, and with seniority and merit points totaling 81.563 my score averaged (50/50) to a 80.282. On the "Mock Lt. List" which is historically accurate to a few names, I found myself to be number 650. However, on the two lists that have been filed since, my list number has dropped to 747, and then to 777. My score also jumped from an 80.28 to an 84.22. I'm submitting this information to ask for transparency on how the test was graded. I had originally hoped that I would be able to take the next Captains exam, but with the holdup of this list being officially established and my list number dropping 120 names, that doesn't seem to be a possibility anymore. I appreciate everyone working so hard to ensure accurate results, and to provide transparency to the grading process. Thank you for your time.
Brendan Mulligan

[REDACTED]

From: Brian Hooghuis <brian.hooghuis@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:57 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

I am one of the 4,000 plus members who took the FDNY Lieutenant promotion exam (0569) in December 2022. Historically these exams are offered once every four years and have been extremely competitive. As a result, many firefighters study for years leading up to these tests, because he/she may only be eligible for two or three promotional exams in their careers.

Since taking the exam in 2022, we have not seen the questions, answer key, or accepted protests for the test. Additionally, members have seen both their scores and/or list numbers published by DCAS changed without any communication. The lack of transparency is disheartening for the many members who spent countless hours preparing for a test that could change their career trajectories.

It appears that the exam was scored on a curve, or using a method not consistent with the Notice of Examination. The FDNY has always used a 50/50 scoring method for its exams, weighing your written test score and seniority equally.

Captain Michael Tracy, the representative for the UFOA , raised this issue at the February 27, 2024 meeting of the Civil Service and Labor Committee, and was told that it would be discussed "offline." While encouraging that it appears to be moving toward a resolution that can start the promotion process, not addressing any of our concerns in a public form or allowing any further discussion to be recorded is frustrating for members who have been waiting almost four years (the original exam was scheduled for May 2020 but delayed due to COVID) for a promotional list to be established.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to further discussion and ultimately resolution on the scoring of our promotional exam.

--
Brian Hooghuis
FDNY - Ladder 22
FDNY LT EXAM 0569 List #148

Brian Mahoney
Firefighter-Engine 73
February 29,2024

Good evening,

I would like to start off by saying thank you for taking the time to address our issues with the grading of the Lieutenants exam. This is a frustrating time for all involved and I hope we can get to a resolution that benefits the candidates for lieutenant, DCAS and most importantly the citizens of this city.

Being a younger member with only 6 years on this job, I have learned a tremendous amount from my bosses about what it takes to be a leader. I have witnessed these officers make split second decisions that have put my coworkers in prime position to extinguish fires, extricate badly injured citizens from cars, mitigate smaller emergencies and treat the public with care. Being an officers means you have to lead your Men and women into some of the worst situations imaginable while simultaneously making sure everyone comes home. I have also witnessed these officers manage certain problems with the public in a respectable manner such as summons, violations and in unacceptable workmanship to keep both the public and members safe.

Watching these officers has inspired me to become a leader of men and women myself. I took the pledge to do whatever is necessary in a small amount of time to accomplish this. I would also be remiss not to mention the positive affect this would have on my family financially. I have a two-year-old son who I live an breathe for and I know that promoting will allow me to provide the very best life that he deserves.

With these factors in mind, I decided to embark on this journey to advance my career. I decided to do this much later than most guys on this list , and started from scratch just 8 months before the exam. Due to my late start, I had to do double the amount of studying daily to catch up and get through thousands of pages of material. Like many others in my position, I did this while raising a one year old, working mandated overtime shifts to go along with my scheduled work schedule.

While this brought me to extreme exhaustion, the process was especially hard on my girlfriend who was also a new mother. When she was free, she would take over for me while I buried my head in a book for hours on end. Once again, like many people on this list, families suffered and made sacrifices for this exam.

What we ask for is a fair grading system. The traditional scoring system. We were told in the NOE that 70% was passing and after that your seniority and accolades would kick in. I have zero issue with grading system encompassing seniority. A member with more seniority has more experience on the fireground than I do, and they are deserving of those points. However, a member that has more time than me who did not attain a passing grade should not be higher than those that passed. For instance, there is a member in a neighboring firehouse who is not interested in becoming the lieutenant but took the test "just to take it." He admitted to studying four nights before the exam. He has full seniority and wrote a 55%. I wrote an 81%. With the grading policy in place, he ended up with a 79%. Simple math tells us that I knew more than 25% more of the material than he did. This is flat out not fair and potentially dangerous. While I realize I'm far from the top of the list, I do feel I'm more than qualified for this position and hope that this is corrected to give those who prepared the fair grading that we deserve. The changes in this grading system have dropped me from list number 700 to list number 775, which puts me in jeopardy of getting the promotion. Please do what's right and grade the exam the way it's been graded in the past.

Thank for your time.

-Brian F Mahoney

[REDACTED]

From: Chris Otten <eiz3putter@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:42 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may be concerned,

Thank you for hearing our written testimony about FDNY Lieutenant's List #0569. No matter what side of the list the member is on, we have been impacted by the impasse on our list. From the beginning of the illustrious history, the fire department has prided itself on rising to the occasion time and time again.

I can speak for myself, the impasse between the City, DCAS and the FDNY has caused a palpable feeling of discouragement and bewilderment throughout the ranks and within ourselves. EVERY FDNY promotional test has been graded on a 50-50 seniority-written scale. Furthermore, every correct answer would earn you 1 point with nothing gained for an incorrect score. The reasoning for this is a simple one. In serving the people of NYC, we don't get the opportunity to be wrong. If we're wrong, people (civilians and firefighters alike) can get hurt or perish. Firefighters not only learn from our written books (SOPs, training guides, safety bulletins, etc) but from real life experience at fires and emergencies. This leads to the fair 50-50 grading split.

The impasse has created a great mental hardship on myself. Not so much that I'm in a rush to be promoted, but on the outside in my personal life. I'm getting married in April and the constant guessing game of when/if I will be promoted has really caused undue stress in an already stressful time personally and professionally. The lack of answers from DCAS also has added to the stress of this whole process.

I appreciate the City Council hearing our side of the frustration and experience from the members.

FF Chris Otten
Ladder 13
Written Score 95

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Chris Dignes <chris.dignes@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 10:07 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DCAS and FDNY promotional exam #0569

[REDACTED]

My name's Christian Dignes and I took FDNY promotional exam #0569 in December of 2022. I'm also a member of Manhattan's Community Board 2 and, as such, none of the opinions herein reflect the opinion of that board.

When the FDNY lost 343 members on September 11th, 2001, it spurred fundamental departmental change that hasn't stopped since that day. Promotional exams afterward were not only drastically needed but also pushed through with expediency to refill leadership ranks that had been devastated. And since those promotional exams were after 2001 and firefighters don't earn their pension until they've worked 20 years (depending upon their pension tier), we're finally starting to see more officers start to retire en masse.

There was a hiring freeze starting in 2007 when the United States brought a discrimination lawsuit against the department. As a result, the FDNY wasn't able to start hiring again until 2014. Normal hiring cycles are usually 4 years for both firefighters and promotional exams in order to keep up with what's generally a regular accumulation of FDNY retirements. That said, retirements since 9/11 have been anything but regular due to a large array of unusual cancers for first responders.

Essentially, hiring in 2014 restarted with some of the most diverse classes in FDNY history. However, it also meant that the diversity of those classes wouldn't translate to leadership positions via promotional exams until 2020. As we all know, Covid-19 wrecked everyone's 2020 and caused another 2-year delay for the promotional exam that basically kept the remedy sought and so desperately needed in 2007 from even *starting* for leadership positions until *15 years* later.

The Fire Department is overdue. We have the people, we have the leadership, we have the talent, and we have the solutions, but DCAS came to us and told us we don't know how to write a test about firefighting so they have to step in. Every person who walked into that test in December 2022 studied our firefighting books diligently, religiously, and thoroughly (perhaps except the people who didn't pass the test).

For our department, that has always meant the same thing: 100 questions for 100 points, points below 70 constitute a failed test, a seniority system dependent upon time served in the FDNY, and the expectation that we would know our grades (and maybe even our list number) within 12 months. Instead, we're now here almost a full 15 months later and DCAS has invented new rules.

I got an 83 on the test and I'm white, but I'm not testifying for me. I know people at the top and at the bottom of the list. A lot of them are more diverse than me. A lot of them deserve a promotion more than me. A lot of them work harder than me *every day*. But every single one of us who got at least a 70 deserves to shape this Fire

Department for the better. Not because we're owed anything, but because we love this job and want to keep making it *and the city* better.

Whether for diversity or diversity of thought, it's time to start promoting according to preexisting rules. For example, the Notice of Examination itself specified that list numbers would be generated from 50% test score and 50% seniority, then DCAS decided for no apparent reason to use 85% test score and 15% seniority. If anything, DCAS owes us the same fairness that they have given every other officer who's been promoted before us.

The FDNY has to keep up with the times, and DCAS is hamstringing the FDNY right now by making up rules that don't apply to FDNY promotional exams.

Thank you for your time,

Chris Dignes
Ladder 18

Distinguished Members on the Committee on Civil Service and Labor,

My name is Christopher Andersen. I'm currently a firefighter with the FDNY, and I'm waiting on a promotion to Lieutenant. This promotion, unfortunately, has been stymied by a dispute with DCAS and the FDNY. I'm asking for the Committee's help in resolving this issue that has affected many of our members.

I first started studying for the Lieutenant's test in the Fall of 2018. Our test is a very competitive test, and many firefighters, in order to assure themselves a spot at the top of the list, will start studying a couple years in advance of the test. I myself studied a couple hours a week from the Fall of 2018 until the Fall of 2019. At this time, I increased the number of hours I studied from a few hours a week to a few hours a day, peaking with studying approximately five hours a day in March of 2020. That's when the test, set to take place in May of 2020, was delayed due to the extraordinary circumstances of Covid.

The test was ultimately delayed until December of 2022— causing myself and many other firefighters to have to go through the same process. Study a few hours a week, until six months out from the test, and then study upwards of four hours a day until the test. Three months out from the test, I was studying six to eight hours a day. My fiancée, a lawyer, noted that we study harder for this test than lawyers do for the bar examination.

And I don't regret a single moment of studying. Being a firefighter for the FDNY is challenging. We must possess knowledge related to a variety of circumstances— from building construction to Con-ed substations to steam pipe explosions— and be able to recall this knowledge instantly, and make life and death split second decisions based on this knowledge. For the safety of the citizens of New York City, the Committee would hope that many firefighters took this level of care to know their job well.

Unfortunately, DCAS has stymied this process and devalued all of this hard work. Beyond not being transparent as to how they calculated the last list they issued— I tried myself to reverse engineer their formula and failed— DCAS unilaterally curved our list. Our Notice of Examination had the following information on the scoring of the test:

The multiple-choice test will be given at a computer terminal. A score of at least 70% is required to pass this test. Your score on this test will determine 50% of your final score. Your seniority and awards will determine the remaining 50%. You must pass the multiple choice test to have your Seniority and Departmental Awards and, if applicable, Veterans' Preference credited.¹

However, many members who received failing grades— those with scores in the low 60s— found themselves on the list. DCAS has not given us any answers as to how that could have taken place.

We ask that the committee push for transparency with DCAS and ask for traditional scoring. To curve our tests means that DCAS will cripple the FDNY's culture of knowledge and studying, and put citizens of NYC at risk with less qualified and knowledgeable lieutenants in charge. This

¹ <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dcas/downloads/pdf/noes/20200569000.pdf>

process has also further delayed promoting members of the FDNY as it grows more and more diverse.²

I would like to thank the Committee for their time.

Christopher Andersen

² <https://ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2021/11/23/fdny-racial-demographics-more-diverse-in-recent-years>

[REDACTED]

From: Christopher Rossi <christopher.rossi10@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 2:04 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. With all due respect, some of my frustrations are cited in the memo below, they portray the passion for my career and feelings of resentment I have in regards to how this process has played out for myself along with all other Lieutenant candidates.

April 18, 2017 - A very special day for myself, along with 303 other probationary firefighters who had successfully graduated from the Fire Academy. I was thrilled to begin my career as one New York's Bravest.

