

Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board



Preface

The Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, in recognizing the importance of physical fitness status for academy performance (and eventual job performance), has established the **Peace Officer Wellness Evaluation Report (POWER)** test for entering any of the Illinois certified police academies.

The POWER test will be provided to all candidates prior to entering the academy to see if each individual meets the standards. These fitness entrance requirements help to ensure that each recruit can undergo both the physical and academic demands of an academy without undue risk of injury and with a level of fatigue tolerance to meet all academy requirements. If the applicant does not meet all the standards, the recruit will not be allowed to enter the academy.

In an effort to brief police administrators and police applicants, this pamphlet will provide information on the rationale, purpose, testing and procedures, standards of performance and fitness activities to prepare for the POWER test. It is intended to answer the basic questions pertaining to all aspects of the fitness testing process. Any questions you may have about these standards should be directed to the Board's Office at (217) 782-4540.

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What Is Physical Fitness?

Physical fitness is a health status pertaining to the individual officer having the physiological readiness to perform maximum physical effort when required.

Physical fitness consists of three areas:

- Aerobic capacity or cardiovascular endurance pertaining to the heart and vascular system's capacity to transport oxygen. It is also a key area for heart disease in that low aerobic capacity is a risk factor.
- Strength pertains to the ability of muscles to generate force. Upper body strength and abdominal strength are important areas in that the low strength levels have a bearing on upper torso and lower back disorders.
- Flexibility pertains to the range of motion of the joints and muscles. Lack of lower back flexibility is a major risk area for lower back disorders.

Why Is Fitness Important as a Job-Related Element for Law Enforcement Officers?

- It has been well documented that law enforcement personnel (as an occupational class) have serious health risk problems in terms of cardiovascular disease, lower back disorders, and obesity. Law enforcement agencies have the responsibility of minimizing known risk. Physical fitness is a health domain which can *minimize the "known" health risks* for law enforcement officers.

Physical fitness has been demonstrated to be a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ). Job analysis that account for physical fitness have demonstrated that fitness areas are underlying factors determining the physiological *readiness* to perform a variety of *critical* physical tasks. These three fitness areas have also been shown to be predicative of job performance ratings, sick time, and number of commendations of police officers. Data also shows that the fitness level is predicative of *trainability* and academy performance.

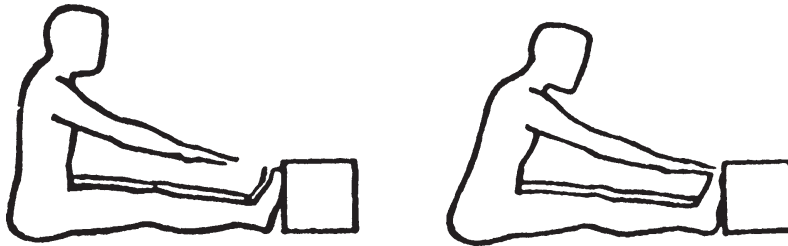
- Physical fitness can be an important area for minimizing *liability*. The unfit officer is less able to respond fully to strenuous physical activity. Consequently, the *risk of not performing physical duties* is increased.

How Will Physical Fitness Be Measured?

The POWER test consists of four basic tests. Each test is a scientifically valid test. It is recommended that five minutes of static stretching, using techniques approved by the Board, be completed prior to each test. A five minute rest is recommended between each test with a fifteen minute rest before the 1.5 mile run. The tests will be given in the following sequence with a rest period between each test.

1. Sit and Reach Test

This is a measure of the flexibility of the lower back and upper leg area. It is an important area for performing police tasks involving range of motion and is also important in minimizing lower back problems. The test involves stretching out to touch the toes or beyond with extended arms from the sitting position. *The score is in the inches reached on a yard stick.*



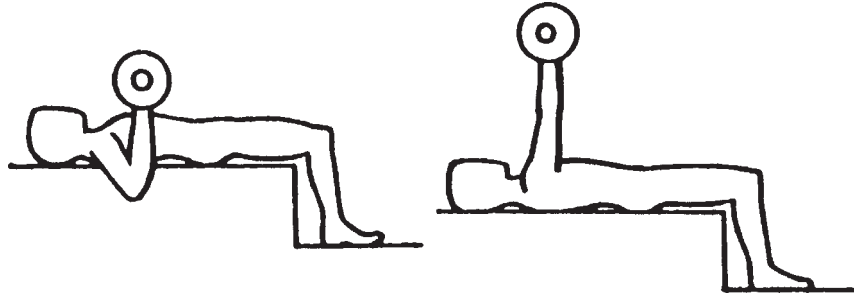
2. 1 Minute Sit-Up Test

This is a measure of the muscular endurance of the abdominal muscles. It is an important area for performing police tasks that may involve the use of force and is also an important area for maintaining good posture and minimizing lower back problems. *The score is in the number of bent leg sit-ups performed in one minute.*



3. 1 Repetition Maximum Bench Press

This is a maximum weight pushed from the bench press position and measures the amount of force the upper body can generate. It is an important area for performing police tasks requiring upper body strength. *The score is a ratio of weight pushed divided by body weight.*



4. 1.5 Mile Run

This is a timed run to measure the heart and vascular system's capability to transport oxygen. It is an important area for performing police tasks involving stamina and endurance and to minimize the risk of cardiovascular problems. *The score is in minutes and seconds.*



What Are the Standards?