June 1, 2017 - My very first fire, in the Dyker Heights section of Brooklyn. It was at this operation that the entire outlook of my career changed. I was lucky enough to be put into the position to assist the Lin family on this early morning; a mother and two children trapped in the basement of a two story multiple dwelling engulfed in flames. It was after this fire I knew that studying and becoming the best fire officer I could be was a top priority for myself. Myself and another probationary firefighter were lead into an inferno with an accomplished and experienced Captain who made us feel nothing but sage during the entire fire. I immediately started studying the extremely vast and complex books of the FDNY in hopes of being promoted to Lieutenant one day.

December 14, 2022 - The FDNY lieutenants exam was given after numerous delays, I was lucky enough to score a 95/100 on the exam after years of studying. Starting and stopping multiple times due to the on again, off again scheduling of the exam due to Covid-19 which was already a very rough time for me after losing my mother to Covid-19.

Today - I sit here and write this note completely repulsed with the City of New York, DCAS, and the FDNY. The fire, passion, and desire to strive to be the best I can be is dwindling away due to the lack of transparency, and neglect every single agency has had throughout this entire process. The delay in promotions involves much more than allowing the department to meet staffing needs. The delay and carelessness has crushed morale throughout every rank. The sacrifices of time, energy, and stress members put themselves through on their own time to better themselves and the FDNY is being overlooked tremendously.

After over 1 year of speculation and awaiting a final raw grade and true list number, multiple scoring lists have been compiled with the latest list dropping me 101 names from list number 123 to 224. How was the exam graded? Why have several changes been made to the scoring rubric used for the exam? How hard is it to score a test of out 100 multiple choice questions?

I feel aggravated for investing my time and energy into this process. Perhaps the individuals in charge will for once think of the greater good of the members involved, the citizens of New York City, and arguably one of the greatest agencies on the planet, the FDNY.

Sincerely,

Christopher Rossi

L-149

[REDACTED]

From: Chris Ryan <rhyno1723@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 10:11 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee)

[REDACTED]

Good evening my name is Christopher Ryan. I am a NYC FDNY firefighter and have been negatively impacted by the handling of the most recent FDNY Lieutenant's exam. I have been employed by the city of New York for almost 12 years and with the FDNY for almost 9 years and this has been my first opportunity to take a promotional exam. I was excited to have the opportunity to advance my career but feel very discouraged now due to how this whole process has gone. I studied hard got a passing score and landed in a spot that put me in a good place to get promoted but that seems like it could be held up even more so than it already has been. I ask you to please be transparent and fair when grading this exam. Hundreds of us who took this exam dedicated countless hours away from our family to pass this exam in order to further our career and it has felt like it was all for nothing as it's been 15 months and we still can't even get a proper list established. Please try to correct to this quickly and fairly so we can continue to serve this city and have faith in the civil service test system. Thank you for your time.

Christopher Ryan
FDNY ladder company 138

To the members of the New York City Council,

I am writing this letter to make members aware of the current situation going on with the FDNY Lt exam 0569. This test was given in December of 2022, and almost 15 months later we have yet to see an accurate list. DCAS has come out with 2 different lists both with incorrect data and an apparent “curve” that was not discussed on the notice of examination. Not only is this frustrating for the members that dedicated years to studying but this curve is dangerous to the people of New York City and the future of the FDNY.

For those of you that aren't aware of how the FDNY promotional test is given; the test is offered every 4 years and members spend countless hours studying for a chance to be promoted to the higher ranks of the FDNY. When I say countless hours, I mean years of dedication and sacrifice. Members give up time with their families, kids, friends, vacations, and monetary obligations (i.e overtime and second jobs) to name a few. The amount of information that is needed to be read and understood is tremendous (about 15 2-inch binders filled with information), and the dedication members put towards studying is the type of dedication that is needed to safely lead men and women into dangerous situations and to protect the people of NYC.

When you take the job as a firefighter in the FDNY, you are told of all the opportunities individuals have in order to better the job as well as better themselves, but apparently this has been halted due to DCAS lack of transparency in the matter. You are told in proby school how much time it takes to study for exams and how much time it takes to be a master of your craft. DCAS lack of transparency is not only frustrating for members on the list but this is a public safety threat for the people of NYC.

New York City Council, I strongly urge you to investigate this matter further and to hold DCAS accountable for the lack of transparency in this matter. Not only is this process unfair for the members on the list but also unfair for the future of the FDNY “The Greatest Fire Dept in the World” as well as the residents of New York City.

Sincerely,
FF Connor Williams

From: Fripp, Constance (FDNY) <Constance.Fripp@fdny.nyc.gov>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:40 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committeep

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Constance Fripp and I am a firefighter with the Fire Department of the City of New York. I am writing this letter to express my intense disappointment and frustration regarding the delays and lack of transparency in establishing the promotional list for the FDNY Lieutenant exam #0569. This ongoing uncertainty is not only hindering my personal career advancement but also impacting the morale of countless dedicated firefighters who go to work and put their lives on the line everyday and have been patiently awaiting the list to be established.

As a minority female firefighter, I have faced numerous challenges and barriers throughout my career, yet I have persevered with the hope of achieving higher ranks within the FDNY. However, the prolonged delay in establishing the promotional list for exam #0569 has dashed those hopes and left me feeling disheartened and undervalued.

The lack of transparency surrounding this process only compounds the frustration felt by myself and my fellow firefighters. Without clear communication from DCAS to the FDNY, we are left in the dark regarding the status of our exam list numbers and what steps should be taken next to ensure our career advancement.

Additionally, the delay in promotions resulting from the delay in establishing the promotional list has significant consequences for the advancement of minority and female firefighters within the department. It perpetuates systemic inequalities, undermines efforts to promote diversity and inclusion and risks further alienating minority firefighters within the department who have been convinced the process would be fair and transparent.

I urge you to prioritize transparency and open lines of communication between DCAS and the FDNY to restore the morale of firefighters and provide clarity regarding the promotional process. By doing so, you will not only demonstrate a commitment to fairness and equity but also empower minority and female firefighters to pursue their career goals with confidence and determination.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I implore you to take swift and decisive action to address these concerns and ensure a fair and transparent promotional process for all members of the FDNY.

Sincerely,

Firefighter Constance Fripp
FDNY Engine 283
Brownsville, Brooklyn
[REDACTED]

2/27/2024

Good Morning,

My name is Daniel Cronin and I am a NYC Fireman here in New York and I am writing this testimony today about the failures of DCAS in administering the LT test December of 2022.

IT clearly states on the bottom of the NOE that you MUST PASS the multiple choice test to have your seniority and departmental awards apply. Passing is on a definition in the NOE of 70% or greater. The problem is,,,,DCAS let guys who didn't put the hard work and dedication in to allow scores of 58 and upwards on the Multiple choice to be a "passing grade" and then to move on to their seniority and awards. This was NEVER the case, if you didn't get a 70 or better on the multiple choice, your out. It is not fair to the guys and girls who studied hard for 3+ years to have this type of situation fail them. Now guys who did get between a 70 and 75 are getting "jumped" by guys scoring 58s to 69s because they have more seniority.

DCAS and the FDNY has failed myself multiple times, I was a victim of exam 6019 which was given out in 2007 and was the most diverse list in history, and was going to be in the second class until an affirmative action bogus lawsuit stopped all hiring. I had to wait another 6 years to retake the exam. Now I have been patiently waiting for this LT test which was supposed to be given out in March of 2020, that got held up for almost 3 years,, to now have DCAS fail us by administering this type of scoring, where if you get a 58 on a multiple choice test, you could still be put on an eligible list. Someone needs to step up and stop this, have the scoring the way it always was, 1 point per question, and stop ruining guys careers.

Thank you for your time and we would all hope to have this cleaned up as soon as possible to start promotions for LT.

Thank you,

Daniel Cronin

L152

[REDACTED]

From: GAIL FERNANDEZ <dfsw247@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 10:42 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Lieutenant Exam

[REDACTED]

To the attention of Department of Citywide Administrative Services,

I am writing in regards to the scoring of FDNY Lieutenant examination. My raw score of 73 out of 100 questions correct on the exam, placed me at 750 on the mock list. This would put me in the range of promotion, as historically 800-850 people are promoted to rank. Under the new scoring method put forth. I am currently 867 on the list. This may put me out of eligibility for promotion. Please reconsider your scoring method.

Thank you

Firefighter Darren Fernandez

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: David Villaruel <davidvillaruel@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 12:21 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Comittee

[REDACTED]

My name is David Villaruel and the scoring of this LT exam is negatively affecting me in that based on my passing score of 72 I'm being passed over in list number by others who did not even pass the exam. Thank you for your consideration.
Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Dominic DiBiase <ddibiase22@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 11:02 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. With all due respect, some of my frustrations are cited in the memo below, they portray the passion for my career and feelings of resentment I have in regards to how this process has played out for myself, along with all other Lieutenant candidates. I do not mean to disrespect anyone reading this message.

April 18, 2017 - A very special day for myself, along with 303 other probationary firefighters who had successfully graduated from the Fire Academy. I was thrilled to begin my career as one New York's Bravest.

June 1, 2017 - My very first fire, in the Dyker Heights section of Brooklyn. It was at this operation that the entire outlook of my career changed. I was lucky enough to be put into the position to assist the Lin family on this early morning; a mother and two children trapped in the basement of a two story multiple dwelling engulfed in flames. However, the much larger raging fire that night was set off inside of me. My passion for the New York City Fire Department truly started on this day, it was at this moment I knew that studying and becoming the best fire officer I could be was a top priority and a new major goal set for myself. I immediately started studying the extremely vast and complex books of the FDNY in hopes of being promoted to Lieutenant one day.

December 14, 2022 - The FDNY lieutenants exam was given, I was lucky enough to score a 91 on this extremely difficult exam after years of studying. Starting and stopping multiple times due to the on again, off again scheduling of the exam due to Covid-19.

Today - I sit here and write this note completely disgusted with the City of New York, DCAS, and the FDNY. The fire, passion, and desire to strive to be the best I can be is dwindling away due to the hypocrisy, lack of transparency, and neglect every single agency has had throughout this entire process. The delay in promotions involves much more than allowing the department to meet staffing needs. The delay and carelessness has crushed morale. The sacrifices of time, energy, and stress members put themselves through on their own time to better themselves and the FDNY is being overlooked tremendously. Lastly, after over 1 year of speculation and awaiting a final raw grade and true list number, multiple scoring lists have been compiled with the latest list dropping me 73 names from 302 to 375. How was the exam graded? Why have several changes been made to the scoring rubric used for the exam? This process has been nothing short of a gigantic joke and I feel like a complete buffoon for investing my time and energy into this process. Perhaps the individuals in charge will put politics, numbers, and corporate BS aside for the greater good of the members involved, the city of New York, and arguably one of the greatest agencies on the planet, the FDNY.

God Bless,
Dominic DiBiase
L-149

Subject: Urgent Request for Prompt Resolution of FDNY Lieutenant Exam 0569
Grading by DCAS for Public Safety

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I am writing to you in my capacity as a dedicated FDNY firefighter with nearly a decade of service, urgently appealing for your intervention in resolving the recent discrepancies in the grading process administered by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) for the FDNY Lieutenant Exam 0569.

During the recent administration of the FDNY Lieutenant Exam 0569, it is believed that DCAS failed to deduct the appropriate number of points for incorrect answers, significantly compromising the fairness and accuracy of the grading process. However, we are still unsure of the exact methodology of the incorrect grading due to the alarming lack of transparency from DCAS themselves. This lack of transparency was on full display at the hearing itself when both the Commissioner of DCAS and their lawyer intentionally misled the councilwoman who asked about the grading curve when they only addressed the seniority mistake they already corrected, while knowing that was clearly not the curve the councilwoman was referring to. This issue has been outstanding since October of 2023.

It is believed DCAS failed to deduct a full point for each incorrect answer or weighed some questions more than others. Additionally, the scoring method employed by DCAS deviated from established standards and the Notice of Exam, casting doubt on the integrity of the entire promotional process. This is now the second FDNY Lieutenant exam in a row that DCAS has failed to grade accurately as they needed 3 attempts to grade the 2015 exam correctly as well.

As firefighters committed to upholding the highest standards of professionalism and integrity, we are deeply troubled by these discrepancies and their impact on our careers and the safety of the communities we serve. Therefore, we urgently request the New York City Council to oversee and expedite the following actions:

1. Prompt and accurate re-grading of the FDNY Lieutenant Exam 0569 by DCAS, adhering strictly to the established scoring methodology where one full point is deducted for each incorrect answer.
2. Ensuring that the grading process is completed expeditiously to enable the promotion of qualified candidates from the list within the coming couple of days.
3. Emphasizing the critical importance of not allowing any failed test scores (69 or lower on the multiple-choice test) to be on the list, as it is a matter of public safety. Fire officers serve as leaders in emergencies and directly guide firefighters, and their competency directly impacts the safety and well-being of our communities.

Furthermore, this delay has set many careers back approximately 5 years already, as the exam should have been administered in 2019, only to be held back by DCAS and then cancelled once again due to COVID 19. The prolonged waiting period has not only hindered career progression but has also caused financial strain and uncertainty for firefighters and their families. We emphasize the critical importance of resolving these issues swiftly to restore confidence in the promotional process for firefighters within the FDNY and to uphold the integrity of our esteemed institution.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. We trust in the City Council's commitment to fairness and transparency and look forward to a prompt resolution that will allow us to continue serving our city with honor and dedication.

Sincerely,

Douglas Adams, MPA

FDNY Ladder 108



Hello,

My name is Emmet Meehan, I'm a firefighter in L34. I studied for almost 8 months for the LT Test and scored fairly well, with a 91. On a typical grading system and list, I would be around #400 on the list, would be promoted in about 2 years, and would be eligible for the Captains test slated for 2026. Due to the unknown grading system used and new list published by DCAS, my list number has now fallen to #621, meaning it could be 3 years or longer to get promoted and potentially missing the opportunity for the Captains test. This could push back my career goals by 5-10 years.

Everyone in the FDNY holds a high standard in order to be an officer and we believe everyone should be graded on a fair system: one point for one question.

We expect and hope this is resolved as soon as possible and we can continue being the best fire department in the world.

Thanks,
Emmet

[REDACTED]

From: Erik Larsen <elarsen57@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 12:06 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Erik Larsen and I am a 7 year verterán of the FDNY as a firefighter working out of Ladder 125 in Queens. I am wringing because my life and career have already been affected and continue to be affected by the ongoing issues with the DCAS list for exam 0569.

This test was originally scheduled to happen in May of 2020 and many of us including myself began studying in 2018. Studying for this exam was more intensive than any studying I have done in my life despite having attended an extremely competitive high school and having completed my bachelors degree at Queens College. The material has been compared by members who have studied for both as more intensive than the NYS bar exam. I say this not to insult anyone who has taken the bar but only to emphasize the sheer volume and depth of the material we study.

As far as anyone in the FDNY knows when studying for these exams the scoring has always been 50% exam score and 50% seniority/departmental awards.

This was always in my mind as I prepared to take this exam because I knew how important every point was to my promotion. I studied for 6-10 hours per day every day I was not working in the firehouse for the last 3 months leading up to this exam. I hired help and leaned more on my parents and wife to watch my kids than ever. I put aside my life for this. This is studying I would have never done if I knew that the scoring would be changed to devalue written portion of the exam.

I knew that in order to get promoted in time to take the Captains test which should be in 2026 I had to beat out my fellow firefighters with more seniority by a considerable amount. The fact that by scoring a 96 or above would drastically change how many people could catch me based on seniority was always in my head. The scoring of the test as stated in the NOE and as has always been done is part of what made me study so hard.

If we take away from the importance of the written exam we are not only hurting people like me who studied so hard and put their lives on hold for this but we are hurting each and every New Yorker who relies on Fire Officers to know this information. The extra studying I put in to get from the 92 I could have written in September to the 97 I wrote in December will be with me as I move forward in my career and make me a better officer. If we devalue the written portion of the exam we take away the insensitive to study and we will have less knowledgeable officers in the future.

In closing I have been negatively impacted by this change to scoring to a degree to which is unknown. I have also been negatively impacted by the delay to an unknown degree. All of this additional time both in the delay and by being further down this list than I would be on a traditionally scored list will at best result in less time in rank for the coming Captains exam and at worst result in it being promoted in time to even sit for it. The later of which was unthinkable when I received my grade over a year ago.

I scored a 97 and was 61 on the first list published. I was 177 on the current list and on a traditional list I believe I would be about 95.

Sorry if you got this twice. I put the subject wrong the first time so I thought I should resubmit.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Erik Larsen

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Francesco Vultaggio <f.vultaggio88@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 10:10 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm civil service and labor committee

[REDACTED]

Hello my name is Francesco Vultaggio I'm a member of the FDNY and I'm writing to you to give you my story in hopes of getting our Lt list corrected and sorted out as quickly as possible. As you have been made aware of by many of my peers we believe DCAS has scored our exam incorrectly for what ever reason we do not know. Im a father of 4 wonderful children and work 2 jobs to support my family over prior to the test I spent about 4 years and about 3000 hours studying for the lieutenants exam hoping to get promoted so I don't have to work as much and get to spend more time with my family. To my excitement my studying had paid off so I thought I wrote a 98 of my test which I needed to because I didn't have full seniority when i took the exam and since our test only counts for half of our final score I need to do as well as I could. Currently we believe DCAS has awarded everyone .367 of a point for every wrong answer they got instead of the standard 0 which ends up putting more weight on seniority than our 50%. I did some math afterwards so for my seniority which at the time I took the test was 81.25 and full seniority is 85 which averaged out I would overall beat anyone with full seniority and a 94 or less. Due to the possibility of dcas awarding people points of incorrect answers now anyone with full seniority and a score down to a 92 now passes me on the list. Will I still get promoted yes but it's very frustrating to have all of my hard work be undermined by an incorrect grading system that now cause me to get promoted at a later date than I should by people that didn't sacrifice as much as I did and this is just my story. There are many of my peers who put time in and passed this exam but don't have full seniority that are now being bumped out of a promotional range by someone with full seniority that failed the exam this is not fair to them. So I ask you humbly if there is anything you can possibly do to have the grading on our exam corrected so those of us that took the time out of our busy lives and earned our score can eventually get the promotion we have worked so hard for. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be heard and I hope you have a wonderful day Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: fred ted <fredster156@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 12:29 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

My name is Frederick Martell and I am a firefighter in ladder company 119. I took the lieutenant exam in December 2022 and passed with a 75%. For over two years, I have anxiously waited for the publication of the official lieutenant list, as this list will dictate my chances of being promoted in the timeframe that I am counting on. I studied for months to pass this test. My efforts are beginning to seem pointless as it has come to my attention that there are people who failed the exam (i.e., received below a 70%) but may still be eligible for promotion, potentially even before me. I view this possibility as deeply unjust. To further clarify a member with max seniority who received a failing grade of 69 along with the assistance of military credits will in fact pass me (5 years time on the job when I wrote the exam) on the list and potentially push me far enough down the list to not even get promoted at all off of exam 0569. I want to believe that the FDNY and the city of New York and DCAS is fair and sticks to its word. If the required passing score is 70%, this must be upheld.

It is wrong to keep us waiting for so long. Please publish the official lieutenant list with a non curve scoring system. Thank you.

[REDACTED]

From: Greg Baum <gregbaum04@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:33 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

I am in writing to you in frustration on how FDNY Lt exam 0569 has been mismanaged. Many of us have studied countless hours to get the chance to be promoted on the job we love and have dreamt to be on. The original exam was set to be May of 2020 but because of Covid was pushed back 2.5 years. That alone had every test taker frustrated and now the lack of transparency of how/why DCAS scored the exam is the icing on the cake. Traditionally FDNY promotional exams have been 1 point for each correct answer and 1 point for each wrong answer. DCAS seems to have take it upon themselves to break this tradition and for no apparent reason and won't explain why they did such. This job requires officers who lead firefighters into burning buildings to be the best of the best and there is no room for curved test scoring in such a dangerous job. I am looking forward to our testimonies being addressed. Thank you for your time

-Gregory Baum L22
FDNY Lt exam 0569 list #82
Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: James Hayden <james.hayden27@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 10:08 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil service and labor committee

[REDACTED]

Dear Council,

My name is James Hayden and I took the promotional Exam for Fire Lieutenant in December of 2022. I scored 92/100 questions correct on the exam. In the past and using traditional test scoring this would mean I scored a 92 on the written exam, and then adding in my seniority and merits, on the list for the exam I should be about number 200. This is a score I am very proud of, I studied almost THREE YEARS for the ONE exam. There is no make ups, it is a one time shot. But now with the "curve" I am in the mid 200's. This could lead to me possibly missing the captains exam to reach the next rank in the FDNY, which is a goal of mine and one of the reasons why I studied for three years. This is unfair to everyone that studied. This curve does not help anyone, not the test takers, the public, or the test makers. It ultimately makes the city more unsafe with less qualified people being promoted. Please rectify this by removing the curve and making every question worth 1 point.

Thanks,

James Hayden

Subject: Urgent Attention Required: Frustrations Regarding FDNY Lieutenant Promotional Exam Results

Dear City Council,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep frustration and disappointment regarding the prolonged delays and lack of transparency surrounding the establishment of results for the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam. As an aspiring candidate eagerly awaiting the outcome of this crucial examination, the uncertainty and opacity surrounding the process have significantly impacted me and my fellow candidates.

The lack of clear communication and definitive timelines regarding the release of results has caused undue stress and anxiety among us. We have diligently prepared for this examination, investing significant time, effort, and resources into our studies with the expectation of a fair and timely evaluation process. However, the persistent delays and ambiguous updates provided have left us feeling disillusioned and disheartened.

Furthermore, the absence of transparency in the examination evaluation process undermines the integrity of the entire promotion system. As dedicated members of the FDNY, we place great importance on meritocracy and fair assessment, yet the current situation has eroded our confidence in the system's fairness and impartiality.

Moreover, the prolonged uncertainty surrounding the examination results has far-reaching consequences beyond personal frustration. It affects our career planning, professional development, and morale within the department. The lack of clarity hampers our ability to make informed decisions about our future paths and leaves us in a state of limbo, unable to fully commit to our career advancement goals.

I urge you to prioritize this matter and provide a comprehensive update on the status of the examination results. Transparency, accountability, and timely communication are essential for maintaining the trust and confidence of the candidates and ensuring the integrity of the promotional process. We deserve clarity and respect for the dedication and commitment we have demonstrated throughout this process.

In conclusion, I implore you to take immediate action to address these concerns and expedite the release of the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam results. Your prompt attention to this matter is crucial in alleviating the frustration and uncertainty experienced by myself and my fellow candidates.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Respectfully yours,
FF Jesse L. Phillips

[REDACTED]

From: Jesse Muldoon <jessem7@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:13 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Hello,

I'm writing in regards to the scoring of the FDNY Lieutenant Exam. DCAS has done the city a disservice with their "curved" grading, allowing members that failed to get promoted, and is setting a dangerous precedent by implementing it with no prior warning.

Firefighters studied for months and years. The test was even delayed 2 years because of COVID. It wasn't until approximately 9 months after the test was finished that DCAS released a list that indicated the test was not scored traditionally (1 question = 1 point). In approximately 5 months since the results came out, there has been no response from DCAS as to how the test was actually scored. WHERE IS THE TRANSPARENCY? WHY THE SECRECY? Can they just do whatever they want without having to answer to the agencies and civil servants that they serve?

Also, why is DCAS choosing to put members that failed the test, in a position to be promoted. Firefighting is a dangerous job. Officers are required to make split second decisions to protect the public and their own members. A person that failed the exam doesn't seem like a good candidate for the Lieutenant rank. How would firefighters and citizens feel, knowing the person in charge of their safety, isn't qualified?

Approximately 900 members passed legitimately. This has historically been a long enough list of names to promote adequately for the life of the list. What is the motivation for DCAS?

Thank you,
Jesse Muldoon
Ladder 119

John Castagna
Firefighter
Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY)

John.castagna89@gmail.com

Date February 27 2024

Dear City Council,

My name is John Castagna, and I'm a firefighter with the FDNY. I write to you today in regards to the FDNY Lieutenant's Exam (#0569), administered in December 2022. I would like to share how I have been personally impacted by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) grading in regards to this examination.