- The actual performance requirement for each test is based upon norms for a national population sample.
- The applicant must pass every test.
- The required performance to pass each test is based upon age (decade) and sex. While the absolute performance is different for the eight categories, the relative level of effort is identical for each age and sex group. All recruits are being required to meet the same percentile range in terms of their respective age/sex group. The performance requirement is that level of physical performance that approximates the 40th percentile for each age and sex group.

POWER CHART

TEST	MALE				FEMALE			
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59
Sit and Reach	16.0	15.0	13.8	12.8	18.8	17.8	16.8	16.3
1 Minute Sit-Up	37	34	28	23	31	24	19	13
Maximum Bench Press Ratio	.98	.87	.79	.70	.58	.52	.49	.43
1.5 Mile Run	13.46	14.31	15.24	16.21	16.21	16.52	17.53	18.44

How Does One Prepare for the Power Test?

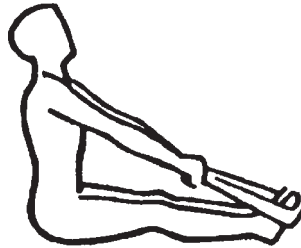
1. Preparing for the Sit and Reach Test

Performing sitting type of stretching exercises daily will increase this area. There are two recommended exercises.

Sit and Reach. Do 5 repetitions of this exercise. Sit on the ground with legs straight. Slowly extend forward at the waist and extend the fingertips toward the toes (keeping legs straight). Hold for 10 seconds.



Towel Stretch. Sit on the ground with the legs straight. Wrap a towel around the feet holding each end with each hand. Lean forward and pull gently on the towel extending the torso toward the toes.



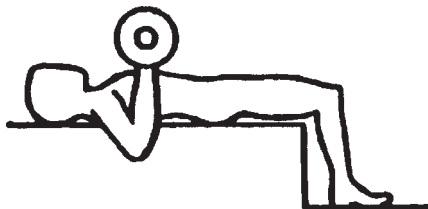
2. Preparing for the Sit-Up Test

The progressive routine is to do as many bent leg sit-ups (hands behind the head) as possible in 1 minute. At least three times a week, do three sets (three groups of the number of repetitions one did in 1 minute).

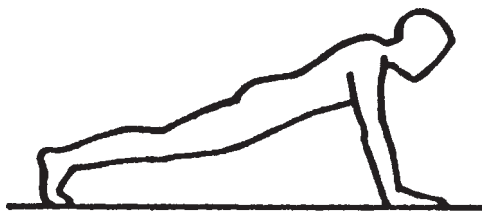


3. Preparing for the 1 Repetition Maximum Bench Press

If one has access to weights, determine the maximum weight one can bench press one time. Take 50% of that poundage. This will be the training weight. One should be able to do 8-10 repetitions of that weight. Do three sets of 8-10 repetitions adding 2 ½ to 5 pounds every week.



If one does not have weight equipment, then the push-up exercise can be utilized. Determine how many push-ups one can do in 1 minute. At least three times a week, do three sets of the amount one can do in 1 minute.



4. Preparing for the 1.5 Mile Run

Below is a gradual schedule that would enable one to perform a maximum effort for the 1.5 mile run. If one can advance the schedule on a weekly basis, then proceed to the next level. If one can do the distance in less time, then that should be encouraged.



Week	Activity	Distance	Time	Frequency
1	Walk	1 Mile	20'-17'	5/Week
2	Walk	1.5 Miles	29'-25'	5/Week
3	Walk	2 Miles	35'-32'	5/Week
4	Walk	2 Miles	30'-28'	5/Week
5	Walk/Jog	2 Miles	27'	5/Week
6	Walk/Jog	2 Miles	26'	5/Week
7	Walk/Jog	2 Miles	25'	5/Week
8	Walk/Jog	2 Miles	24'	4/Week
9	Jog	2 Miles	23'	4/Week
10	Jog	2 Miles	22'	4/Week
11	Jog	2 Miles	21'	4/Week
12	Jog	2 Miles	20'	4/Week