The understanding, as per all previous FDNY promotional exams, was that the exam was 100 questions, with each worth a single point. After receiving our score, other factors such as Seniority, and Merits would be then factored in to produce a final score. The criteria was transparent enough to where most members were able to determine their final score, sans any changes to successfully protested questions. Unofficial mock lists promulgated throughout the department based on this transparency. Personally, I scored a 91, with 7.5 years of Seniority and a single Merit factored in. This, in theory, should have put me in the mid-200s on the promotional list. Seeing as the FDNY typically promotes 30-60 at a time, every 7+ weeks (as authorized by NYC), this allowed me a general understanding of when I would be promoted.

Unfortunately, no individual has received an official email from DCAS with their final score. The first list DCAS promulgated was scored incorrectly—a point admitted by DCAS, eventually. They used a weighting of 85/15, rather than the 50/50 traditionally used on FDNY exams. After this incorrect scoring was addressed, DCAS released a second list—this time, using the correct weighting, but still showing incorrect scores based on the transparent criteria used for all past FDNY promotional exams. FDNY officials, Union representatives and Lieutenant-eligibles have yet to receive any transparency from DCAS as to the criteria for the scoring of this second list. Based on this incorrect scoring, I am going from an expected list number in the mid-200s, to the low-300s. This change could potentially delay my promotion an approximate 6-12 months. For a position with numerous pay scales, this delay could cost me financially. Additionally, for eligibles such as myself seeking to take the future Captain's Exam (the next rank after Lieutenant in the FDNY), any delay in promotion may deny us the eligibility for taking this exam. As exams are traditionally given every 4 years, a missed exam may mean 6+ years waiting for the next promotion. From our understanding, approximately 900 or so members passed the Lieutenant's Exam with a score of 70 or greater, before Seniority and Merits are applied. DCAS's latest list shows close to 1700 members—a stark difference in the original reported "passing" numbers.

I am seeking transparency from DCAS regarding the scoring criteria, the reason for the incorrect scoring, and a swift resolution that involves the 1:1 question to answer scoring criteria. It has been over a year since the exam was given, far beyond when promotions typically begin after a new list is released.

Thank you for your time, efforts, and for all you do for this great city.

Respectfully,

John Castagna

[REDACTED]

From: John Moncayo <johnkmoncayo@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 11:21 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Good morning to the Civil Service and Labor Committee. My name is John Moncayo, and I am a firefighter with almost five years of experience at Ladder 154 in Jackson Heights, Queens. I took the Lieutenant Exam (Exam #0569) and received a written score of 92. However, I have encountered inconsistencies in the grading process, resulting in my list number fluctuating from #311 to #593, with no clear explanation. This deviation from the originally proposed scoring rubric on the Notice of Examination has caused uncertainty and hindered my career planning. I am concerned that the repeated changes in the grading process and the resulting delays in promotions may cause me to miss the Captain's exam in 2026, which I am eligible to take as a Lieutenant. As a Hispanic firefighter, I hope that the scoring confusion is not related to a diversity agenda. I urge the committee to address this issue and ensure fair scoring to enable me to plan my career and take the Captain's exam in 2026. Thank you for your attention, and I hope for a prompt resolution.

Sincerely, John Moncayo.

[REDACTED]

From: Joseph Mcpartland <jm793972@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:33 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fdny Lt exam

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

Putting the citizens of New York City at personal risk of injury or potential death is not hyperbole. It is very real. Reading another email from a desk doesn't highlight this reality, it only puts it out of sight. I would invite a member seeking first-hand insight to visit any firehouse in the city for a ride along.

The great New York Politician, Theodore Roosevelt once said "The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood." This may seem like colorful language, but dust from fire, sweat from spirit, and blood given by firefighters is real only when you see it. Roosevelt knew this and governed only after visiting tenement buildings to see constituents living conditions and riding with soldiers to witness first hand.

If you saw someone study 3 years for a test, you bear witness. If you were to see exam takers wait 18 months for a political decision to cross the correct desk, you bear witness. Don't let the citizens of New York suffer the fate of unqualified promoted candidates due to some sort of curved perversion of grading standards. People will die from consequence. The decisions you make in your positions as elected politicians are of the highest stakes. Human Life. The decision you make should not be of compromise, but of steadfast moral obligation.

I implore you to establish a list based on 1 correct answer, 1 point given. No curve, no band-score grading. Stay true to conviction and principal.

-Joseph McPartland

Exam 0569 candidate

Sacrifice....

It's something that is synonymous with firefighting. I want to talk about the sacrifice that my brothers and sisters made to study for this Lieutenant test. While everyone had a different path to the test, each person sacrificed something for it. Here is the story of my sacrifice.

I started this journey back in 2018, my wife was pregnant with our first child and I knew I had to get promoted to provide for my family. After my son, Mychal was born I spent every free minute of my day studying for this test. I sacrificed time with my newborn son to study for this test. I had no time to enjoy watching my little guy grow up while I poured over thousands of pages of documents. Then covid hit pushing the test back. While most guys stopped, I didn't stop. I knew that a promotion meant sacrifice. Over the covid period, we had another child, Aiden. Soon after his birth, they announced the new date for the test. And the sacrifice started again full time causing me to miss time with my little ones. While I did well on the test, some brothers and sister have been negatively impacted by the current grading of the exam.

Flash forward to today, Mychal is five and Aiden is three and a half. I missed out on them growing up to study for a test that is being held up because DCAS isn't following the grading standard that has been used for past test (1 point for correct and 0 points for incorrect). The current list rewards people who answered questions incorrectly, those individuals who would have failed to register a score of 70 (passing) are now passing due to the curve. Other DCAS administered FDNY exams have been scored the traditional manner (1 point for correct and 0 points for incorrect) since our test. I am asking to reward our sacrifices by adjusting the grading used on our exam and starting the promotion process for us.

Thanks for your time

Joseph O'Rourke

[REDACTED]

From: Joseph Schade <shady4612@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 11:19 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Hello,

My name is Joseph Schade and I am a firefighter with the FDNY. I would like to make a testimony on the results of the lieutenants exam that was administered in December of 2022.

To be honest, I do not know exactly how I was impacted by the scoring of this exam. I believe that my list number went down by 20-30 names. However, due to the lack of transparency that DCAS has shown there is no clear information. There was obviously some type of formula that was used that has changed the scoring procedure from a traditional FDNY promotional exam. I think it is only right that we know what that formula was and why it was implemented.

Furthermore, I would like to iterate that the original lieutenants exam was scheduled for May of 2020. It was postponed until December of 2022 due to covid restrictions. I would also like it to be known the amount of effort that individuals put into studying for this exam. My study materials were ordered in February of 2018, with which I started studying shortly after. So, this one exam has been a part of my life, and many others, for nearly 6 years, with still no result. Please, can we work to resolve these issues as quickly as possible.

Respectfully,
Joseph Schade

[REDACTED]

From: Joshua Burgos <jay.burgos7@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 11:00 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joshua Burgos this is my testimony towards the ongoing issue with Lieutenants exam #0569. I am one of the lower list number individuals who wrote a passing score of 72. With my seniority and a citation my score would be brought up to about a 77. I was on the mock list listed around 783 with over 900 reported responses. This number being important as history has shown the magic number of max promotions being listed above 800 to be reached within a 4 year span. With this grading system as DCAS has implemented my overall score after a "correction" has me having scored a 83 but somehow I am listed at 922 meaning at least 139 names who most definitely did not pass the exam have passed me in the ranking. This hurts my chances of being promoted. I being Latino born and raised in Spanish Harlem have lived my entire life earning my accomplishments not needing a handout from anyone to help me exceed in any position by any means necessary and don't feel it should be this way for any individual. I take pride in the fact that I was able to pass the exam not as well as other but having achieved a passing grade having studied hard with a tough work schedule and also having fought through having had elbow surgery not even a month prior to the exam. I do not feel that my ethnicity nor any be prioritized to fill any quotas. I only bring this up because of the known fact that diversifying city positions seems to be a focus. In this exam I studied along many friends from all works of life who have it their all in hopes of advancement. This information we had to study means life or death and having been taught what I know from experienced officers has made a difference in the daily dangerous situations this job will find you in which in my 8.5 years with the department comes more frequently than not. I strongly support the traditional grading in this current and any future exams because the public and the many firefighters to come need officers who know what they're doing when things hit the fan. As for band grading it will be doing more harm than good.

Respectfully,

Joshua Burgos
Tower Ladder 13

Good evening. My name is Keith Gough. I am a 19 year veteran of the FDNY. On December 14th 2022 I took the promotion to lieutenant exam. This was an exam that I studied 3-4 hours a day for two years. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life. To a person outside the FDNY, the amount of time required to study may sound strange. But the reality is that the promotion process in the FDNY is extremely competitive. There are typically only 800 spots available with thousands of applicants. You have to outwork everyone else and sort your way through a mountain of material. You are required to know how to handle any situation that may arise in NYC. As a lieutenant you are responsible for the safety and lives of the firefighters under your supervision. You are responsible for making life and death decisions. Its a very serious responsibility, one that I prepared for vigorously. I scored a 97 on the exam and are currently at #16 on the list. I decided to take this test to better my family, earn more money to send my kids to college, and also because I felt like I had something more to offer the FDNY. But here we sit nearly 15 months after the exam and no promotions. This is devastating to the members who studied so hard, it is truly demoralizing. You need to have the best of the best when lives are on the line. The curving of this exam is truly unfortunate and I hope that it is rectified soon so that we can all move on with our lives and into our new roles as Lieutenants in the greatest city and department in the world. Thank you for your time. Keith Gough. Ladder Company 9

[REDACTED]

From: Keith McBride <k.mcbride15@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 7:42 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Hi all,

I just wanted to send this email to join in on alerting you all to the issues surrounding the grading of the FDNY's Lieutenant exam. While no list we've seen is accurate I have continued to drop in my list number. The first leaked list which DCAS stated had improper seniority I was 143. This latest list I am now 184.

Aside from the list number itself we have no clue how DCAS scored the exam. Clearly it is not 1 point 1 question. 900 firefighters approx. passed the exam legitimately. This newest list is showing 1600+ people. This scoring that DCAS is using was never shown in our notice of exam. Furthermore, I think it should be made clear to you much sacrifice this exam cost the test takers. The guys in top couple hundred of this list I can assure you spent anywhere from one to two years studying for hours. Taking time away from their lives. That means not spending time with your children in many cases to work for this promotion. No one is complaining about the work needed to get the grade. Our complaint lies in the establishment of this list which is a slap in the face to the men and women who put in that work. We're all very disappointed. This is ruining guys career plans. The people who got on this job in the past have been able to take their career leaps and we are not being afforded that same opportunity. I got on in 2014 and you need three years on to take the test. I was ineligible in 2015 when the last exam was. I had to wait until 2022 to finally take a test. We were supposed to take it in 2020 but COVID ruined that. It's time to get this thing squared away.

Thanks for gamification. The time to read this.

[REDACTED]

From: Kevin Gilmartin <gilmartink92@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 10:44 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FDNY Lieutenants Exam Testimony

[REDACTED]

Dear council,

I am writing to express my deep frustration and concern regarding the lack of transparency in the establishment of results for the FDNY Lieutenant Exam. As a candidate who has invested significant time, effort, and resources into preparing for this exam, I am deeply troubled by the lack of clarity and communication regarding the scoring process and the determination of final results.

The FDNY Lieutenant Exam is a critical step in the career advancement of many firefighters, and the results of this exam have a direct impact on the professional trajectory and opportunities available to candidates. It is therefore imperative that the scoring process and the criteria for determining final results are transparent, fair, and consistent.

Unfortunately, the lack of transparency in the establishment of results for the FDNY Lieutenant Exam has left many candidates feeling frustrated, confused, and disillusioned. Despite repeated requests for information and clarification, the NYC DCAS has failed to provide clear and comprehensive answers regarding the scoring process and the criteria used to determine final results.

This lack of transparency is not only unfair to candidates who have worked tirelessly to prepare for this exam, but it also undermines the integrity of the entire examination process. Without clear and consistent criteria for determining final results, candidates are left to wonder whether their performance on the exam was accurately assessed and whether they were given a fair opportunity to succeed.

I urge the NYC DCAS to take immediate action to address these concerns and to provide candidates with the transparency and clarity they deserve. This includes providing detailed information on the scoring process, the criteria used to determine final results, and any adjustments or modifications made to the scoring process after the exam was administered.

In addition, I urge the NYC DCAS to establish a clear and transparent appeals process for candidates who believe their results were inaccurately assessed or unfairly determined. This will ensure that candidates have a fair opportunity to challenge their results and seek a resolution to any discrepancies or concerns.

The FDNY Lieutenant Exam is a critical step in the career advancement of many firefighters, and it is essential that the scoring process and the determination of final results are transparent, fair, and consistent. I urge the NYC DCAS to take immediate action to address these concerns and to provide candidates with the transparency and clarity they deserve.

Sincerely,
Kevin Gilmartin Ladder 133

[REDACTED]

From: Kevin Quinn <ktq145@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 5:34 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Dear Council,

My name is Kevin Quinn and I took the promotional exam for Fire Lieutenant in December of 2022. I scored 95/100 questions correct on the exam. Based on standard previous grading techniques factoring in seniority, I would fall in the low to mid 100s as a list number. When DCAS implement their “curve” my list number dropped to 198. Many members who scored lower than me jumped ahead because the curve devalued the raw score and placed a further emphasis on the seniority/awards section, which blatantly disregards the 50/50 calculation stated in the NOE. This drop could adversely affect me by delaying my promotion from 6 months to a year, and perhaps missing out on a chance to take the next Captains exam.

I would also like to say that as a citizen of this city the DCAS curve is bad for public safety. The curve has enabled someone who scored 53/100 questions correct to be on the “list”. The FDNY books contain massive amounts of material, containing procedures of nearly every emergency that could be encountered, ranging from basic fire operations and emergency medical services to procedures for high level terrorist attacks. There is often no time to reference this material in an emergency situation, as it must be recalled immediately. When studying years for a high score, you memorize the protocols and procedures that could help New Yorkers on their worst days.

I understand the flaws of multiple choice tests, but it is undoubtedly the best thing we have to test the wide range of knowledge that a fire officer may need. I also know, with all do respect to my fellow firefighters, that if you scored below 70/100 on this test you did not put in the time needed to learn even the most basic procedures needed for a fire officer.

I have seen first hand FDNY responses on some of this city’s worst days, as a 13 year old during the flight 587 crash, and years later during hurricane Sandy. I hold this city to a high standard, and I want the most qualified officers leading the men and women of this department. The DCAS curve on this exam puts that in jeopardy, and I ask that you kindly consider helping us rectify this situation, as you would be helping all New Yorkers.

Regards,

Kevin Quinn FF

[REDACTED]

From: Marcus Matulik <marcus.matulik@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 12:57 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Marcus Matulik and I am a firefighter in the FDNY. I have been a firefighter for over 10 years and I took the FDNY promotional Lieutenant Exam #0569 in December 2022. This was the first exam I could take since the last one I had below the 3 years required to sit for it.

A career in the FDNY is often shorter than many other careers as the nature of the career subjects one to many ailments. Individuals often get diagnosed with cancer or suffer from physical ailments that prevent one from continuing serving their beloved city. The age and retirement force us to retire earlier than most would like. In order to make the most of one's career in the FDNY, members often take promotional exams that are given every couple of years to move up the ranks. Any delay in the promotion process puts careers on hold and prevents them from moving up the ranks as they may miss other promotional exams that may not take place for years to come.

The delay caused by the Covid Pandemic in 2020 prevented myself and other members from taking the May, 2020 exam. It took 2 ½ years for the exam to take place in December 2022. Now, for some reason we are being held up from the promotion process due to a scoring error. This is having an extremely negative impact on my career as well as other firefighters. The exam should be graded in the traditional way with 1 point assigned to each question and the exam to be grade 50/50 with 50% exam grade and 50% seniority. Seniority is essential to the grading process at 50 percent since the nature of the career allows for members to make life and death choices in operations.

On the mock list I was #48. Currently on the "list" I am #72. I believe the curved scoring as negatively impacted me.

Sincerely,

Marcus Matulik

[REDACTED]

From: Matthew Caposio <capo1344@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:31 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Matthew Caposio, and I am a firefighter for the city of New York. In December of 2022, I sat for an examination in hopes to be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in the FDNY. I studied for hours each day for 18 months straight, because I had to do well on the written portion due to my lack of seniority which counts for half of the exam score. That was 18 months away from my wife, family and friends, with the hope that it would pay off with a promotion in rank and pay.

My hard work paid off when I received a written score of 91 on the exam. Based on the mock list (which was created by firefighters and calculated according to the Notice of examination (NOE) with a weight of 50% on written exam and 50% on seniority) I was list number 430 - which would put my promotion at around two years based on previous exams. The two year mark will be coming up at the end of this year, and there hasn't been a single person promoted. Along with this, my list number, as calculated by DCAS is now 592 - adding an additional year and a half to my wait.

I am now growing a family and looking to purchase my first house, which has to be put on hold because of the delay with this exam. I put 18 months of studying into this test, did well, and should be rewarded for my efforts with a promotion to Lieutenant.

The individuals who took time out of their lives to study and properly prepare for this exam should be rewarded for their efforts. The people of New York City deserve to be protected by knowledgeable and prepared officers. Promoting people with inadequate knowledge and lower scores endangers lives and property of New Yorkers.

Please help us convince DCAS that their grading system is incorrect and harmful to the City of New York.

Thank you,
Matthew Caposio

[REDACTED]

From: Matthew Catera <macatera@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 6:19 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Members of the Committee,

I am currently employed by the New York City Fire Department, and over a year ago I took the FDNY firefighter lieutenants exam.

I prepared for this exam for approximately one year and scored a 79. I have a seniority/accolades score of 80.126. In a mock list that was created and has been historically accurate, my projected list number was 681. Approximately the top 800 firefighters on the list are usually to be promoted over the course of 4 years.

During the hearing on 2/27, DCAS acknowledged an initial mistake and correction in grading the exam. This was regarding the percentage of the the exam that seniority played. However, they failed to acknowledge a second irregularity in the grading system. The questions in every past iteration of this exam have been one point per question. The corrected grading of this exam from the initial mistake did not have that.

The question I would like answered is why they have deviated from the standard practice of grading. This has resulted in me dropping from a projected 681 to an 812 which would potentially be out of range for promotion. I am just looking for transparency and fairness.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Sincerely,
- Matthew Catera

[REDACTED]

From: Michael Bottaro <mbottaro322@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:02 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Good afternoon my name is Michael Bottaro I am a Firefighter in Ladder 79 in the FDNY. I wanted to submit my testimony in regards to the Lieutenants test 0569. Because of the curve that was implemented by DCAS my list number went from eligible for promotion to possibly out of contention. Upon doing my own research I have found that there are individuals who scored in the 50s and, because of this curve, have a higher list number than others who scored above a 70. In the field officers have a very short amount of time to make life saving decisions. During the test we had 3 hours to pick a correct answer to a question that was right in front of us. If someone cannot pass a test where they can physically see a correct answer, then they cannot be relied upon to make life saving decisions out in the field. For these reasons I ask that the test go back to traditional scoring and let the individuals who studied hard and passed the test be the ones to get promoted.

Thank you for your time,
Michael Bottaro

[REDACTED]

From: Mike Citera <mcitera@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:11 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Good Morning to the Council Members and to whomever else this testimony may concern,

My name is Michael Citera, I am a Firefighter with the FDNY and I am writing in regard to the recent meeting of the Civil Service and Labor Committee that was held at 1PM on 2/27/24. I scored an 86 on the most recent promotion to Lieutenant exam (Exam No. 0569). I am one of the many Firefighters that has been affected by DCAS' inability to score this test fairly and safely and according to their own Notice of Examination (NOE). With their most recent method of scoring, my list number has dropped from 535 to 784, nearly 250 people being placed ahead of me, many of which who received a FAILING grade on the promotional exam.

This exam was very difficult and the people who did well did so due to their preparation- dedicating a lot of time, money, and attention to studying. The exam was difficult for good reason too- Lieutenants of the FDNY are tasked with leading the members in many dangerous situations, and they frequently fall back to what they learned while studying the FDNY books that are the main subject of testing for promotional exams. For this reason, having members be promoted who did not pass this exam is not only unfair, but dangerous for the public that we have sworn to protect.

DCAS refuses to reveal what they're method of scoring is and/or why they decided not to score according to their own NOE & the way they have scored on nearly every test prior to this one. I implore you to do whatever is in your power to make DCAS see that what they are doing is wrong, and to bring back the conventional, fair, & safe scoring method that has been used in the past.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

FF Michael Citera E309
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Michael Howe <mhowe1005@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 6:22 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil service and labor committee.

[REDACTED]

I'm Michael Howe, I am a firefighter in Engine 283, and I completed the FDNY lieutenant test in December 2022, achieving a score of 91. However, the unjust scoring curve has caused my list number to plummet by over 100 names, potentially resulting in a significant delay in my promotion, ranging from months to even years. Failing to secure a promotion within a specific timeframe could hinder my ability to take the captains test when it becomes available, significantly setting back my career aspirations by several years.

Thank you,
FF Michael Howe
Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Mike Fenton <mfenton108@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:18 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Dear NYC Council Members,

I am writing to express my deep frustration and disappointment regarding the delays and lack of transparency in establishing the results of the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam. As a dedicated candidate eagerly awaiting the outcome of this exam, the prolonged uncertainty and lack of communication have been incredibly frustrating and disheartening.

The promotional exam process is a critical milestone in the career advancement of firefighters, and the delays in providing clear and timely results have created unnecessary stress and anxiety for all involved. It is essential for the integrity of the process and the morale of the candidates that the examination results are promptly and accurately determined.

Furthermore, the lack of transparency by DCAS surrounding the status of the examination results has only exacerbated the frustration felt by candidates. We understand that administrative processes can be complex, but it is imperative that DCAS communicate openly and honestly with candidates about the progress and expected timelines for releasing the results.

I urge you to take immediate action to address these issues and require clear communication by DCAS regarding the status of the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam results. Transparency and accountability are essential for maintaining the trust and confidence of the firefighting community in the promotional process.

Over 900 of candidates that actually passed with a grade above 70 points, have spent years preparing for this lieutenants exam and the opportunity to lead members of the FDNY, the greatest fire department on earth. To have the exam scores and list numbers of candidates like myself unfairly and unjustly altered in an unexplained curve, which creates a huge disadvantage, is unfair. This curve added hundreds more names of failed scores up the passing range, which ultimately bumped passing names down the list. I am one of those names directly and adversely affected.

Another adverse affect is the climate in the firehouses all around New York City is starting to change, with members feeling the promotional process, which was once considered transparent and fair, is now broken and filled with questionable grading practices. This sentiment is unneeded and, if allowed to continue without question, will create a different and new feeling in the department about the fairness of the promotional process by all its members. We absolutely do not need the authority of the supervisory ranks within the fire department in question moving into the future.

For the love of this great department in maintaining its honor, morale, and beautiful reputation, I beg of you to please look into the future and realize this unjust action of changing scores and list numbers unfairly will cause irreparable harm not just to candidates like myself, but to the heart of the FDNY as a department.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to a swift resolution and inquiry by the council into the practices and procedures of DCAS regarding grading of the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Fenton
Lieutenant Candidate, List no. 839 (previously lower)
Firefighter, Ladder Co. 161
Coney Island, Brooklyn, New York

[REDACTED]

From: Michael Kalamaras <mikekals126@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 11:02 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm civil service and labor committee

[REDACTED]

City council members,

Hello, my name is Michael Kalamaras and I'm a firefighter for the FDNY. I'm writing to you today about the Lieutenant exam 0569. The way that this exam has been curved/graded has negatively impacted myself and hundreds of others. NYC and the FDNY are the greatest city and fire department in the world. As New Yorkers, we should take pride in knowing that when 911 is called, the most qualified and highly trained responders are responding. Studying for this Lt exam takes years; it requires discipline, hard work, and giving it your all. With the current way this exam is scored, I personally have moved from list number 543 to 654. In the past, the exam was never curved and was graded one question was worth one point, as it has been since elementary school. I have studied for the exam for two years, and I was proud that I earned an 85, but it is shameful that all of my hard work is for nothing when others with lower scores are pushed ahead on the list when they did not earn their place fairly with hard work, studying, and dedication. It is wrong to curve the exam and to reward people for not studying hard enough on such an important exam. As a firefighter, I want a Lieutenant who earned their rank by studying the job that we do, who put the time, effort & energy into learning it, as would the citizens of NYC. People shouldn't be rewarded for taking short cuts, especially when people's lives are on the line.

Thank you for your time, and I sincerely hope you consider re-establishing the list to its former, pre-curved status.

Michael Kalamaras

[REDACTED]

From: Michael Wolters <mwolters1215@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 11:32 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Service and Labor committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Michael Wolters. I'm writing in regards to the scoring of the most recent FDNY Lieutenants exam, in particular the use of a weighted scoring system.

I've been a firefighter with the city for 21 years. I began studying for this exam in January of 2018 and took it in December of 2022. I understand that there was a delay due to COVID, but when the test was given- I had dedicated almost 5 years to this process.

My number one motivation was to be as prepared as I possibly can for not only an exam, but for the responsibilities that could one day be bestowed upon me. The responsibility of leading a fire company into a life threatening situation. The responsibility of making critical decisions at the onset of an operation that could potentially help save a civilian on any given day.

I do not take these responsibilities lightly and we urge you to take them into consideration when making your decision. The decision to use a scoring system that would promote unqualified people is unsafe and morally wrong for firefighters and the people we swore to protect.

I scored a 97 on the exam. Because of my seniority, I'm currently 29 on the promotional list. I dropped minimally by the use of the weighted scoring but know of many firefighters who dropped hundreds of names. By using a weighted system, you are essentially telling every firefighter and every civilian that you are okay with promoting a less qualified person sooner than they should be promoted. Or even worse, promoting someone (who under traditional scoring, 1 point per question) could not pass an exam.

This system may work in other walks of life, but in a job where people's lives are at risk-it simply does not.

When making your decision please consider if you had a loved one call 911 for any type of emergency. Who would you want to come help your loved one? The most qualified person, I'm guessing.

Please allow the most qualified people that opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak

Respectfully

Michael Wolters

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Neil ST. HILL <neilsthill@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 12:49 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Neil St Hill. I have been a Firefighter with the FDNY for almost 8 years now. I work at Ladder 125 located in Queens, New York. My life is being greatly affected by DCAS exam 0569 for Fdny Lieutenants.

We are talking about a test that was already delayed because of Covid. I started studying for this test in 2019, anticipating a May, 2020 date for the exam. When that test was canceled, I still studied for the next 2 and a half years several hours a day, hoping they would announce another test date. Leading up to the December 2022 test, I sacrificed hours away from my family, knowing I would need to score High on this exam because I lacked full seniority. Some days 10-12 hours away from my young kids and wife. I delayed any extra curricular activities for my family until after my test date. It took a toll on my family being without a husband and dad for all the hours I was putting into this exam. My kids questioned why their dad missed their sporting events, school plays. Every point I got on the exam would have been worth it for my family in the long run. I was able to score 93 correct out of 100 on this exam. A score, I am extremely proud. The fact that that score was taken away from me because of a curve, is hard to swallow. My actually written score means a lot less now that it did if they followed the original formula on the NOE.. 50 percent seniority and 50 percent written. On the original list I was 214. Then the new list I am now 304. The fire tech mock list had me somewhere around 220. This mock list is important because it's the closest the the original exam formula. My whole goal with this test was to get promoted in time for the 2026 captains exam. With the curve and now delay in promoting off the list, my chances of getting promoted in time are very slim. Even if I do, I will have little to no time in rank. Imagine a test taken in 2022, has not yet started promoting. My whole career in limbo because an agreement can't be come to with scoring.

I am kindly writing this because I am seeking help from anyone who would listen to please Start promoting. Please fix the issues with the curve. The people who worked hard and put the time in deserve the results.

Thank You.

Neil St Hill
Ladder 125
FDNY

[REDACTED]

From: nick morici <nick21333@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:30 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Nicholas Morici
Engine 38

Thank you all for hearing our thoughts on this upcoming promotional list. I have been severely affected by this “list” that dcas has established. On the initial list I was put at a promotable number of 790 and then moved back to a list number of 1034. On a traditional list about 800 firefighters get promoted to Lieutenant and because of this I will be out of range. I passed the test with a 77 while others who failed are ahead. I appreciate your concern and hope to solve the problem.

Thank You

Dear Honorables,

My name is Nick Pugliese and I am a firefighter with the FDNY. As a member who has taken exams, and hopes to take future exams, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to enter my testimony on behalf of traditional scoring of FDNY exams. I can speak only for myself on this matter, but suspect that many feel this way.

Your public support and respect of the FDNY is well documented throughout prior resolutions and legislation that has passed through your chambers.

I think it is important to give background information about our job, though. We are often tasked with some of the most extraordinary challenges any profession can have. Occupied stuck elevators, vehicle accidents with pinned motorists, medical emergencies and building collapses are some of the many non-fire related emergencies that we as firefighters respond to daily. The operations that take place at these incidents allow no time for reference material or slow and deliberate action.

Structural fires, though, are what have made the FDNY the standard throughout the world. They are a coordinated effort by five firefighters in a ladder, and four or five firefighters in an engine. Each firefighter depends on the next to complete their task in order to accomplish their own. For example, the ladder company's inside team is responsible for forcible entry, containment of the fire, and the primary search for life. The engine company is responsible for stretching the required amount of hose and the required diameter hose to the location of the fire, using a carefully determined path. Without entry being forced, the engine can't apply water to the fire. Without water on the fire, the ladder company cannot fully complete their searches. A coordinated effort, and one that is led by the officers of both ladders and engines, as well as the chiefs in command of the operation.

Actions on the fire floor have consequences. Ventilation, for example, requires approval from the officer. "Can I take the window on the front fire escape," you might hear if listening to fire ground transmissions. This question is asked because if the action is not timed and carried out properly, the lives of firefighters and civilians become seriously endangered. There is not time for officers to refer to the Ventilation Bulletin when asked if ventilation can be performed; they must understand the bulletin and apply that knowledge cold, much like they would on exam day.

These tests are developed with approval from DCAS and subject matter experts, and are designed to assess the abilities of the candidates.

The tests are made up of information found strictly within the FDNY books. There are no arbitrary questions. Every question on an FDNY Exam is stringently reviewed by numerous subject matter experts; the proposed answers stand up to protests due to their ability to be verified with precise accuracy down to the sentence of the chapter used.

All of that said, it can be absolutely confirmed that FDNY exams are an accurate measure of one's knowledge of the "books." Knowledge of these procedures and tactics are a prerequisite to being an officer in the FDNY. This knowledge keeps the operating firefighters safe, the public in good hands, and the reputation of the Department in the highest regard.

By using a point-per-question scoring method, the test developers, the employer, and the public can be assured that an accurate measure of ability is implemented. Each question can be considered a full percentage point of knowledge, up to a full one hundred percent score.

The tests are difficult, no doubt. Members sacrifice years of their personal time for these exams; time studying away from their families that can never be recovered. Members miss their children's milestones, holiday gatherings, social events. At work, every run becomes an opportunity to discuss a particular testable topic. Entire companies take part in these sessions, working together to broaden their collective knowledge.

The current system rewards both knowledge of the material and time in rank, or experience, which are both required to be a successful member of the FDNY. Using one hundred questions, weighted at one point per question, measures the knowledge of the candidate. Separating oneself from other candidates can only be done by having a proper working knowledge of the material. This separation is not a bad thing; it ensures that the candidate who possesses the required experience and knowledge will be promoted, and in turn, be the officer tasked with answering the question asked earlier, of whether or not taking the window on the front fire escape will seriously harm a firefighter or civilian inside the room.

In closing, civil service exams cannot be considered in a vacuum. There is no hyperbole in the FDNY. It is always a matter of life and death, and the true measure of one's knowledge is using a point-per-question scoring system, weighting seniority and exam scores evenly, and ranking those members individually.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and for your continued efforts to improve the lives of all of us here in New York City.

[REDACTED]

From: Patrick Keenan <patricklkeenan@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:08 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED] rt suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

Good morning,

My name is Patrick Keenan. I am one of the many members of the FDNY who took exam #0569, promotion to lieutenant (fire). Having studied every day, over the period of more than one year, I was able to score a 93 on the challenging exam. I had 6 years of service when I took the exam, which gave me an 81 in seniority points. Given the scoring equation on the notice of examination (50% score, 50% seniority) I should have a final score of 87. However, on the current promotional list, I have a final score of 88.34.

When the promotional list was initially published, I had achieved a list number of 217. This initial list had implemented an incorrect score/seniority equation and was replaced by the current, second list, in which my list number fell to 315. The current list's scoring method implemented a curve, and members who failed the exam (scored less than a passing grade of 70 as per the notice of examination) are now on the list. Also, due to the grading of the exam (50% score, 50% seniority), there are also many members with lower passing test scores, but high seniority points, who benefitted from this curve and moved higher on the list as a result. There are many members, such as myself, who dedicated countless hours away from their families to score high on the exam in hopes of being promoted in correct order. We have been negatively impacted not only by the scoring curve, but the resulting impasse of the list establishment due to said curve. I hope the grading of the exam can be corrected without a curve, or at the very least, explained why it was graded with a curve.

Thank you for your time,
Patrick Keenan

Testimony for Committee on Civil Service and Labor

February 27th, 1pm Meeting

First, I would like to thank the Committee for allowing me to submit written testimony on this issue, and to DCAS, the UFOA Recording Secretary Michael Tracey, and Firefighter Brandon Coons for their spoken testimony at the meeting.

Unfortunately, I must also speak to DCAS's summation of the issues with the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam – issues which are, despite the testimony of DCAS's General Counsel, currently ongoing. The issue continues to be regarding the scoring of the exam – despite DCAS testifying that no algorithm was used, we know that there are members of the FDNY who failed the test, some as low as 54%, who are on the eligible list to be promoted. We are also aware of members who passed the test that have been “jumped” over by members who have failed, due to the nature of seniority scoring. The members whose list numbers moved downward compared to where they would have otherwise been had the established and historical scoring method been used are, for the most part, younger members of the department.

Right now, the FDNY is the most diverse it has ever been in its history, and so this being the first promotional exam administered in nearly 8 years, the group that took this exam happens to be the most diverse in NYC history. Due to the efforts under this and previous mayoral administrations, the younger generation of firefighters tend to be more diverse than the older generation. Unfortunately, the younger generation of firefighters is disproportionately hurt by the apparent curve that DCAS administered to this test.

Despite these issues, DCAS has not been transparent with us about the scoring process. Since this test represents an extraordinary ability for the department to diversify its upper ranks solely on the merit of those who studied hard and passed this test, and that the list DCAS released contains more eligible candidates than any other promotional exam ever given in modern history, this is reason for more transparency and more accountability. However, to this day, DCAS has not released any information related to scoring to the members who took this test, to the respective unions, and as far as we are aware, to the Fire Department itself. It is especially concerning, as a firefighter who took the promotional exam and as a citizen of New York City, that DCAS would seemingly obscure and omit the relevant issue at hand to the Committee and its elected officials.

I urge the Committee to investigate the scoring process that DCAS used for this examination, and have that information made available to the FDNY and its members. Thank you so much for your time, it is greatly appreciated. - Paul Porcello

[REDACTED]

From: peter abbondondolo <islanders1990@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 11:06 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Peter Abbondondolo. I am a FDNY Firefighter assigned to Ladder 134 in Far Rockaway. I took the recent promotion to Lieutenant Exam (#0569) and was negatively impacted by the "scoring method" used to score the test. The test itself was a fair test questions wise. The problem myself and many other eligible candidates have is how the test was scored. We have been in contact with multiple agencies in order to get transparency from DCAS on the scoring method used to calculate the results and assign us a list number. We are months past when this list should have been made official by DCAS.

I can use myself as an example of this negative scoring "curve" DCAS has used. I got a raw score of 80, my seniority score is a 79. I am currently #868 on the list. There is a member from my house who didn't pass the exam and is only approximately 30 list numbers behind me. If the test was scored correctly using the 1 point per question method (which was described in the notice of exam), I should have a much lower list number and my fellow member who didn't pass wouldn't be on the list. I am positive there are members who did not pass the exam who have lower list numbers than me and would be promoted before me. This is not fair. This specific job I took the exam for includes making life or death decisions. The city and FDNY should be taking the best of the best, not members who did not pass an exam.

All of the members who passed the exam are asking for one thing, transparency from DCAS. Tell us why they scored the test the way they did, tell us why you adapted a "curve" of some sort, tell us why members who scored in the 50s are on a list who could be promoted in the future.

Historically a "Mock List" has been created on various websites that Firefighters use to gauge where they may end up on an established list by DCAS. This involves us being honest and putting our scores into a system along with our seniority and any merits we have achieved. It has been accurate to about 20-30 list numbers. For example if I was 500 on the "mock list", I should expect to have a list number of 470-530 on the DCAS established list. On the "mock list" for this exam, I was #690. I expected to be in the range of 660-720. When the current list came out from DCAS, I am #868. Way off from where I should be with the grade I attained and seniority I have.

The FDNY took the liberty of making their own list from the Data DCAS has posted and came up with a list of approx 900-950 members who actually achieved a passing grade on the exam. We as a group have not seen that list but have been told only members who passed are on that list. That list used the traditional method of 1 point per question, just like how the notice of exam has it written.

It has been a frustrating process to say the least for the 900 of us or so that passed the exam with zero answers from DCAS. Many of us have put years of studying into this exam. I am available for comment or further discussion if needed. I will leave my contact information below. Thank you for taking this into consideration.

Peter Abbondandolo

Ladder 134, FDNY


email - islanders1990@yahoo.com

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

[REDACTED]

From: Phil Ingwersen <pingwersen83@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:44 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm civil service and labor committee

[REDACTED]

To whom this may concern,

My name is Philip Ingwersen and I am a firefighter with the fdny. I have been a firefighter for over 16 years. In 2015, I did not prepare for the last lieutenant exam. I kick myself now because I have friends that are now captains and on their way to become chiefs. I thought I would have another opportunity in 4 years and it was not a big deal. I was wrong. The next exam was not scheduled to happen until May of 2020. While I know there is nothing that could have been done because of the pandemic, I still had hope for an exam in 2021. We ended up finally taking the lieutenant exam in December of 2022. Now it is 2024 and we still have yet to have an established lieutenant list and no timeline in sight. I feel by further delaying promotions it is having a negative impact on my career. I am unsure of the effect of the curve on my score, but I do believe it should be graded traditionally and fairly even if my score changes negatively. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Philip Ingwersen

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: rcc622 <rcc622@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 10:03 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1 PM Civil Service & Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

Good Evening Council. My name is Robert Camaj and I have been a Firefighter in Ladder Company 33 located in the West Bronx for over 10 years. I took the most recent Lieutenant's test last December and I have been negatively impacted by the curve and by the list being held up. I recieved a passing score of a 75 with nearly full seniority. My mock list number was 660 which is usually close to what the official list number is..usual within 20 names. The 1st list DCAS came out with my number was 846 when they gave everyone full seniority. The 2nd current list after being corrected I am at 739. Firefighters on this current list who had failing scores but answered certain questions that were weighted now have better list numbers than those who passed. It is unfair to those like myself who put in the time and effort to pass this exam. If this list is scored traditionally as it was in the past, then my list number should be in the mid 600's putting me in a better postion to be promoted. This delay is also hurting many of our chances for future promotional exams and career opportunities. It is unfair to our growing families and to the citizens of New York who deserve over qualified leadership. I should have a better list number and not be at risk of not getting promoted. Fellow firefighters and I who have been negatively impacted are begging anyone for support in getting answers, transparency and an official list out so that promotions can begin. Thank you for your time.

Robert Camaj
[REDACTED]
rcc622@aol.com

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my deep frustrations regarding the delayed release of results and the lack of transparency surrounding the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam. As a candidate who has invested YEARS of considerable time, effort, and resources into preparing for this exam, the prolonged uncertainty and lack of communication have been incredibly disheartening.

The absence of clear timelines for result announcements has left many of us in limbo, unable to plan our career trajectories or make informed decisions about our future within the FDNY. Additionally, the dearth of updates or explanations from DCAS NYC only exacerbates our anxiety and frustration.

Transparency is crucial in maintaining trust and confidence in the examination process. It is essential that candidates are kept informed of any delays, challenges, or updates throughout the assessment process. Without this transparency, candidates are left feeling marginalized and disregarded, which undermines the integrity of the entire promotional process.

Furthermore, the prolonged delay in releasing results not only affects individual candidates but also has broader implications for the efficiency and effectiveness of the FDNY's operations. Timely promotions are essential for ensuring that the department has the necessary leadership and personnel to fulfill its mission and serve the community effectively.

I urge DCAS to prioritize transparency and accountability in its handling of the FDNY Lieutenant promotional exam. Clear and timely communication regarding the status of the examination results is essential to ensure fairness and maintain the trust of all candidates involved.

We request clear and concise information from DCAS regarding exactly how this test was graded. It's not that difficult, and DCAS' silence and unprofessionalism when questioned on this topic leads us to believe that something has been done behind the curtains that they know will ruffle a lot of feathers. Somehow I am higher on the list than a friend who scored a 93 on the test, where I got a 92. We have the same exact seniority, and zero

merits. So, he should be higher than me on the list. The only way this could have happened is if DCAS weighted certain questions differently than others, or applied some type of curve which allowed me to bypass someone who got a better grade than I did. There are examples of this throughout the list, some affected in a much worse way than others, and it must be corrected for the integrity of the rank we wish to promote to, as well as the future of the job. Lives are at stake.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I hope to see improvements in communication and transparency moving forward.

Sincerely,

Robert Paolillo L-103

FDNY Firefighter



To whom it may concern,

My name is Sage Turner. I am writing regarding the FDNY Fire Lieutenants Exam #0569. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

My situation is shared and mirrored by many others. Let me start by saying becoming an FDNY firefighter has been a dream come true since I was a child. I am the first member of my family to have become part of this prestigious department and on May 13th, 2019, I took the oath to serve this city as an FDNY firefighter. I thank God every day for giving me this opportunity. Helping my city and being a first responder here have made me and my family extremely proud.

November 2022 the opportunity to take the promotional test to FDNY lieutenant presented itself. Originally, it was supposed to be years before but due to the covid pandemic it was postponed. I was extremely fortunate to have made it to 3 years by the time the test was given, as you need 3 years to take it. This again made me feel extremely fortunate. I studied and studied; I spent hours whenever I could find time deep in the books. As a single father, finding free time isn't always easy, but I knew it was worth it.

The day of the test came, and the nerves were plentiful. This test was as hard as I expected. Of course, as it should be being that we are constantly in life and death situations and the smallest mistake can result in loss of life of a member or civilian. I took every second allowed for the test, going back and forth question to question. I must have gone over it 4-5 times. Months went by with no scores released. I can't think of a reasonable explanation for why a multiple-choice test would not have the results available immediately.

5 months later the scores were released. I passed the test. My hard work had paid off, I passed with 70, but I still passed. Immediately I told my entire firehouse, my family, friends, everyone. It is my life goal to climb the ranks of this department and continue to serve this city as best as I can. Having passed this exam so early in my career has now set me up to be able to continue to take test and climb the ranks as far as I can.

I went right to the mock list that everyone on the job uses and put in my score and information. These have historically been extremely accurate. My number on the list was 810, right in the hire-able range, as they typically make at least 800 lieutenants from a list. I was ecstatic. I wouldn't be promoted for a few years, but that gives me more time to develop as a firefighter and when my time comes to be completely prepared to be an officer.

Then DCAS released the list. I was not 800, now I was 995. A significant drop. They quickly admitted to an error in scoring regarding seniority and released a second list. Now I was 1,170. My dream was falling apart before my own eyes. I was extremely disheartened and disappointed. Then word got out about the arbitrary decision to curve the test. I thought it was impossible, the NOE clearly stated a written score of 70 must be achieved to pass the test. Before any additional merit or seniority points. People who failed were on this list, and they were ahead of me.

As fortunate as I was to take this test with 3 years on, I was only afforded the minimum amount of seniority points. This curve allowed hundreds of others who failed, to not only pass the test

but to subsequently jump me on the list due to additional points granted from seniority or something else.

This arbitrary action to curve the test based on unknown factors by DCAS, not endorsed by the FDNY, has significantly impacted me and my career in an extremely negative way. It has made my dream of climbing the ranks of the FDNY seem now very unlikely. I am pleading with whatever powers that be, to whoever reads this, whoever hears this, to please correct this mistake by DCAS and to have the test graded traditionally. 1 question, 1 point. So that our test maintains its merit-based integrity and the rank of officer maintains the respect, prestige, and pedigree that it currently holds.

Thank you for your time and hearing my story.

Firefighter Sage Turner, Ladder Company 149.

[REDACTED]

From: Sal Bartolotta <salbart09@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:24 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee

[REDACTED]

My name is Sal Bartolotta and I am providing a testimony regarding the FDNY Lieutenant exam. I received a score of 89 after years of studying. This score got me a mock list number of 344. While not exact, mock lists in the past have given a good idea of where you will be on a list. This was based on a list of less than 1000 members who passed the exam. My official list number currently is 412. That means the current method of curving the exam which brought an additional 700 members who did not pass the exam onto the list, has brought me down approximately 70 names. This is substantial because it means i could be in a class 2 or 3 classes after the one I should have been in. With the nature of this job and its dangers, I could be injured in that time frame and miss additional classes and possibly never get promoted at all which would have a negative impact on my career. Thank you for your time.

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Sean Brunton <brunton.sean@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 10:59 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1PM CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR COMMITTEE

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,
Good evening, my name is Sean Brunton and I am a New York City Firefighter. I sat for, and passed, the most recent promotion exam for Fire Lieutenant in December of 2022. At no point since then have I received a final answer key from DCAS, what questions or answers were changed or what my actual final score is. I was placed on a list of eligible firefighters based on miscalculations made by DCAS. I am sitting at number 803 on that list and I know there are members who failed the exam but are being given points for seniority or meritorious acts that are surpassing me on this list. This was the first computer-based lieutenant exam given and to say it was and has been a boondoggle since would be an understatement. Take, for example, the exam for Fire Battalion Chief that was administered on Wednesday February 28th, 2024. When the members taking that exam finished, the computer gave them a raw score right then and there. Fire Lieutenant exam takers waited months for that raw score. Time will tell if the Battalion Chiefs exam faces the same hinderances as ours. I implore any and all members of the council to demand DCAS score our test the way it is spelled out in the Notice of Exam. 70 percent on a 100 question test means you need 70 right answers to pass and be eligible for your seniority and merit points. This should not take a Herculean effort to make right. Thank you for your time and consideration Respectfully Submitted, Sean Brunton

[REDACTED]

From: TJ Touhey <tjtouhey@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:25 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm Civil service and labor committee

[REDACTED]

Good morning,

I'm writing this morning to convey my frustrations with DCAS' handling of the most recent FDNY Lieutenants promotional exam. After over a 2 year delay in giving the exam, we have now been waiting over 14 months for a candidate list. In that time DCAS issued a list with the incorrect seniority formula applied which was corrected, however there is now a curve or some other scoring variation applied. I can only speculate as to how the exam was scored because DCAS has not explained the scoring or anything else to the FDNY or the members that sat for the exam since the seniority error was corrected. I spent nearly 4 years of my life studying for this exam to put myself in the best position to be promoted and provide better for my family only to have DCAS not do their job. Listening to the hearing on 2/27 they now seem to be misleading the committee in an effort to save face or to try to hide their inability to perform the sole purpose of their job. I hope we can find a fair and transparent solution to this situation.

Have a great day,

Thomas Touhey Jr
Tjtouhey@gmail.com
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Vincent and Thuy Improta <vinimprota1@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:56 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm civil service labor committee

[REDACTED]

Good morning,

My name is Vincent Improta. I am a 2nd grade fireman. Due to my lack of time on the job this curve on the Lt test has negatively impacted my spot on the list. Since I don't have much seniority I had to study hard to get a good spot on the list. I ended up getting an 84 which should have been good to get promoted. Since a curve has been applied guys that didn't do as well but have a lot more time than me were able to jump ahead of me on the list. I feel there shouldn't be partial credit for wrong answers. It hurts a lot of guys that are in the same boat as me. I hope this could all be resolved. Especially for those that have waited a long time. I've still got to do 20 years on this job... it's the other guys that have been waiting for so long that I really feel bad for. There's a saying on this job that goes a long way. "Do the right thing."

Thanks for your time,
Vincent improta
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: vincent moss <vmoss34@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 2, 2024 4:53 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2/27 1pm civil service and labor committee

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Vincent moss, I have 5 years on the fire dept. I've spent two of those years studying for this lieutenants test, which DCAS has botched, meanwhile other FDNY promotional exams have come out with the correct scoring while our list #0569 still has yet to be rectified. I scored 94 and with my seniority I have a 78. My list number from the first list was 204, meanwhile the new list has me at 450. I should be somewhere around list number 300. This grading method used by DCAS does not work and punishes those who took time from their lives to study and better themselves and the people of this city. This grading system gives no reward to those who work hard and should be changed.
Sent from my iPhone

Zachary Mihalrad
City Council Hearing
2/27 1pm Civil Service and Labor Committee
Contact - (516)524-3033 zmihalrad@gmail.com

To whom it may concern,

My name is Zachary Mihalrad and I am currently a firefighter in Squad 252 in Brooklyn. I was initially hired in January of 2013 as a promotee from the FDNY EMS command. During this time I was among the first group of firefighters hired following an approximately 5 year hiring freeze that resulted from discrepancies in the exam #6019 that was ultimately discarded.

From the first day of the FDNY academy I had aspirations of rising through the ranks in my career. Unfortunately due to failing to meet the minimum 3 years of service eligibility requirements for the lieutenants exam at the time, I was forced to wait until the following exam which was expected to take place in May of 2020. After spending hours each day for 3 years studying for the exam, it was cancelled due to unforeseen complications of the Covid-19 pandemic. At this time I had 7 years of service with the department. A fairly common timeframe with which to take a promotional exam. Through the delay, I knew that I would not only need to maintain my studying but would need to accelerate it in order to achieve a score that would offset the delay of my potential promotion by the Covid pandemic. By the time exam #0569 was administered in late 2022 I would have 10 years of service with the department. With more than 5 years spent studying for hours per day I was thrilled the process was finally at an end. I received my score of a 96 and paired with my seniority I was able to determine I would be in the first group of members considered for promotion.

In September of 2023 the finalized list was released by DCAS. As the council is already aware, this list was scored incorrectly. DCAS proceeded to acknowledge this error and released a revised list which once again had scoring discrepancies. Regardless, I knew I would still be in the first 30 names eligible for promotion. In the months to follow the Fire Department and DCAS would be at odds over the list being improper and proceeding with its usage. This impasse continues with no end in sight and minimal transparency for firefighters anxious to be promoted and continue with their careers. As a result, it has now been over 11 years since a promotional opportunity was offered to anyone following the hiring freeze of exam 6019 over 15 years ago. Historically by this time in their career past members have had the opportunity to have been promoted for multiple years and even have had the opportunity to take the following promotional exam for the rank of Captain. Furthermore, with this delay and lack of transparency members are unable to tend to their personal lives as it is unknown when they will be required to be available for promotion.

In closing I ask that you take the above into consideration in helping to bring an end to the impasse between DCAS and FDNY which to date has brought substantial hardship to many of us who simply wish to move on with our careers and consider serving the city and its residents to the best of our ability. Thank you for your time and consideration.

To whom it may concern,

I am submitting this testimony with regard to the current FDNY Lieutenants exam list.

I would like to start by saying that I have over 10 years as an FDNY firefighter, and this was my first chance to take a promotional exam within the department.

I was hired in January of 2014. The first promotional exam offered to me was December of 2022. Almost 9 years after I was hired. Due to covid, our originally scheduled exam was pushed back by years. Leaving many of us anxiously waiting to get the chance to advance our careers. The city took that away from us.

Specifically DCAS. Even after the pandemic ended, the employees at dcas were "working from home"

So December of 2022 came around and we finally got the chance to take the test. Nearly 3 years after it was supposed to be administered. Only to find out another year later that DCAS scored the test incorrectly and then refused to tell us why. Twice.

I still don't even know what my actual score is on the test. There has been zero transparency. We don't know how the test was scored. There are people who failed ahead of people who passed. Traditionally, you must score at least a 70 to pass the test. However, the last list that dcas put out had people who got 50's and 60's somehow on the eligible list of close to 1600 FF's.

The notice of examination clearly states you must receive a score of at least 70 to be considered eligible for promotion. However, there are many people who scored well below a 70 currently eligible if they kept the current unknown scoring.

They are denying us of our careers.
With no explanation. No rhyme or
reason as to why they scored it this
way. And more importantly they won't
even tell us why. It's beyond sneaky
and unprofessional. Not to mention
wrong on so many fronts.
With no end in sight we are told to just
be patient as nothing happens.
We put our lives on the line for this
city every day we go to work. We've
earned the right to be treated better
than this.
There is no reason why DCAS should
have this much power. In fact, there
should be an investigation into their
operation.
How could the self proclaimed
greatest fire department in the world,
and greatest city in the world allow
this to happen. It's a complete joke.
Please help our cause.
Thankyou

areuschle@gmail.com

To whom it may concern:

The FDNY Lieutenant exam is one of the most competitive city exams given. Members study for this exam for 2-3 years prior with hope of being at the top of the list, as every point can change your place by 50-100 names. After studying for 2+ years, COVID cancelled our exam that was scheduled for May 2020. At the time, the members assumed the exam would be given that summer, a two month push back. That expectation was far from correct, as we wound up taking the exam in December 2022. Many members continued studying throughout that time, not knowing when the exam would be given. We sacrificed holidays, vacations, time with our families and friends etc. just to put every extra time we had into studying. The city of New York deserves the best of the best leading the way into emergencies and fire situations. Being a Lieutenant means firefighters and civilians are relying on you, this is not a promotion that should be taken lightly. It should be given to those who deserve it. Those who put the time and effort in and sacrificed for it. Those members will be the most successful at the position and put the public in a better situation. We have now been waiting 15 months for the promotions to begin. We have waited 15 months and still no explanation on how and why the grades were curved and why there was no information prior to the exam that the grading scale would be anything other than 1 question wrong equals minus 1 point. We are supposed to be the greatest city in the world, yet we can't grade one hundred multiple choice questions and issue those grades in a timely matter, for a job in which the public and firefighters lives are at risk? The members are outraged. But more importantly, the city should be furious, you, the city council, should be furious. You should want the best of the best protecting you and your family, coming to you in your time of need. We need you to support the greatest fire department in the world. DCAS needs to grade the exam like all previous fire promotion exams have been graded. Grade the exam as outlined in the notice of examination when we registered to take the exam. Grade the exam like any elementary school would grade a multiple choice exam. At this point it is getting dangerous. There is a lack of Lieutenants, meaning the current ones are being over worked and injured, putting everyone at risk. Please support us in getting this rectified. Thank you.

NYC City Council

Thank you for taking the time to read the written testimonies from the members of the Fire Department negatively impacted from the DCAS scoring of the Lieutenants exam. Leading up to the exam in December of 2022, I had spent years of my life studying and preparing. I originally began with 1 to 2 hours a day and as the test got closer I was studying up to 5 hours a day, sacrificing time from my family and obligations. I also took educational classes that were offered and bought online testing material to help me prepare for the test. I stopped working a 2nd job to spend more time studying, figuring in the long run it would benefit myself and my family financially if I get promoted. My hard work paid off and I performed well on the test, with my seniority I was hoping to be promoted rather quickly.

It has now been almost 15 months since I took the exam and it has not been scored correctly. Since then my life has been in limbo. Family obligations and events were put on hold because I falsely believed that DCAS would fix the list and we would be promoted. All we ask is that the test is graded how we were told it would be graded originally, according to the NOE. This keeps people who failed the test off the list which then not only keeps fellow members of the department safe, but also the people of the city safer. This has been a mentally and emotionally exhausting process for my family and myself. I hope this can be resolved quickly and we can all move on to a fair scoring system so we can better serve our community .

The lack of transparency regarding the FDNY Lieutenant Exam scoring is extremely unethical, unprofessional and a detriment to the department membership.

We need a full explanation of the scoring metric and why the list was changed. I scored and 85 on the exam and originally had a list number of 551, which should be good enough to get promoted within 3-4 years. With the revised list my list number fell to 819. Historically the department only promotes around 800 members, so now due to the new grading metric that hasn't been explained, I probably will not get promoted. After studying hard, putting in the work to achieve a score that should allow me to get promoted, it doesn't appear to be the case due to DCAS' decision.

The lives and livelihood of hundreds of firefighters are dependent on the results of this exam. We have families, goals, and careers to plan for and DCAS at least owes us an explanation why this scoring metric was changed and why it has been handled so poorly with multiple lists, etc..

DCAS needs to change the grading metric back to the way it's been historically scored. This is the only fair way for the hardworking members who risk their lives for this city daily and ensure the best, hardest working firefighters get into the officer rank.

Back in December 2022 I sat for my first Lieutenant's exam. Based on the previous tests throughout the history of the job the parameters were set. One question worth one point required score of 70 to pass. After passing the written the members seniority and meritorious acts are averaged into the score to create a final score and develop a list. After this exam we were told that just over 900 people had passed the test which would have had me in the 700-800 range. When DCAS put out a list there were 1600+ members now on the list and I had dropped down to 965. This is the difference between most likely getting promoted and definitely not getting promoted. DCAS has not even given us any information on the new scoring system or how they developed the list. These delays are impacting everyone's career trajectory. Thank you.

I strongly advocate against promoting individuals who have failed the lieutenant's exam to the position of lieutenant. Doing so undermines the integrity of the promotion process and compromises the standards set for leadership roles within the organization.

Promoting candidates who couldn't meet the minimum requirements for the lieutenant's exam sends a message that competence and mastery of essential skills are not crucial for leadership positions. This practice risks diminishing the overall effectiveness of the leadership team, potentially leading to poor decision-making and inadequate guidance for subordinates. The amount of lawsuits that should be brought up against DCAS if an Officer who failed this exam is the cause of any civilian or firefighter's deaths due to not knowing how to react to certain situations due to lack of knowledge.

Moreover, it undermines the morale of those who diligently prepare and successfully pass the lieutenant's exam, as it erodes the perceived value of their hard work and achievement. A leadership team should be composed of individuals who have demonstrated the ability to meet and exceed the established standards, ensuring a cohesive and effective command structure.

In conclusion, promoting individuals who failed the lieutenant's exam is not only detrimental to the credibility of the promotion process but also jeopardizes the overall effectiveness of the leadership team. Upholding high standards for leadership roles is essential to maintaining a well-functioning and respected organization.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/27/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ROBERT ALEXANDER

Address: 1 CENTRE ST.

I represent: DCAS ASST. CMSR BUREAU of

Address: EXAMINATIONS

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/27/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michelle Tracey

Address: [Redacted] 7th Ave

I represent: Westchester Housing

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ronald Topping President Resident Council

Address: [Redacted] Westchester Ave

I represent: John Adams Housing

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sanford Cohen

Address: General Counsel

I represent: (DCAS)

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Katrina Porter

Address: Deputy Commissioner/Chief

I represent: Human Capital Officer

Address: (DCAS)

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kadian Outar

Address: 1 Centre Street NY 10007

I represent: DUAS

Address: 1 Centre Street

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/27/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DENIS SWEENEY

Address: [REDACTED] E 79 [REDACTED] 10021

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/21

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Leont Johnson

Address: [REDACTED] Bvt. 910 Ave [REDACTED]

I represent: SEIF

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms