

**COMPETENCY MODEL FOR  
FIRE INSPECTOR  
CLASS CODE 2128**

The following competencies have been identified as those that best separate superior from satisfactory job performance in the class of **FIRE INSPECTOR**. (Numbers refer to the order of competencies in the Competency Bank.)

- 3. Judgment and Decision Making
- 7. Self-Management
- 18. Developmental Orientation
- 20. Job Knowledge
- 29. Fact Finding
- 34. Customer Service
- 45. Oral Communication
- 47. Written Communication

On the following pages are descriptions of each competency, including a definition, the level of the competency required for the class (*italicized*, **bolded**, and underlined), examples of behavioral indicators, and satisfactory and superior performance levels.

**3. JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING** – Accurately assesses situations, seeks new information if necessary, and applies all available information to reach sound conclusions/formulate effective response.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

Level 1: Training and guidelines needed to respond to immediate situations within very specific function are provided (or supervisor available to assist).

Level 2: General information and guidance to assist in responding to a variety of situations across a range of circumstances are provided.

**Level 3: Little guidance available for responding to a wide range of complex situations with far-reaching and/or enduring consequences.**

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Effectively responds to atypical situations.
- Asks questions or otherwise obtains additional relevant information to make a decision.
- Formulates a decision and necessary actions based on available facts.
- Correctly infers appropriate response based on information provided and existing policies, personal experience, and/or consultation with others.
- Discusses conclusions/possible responses with others before taking action as necessary.
- Considers impact of decisions on all affected parties.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Correctly assesses routine and unusual situations and reaches appropriate conclusions for actions needed. Obtains additional information and/or consults with others as necessary.

Superior

Evaluates new situations accurately to establish an appropriate response or plan of action. Recognizes the impact on all affected parties, as well as the possible ramifications and/or repercussions of setting a precedent.

**7. SELF MANAGEMENT** – Organizes and plans for task accomplishment; manages time and works diligently to complete assigned work/fulfill responsibilities.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

Level 1: Order tasks for efficient performance; maintain awareness of time allotted and deadlines in order to ensure they are met.

**Level 2: Plan and perform work in a way that maximizes efficient performance; establish and adjust priorities to ensure timely completion of most critical assignments.**

Level 3: Allot time to responsibilities proportional to their prominence, priority, and impact.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Performs only work activities during work hours.
- Alters means of performing work when original approach proves to waste time.
- Keeps a “to do” list (with indication of priority and deadlines, if necessary).
- Requests assistance as necessary when it becomes clear that work will not be completed on time.
- Demonstrates a record of progress with respect to all assignments/responsibilities.
- Uses optimal means of communication for efficiency and effectiveness.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Conducts self while at work in a manner that ensures work will be completed as scheduled, or provides explanation or secures assistance or adjustment of schedule if it will not be.

Superior

Seeks efficiencies in doing work to maximize productivity. Plans work carefully and follows the plan or makes adjustments if it is disrupted. Maintains personal responsibility for all work accomplishment.

**18. DEVELOPMENTAL ORIENTATION**– Seeks out education, training and/or experience to enhance current job performance and/or promotion potential.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

**Level 1: Continually seek developmental opportunities to improve performance of current job.**

Level 2: Pursue developmental opportunities to expand performance of current job and/or improve the probability of promotion.

Level 3: Participate in sufficient breadth and depth of developmental activities to acquire expertise in specific areas.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Identifies appropriate training opportunities.
- Requests and justifies need for training.
- Reads job-related material beyond that required for the job.
- Specifies promotional goals in order to prepare properly.
- Completes degree or certification program.
- Successfully completes college courses related to the job or promotional objective.
- Seeks assignments to develop specific competencies.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Willingly participates in training; learns and applies new information. Recognizes the relationship of personal development to promotion.

Superior

Actively pursues training opportunities and other developmental activities at work and on own time. Strives for mastery of current assignment and identifies promotional options and associated developmental needs.

**20. JOB KNOWLEDGE** – Knows information required to perform a specific job. Includes both widely available courses of study (for example, chemistry, human resources management, graphic arts) and City-specific information (parking regulation and ticketing practices; purchasing procedures; provisions of the City Charter).

Level of Competency Required by Job:

**Level 1:** ***Knowledge is concrete, factual, and/or procedural and may be defined by the organization. Situations in which it is applied are quite consistent.***

Level 2: Knowledge is substantive and may be defined by an external trade, field, or profession. Situations in which it is applied vary and, as such, require breadth and depth of understanding.

Level 3: Knowledge is abstract, conceptual, and/or complex and may be supported by a well-defined academic discipline or authoritative sources (e.g., laws, ordinances, government guidelines/regulations/codes). Situations in which it is applied may vary greatly or be novel.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Performs work correctly/avoids technical (job content related) errors.
- Answers technical questions about work accurately.
- Asks few technical questions about the performance of routine work activities.
- Offers advice (“coaching”) to new employees regarding their work.
- Develops training programs for other employees.
- Sought out as a source of information by others.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Sufficient job knowledge to perform work correctly independently. Answers technical questions about work correctly.

Superior

Expertise in technical job information sufficient to serve as a resource to others. May develop training manuals/ programs and/or give internal and/or external presentations related to work.

## **Job Knowledge Areas**

### **I. FIRE PREVENTION**

1. Knowledge of and ability to read and interpret building plans, including interpretation of scale, legend, and symbols, sufficient to determine whether on-site construction conforms to the approved plans.
2. Knowledge of fire and life safety violations sufficient to detect unsafe conditions, appliances, devices, and systems.
3. Knowledge of the procedures used for brush clearance compliance sufficient to evaluate brush clearance proposals and performance.
4. Knowledge of and ability to estimate contractor work-hours required to bring a property into compliance with brush clearance laws, codes, and ordinances.
5. Knowledge of and ability to distinguish between unsafe conditions posing an immediate severe fire and life safety threat and those that may be allowed a reasonable period for remediation.
6. Knowledge of and ability to determine which law or code takes precedence when there are conflicting requirements regarding particular fire prevention or life safety situation.
7. Knowledge of the range of inspection priorities applied to structures and properties subject to inspection.
8. Knowledge of and ability to write sufficiently to fill out forms such as violation notices, permanent records of each structure's inspection history, and daily activity logs in order to document the inspection status of various structures or properties and the amount of work completed by the inspector.
9. Knowledge of and ability to interpret rough line drawings and sketches of floor plans, seating arrangements, site maps, tank installations, or fire protection systems and equipment to communicate or document fire scenes or changes required to meet fire and life safety requirements.
10. Knowledge of the physical layout of the assigned inspection district.
11. Knowledge of and ability to read street maps sufficient to plan the most efficient route of travel among a number of locations and to find the locations once in the field.
12. Knowledge of LAFD radio operation and communication procedures such as proper radio language, uses of different channels, and radio maintenance and care.

13. Knowledge of and ability to use arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) sufficient to perform calculations, fee schedules, and amount of time and mileage spent on a particular activity.

## **II. LAWS, ORDINANCES, AND CODES**

14. Knowledge of the Los Angeles City Fire Code sufficient to conduct inspections; advise citizens on Code violations and how to correct them; monitor compliance with the various permitting processes; evaluate fire protection systems, devices and equipment; and fulfill all other responsibilities of a Fire Inspector.
15. Knowledge of Title 19 occupancies, such as high-rise buildings, public assemblages, schools, churches, institutions, industrial and commercial occupancies, and all State-owned and State-occupied buildings; and fire, panic, and explosion safety such as those detailed in Title 19 – Public Safety (California Fire Code) of the California Code of Regulations, in Chapter IX of the Los Angeles Municipal Code: Article 1 (Building Code), and in Part 2 (State Building Code) and Part 9 (California Fire Code) of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulation.
16. Knowledge of hazardous materials disclosure, storage (including underground tanks), handling, and use such as those detailed in Title 23, Section 6.95, of the California Health and Safety Code.

## **III. LAFD LIBRARY**

17. Knowledge of the Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) Books, Rules and Regulations, and General Orders as they pertain to the daily activities of a Fire Inspector and the daily operations of the Fire Department.
18. Knowledge of the LAFD Bulletins Manual, including Administrative, Training, and Departmental Bulletins as they pertain to the daily activities of a Fire Inspector and the daily operations of the Fire Department.
19. Knowledge of the LAFD Manual of Operations as it pertains to the daily activities of a Fire Inspector and the daily operations of the Fire Department.
20. Knowledge of the LAFD Driver's Training Manual sufficient to safely and legally operate vehicles according to the California Vehicle Code.
21. Knowledge of the LAFD Fire Prevention Bureau procedures, requirements, directives, bulletins, and standards pertaining to fire prevention activities.
22. Knowledge of the LAFD Accident Prevention and Safety Program sufficient to minimize the chances of employee accidents and injuries.
23. Knowledge of the LAFD Department Discrimination Prevention Policy Handbook sufficient to appropriately interact with employees.

#### **IV. KNOWLEDGE OF THE CITY AND OTHER AGENCIES**

24. Knowledge of the purpose and general structure of Los Angeles City departments and agencies that have functions related to the LAFD's fire prevention activities, such as the Department of Building and Safety, the Public Works Bureau of Sanitation (including the Industrial Waste Operations Section), the City Attorney, Office of Finance, and the Los Angeles Police Department Hazardous Materials Unit sufficient to coordinate enforcement activities, direct problems to the proper agencies for resolutions, or to request assistance or information.
25. Knowledge of the purpose and general structure of national and state offices and agencies that have functions related to the fire prevention activities of the Fire Department, such as the United States Fire Administration, National Fire Protection Association, California Department of Health Services, California Office of Architecture, California Fire Marshall, California Board of Equalization, California Housing Authority, and the California Water Resources Control Board sufficient to coordinate enforcement activities, direct problems to the proper agency for resolution, or request assistance or information.
26. Knowledge of the purpose and general structure of local offices and agencies that have functions related to the fire prevention activities of the Fire Department, such as the Los Angeles County Health and Social Services Departments, Los Angeles Unified School District, and South Coast Air Quality Management District, sufficient to coordinate enforcement activities, direct problems to the proper agency for resolution, or request assistance or information.

**29. FACT FINDING** – Obtains required information through questioning, review of existing materials, or securing new materials to answer a question or address a problem.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

Level 1: Look up information available in the workplace (including use of the internet) or by asking questions of co-workers or supervisor.

Level 2: Interview individuals and/or obtain necessary information from files, the library, and/or the internet.

**Level 3: Conduct in-depth interviews/interrogations or depositions. Locate obscure reference material containing germane information by correctly identifying needed information, making logical inferences regarding where it might be available, and discerning from newly acquired information relevant additional materials.**

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Asks a series of insightful questions in a logical order.
- Correctly identifies persons most likely to have the needed information.
- Listens carefully to responses from others to discern all relevant information stated.
- Makes logical assumptions about where certain types of information might be found; or asks others who are likely to know.
- Persists in locating relevant information until a sufficient amount is available to permit answering question or addressing the problem fully.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Obtains necessary information through scrutiny of existing files and other resources, correctly identifying and obtaining other sources of information, and/or asking questions.

Superior

Exhibits great insight in identifying who would have certain information, or in what materials it might be located. Carefully crafts questions to extract needed information. Persists until sufficient information is gathered to formulate a logical conclusion.

**34. CUSTOMER SERVICE** – Interacts with recipients of services (internal or external customers) in a way that provides accurate, timely, and effective information and service.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

**Level 1:** ***Interact with customers in person, over the telephone, or through e-mail (and/or other electronic media) in order to provide information or assistance. Listen to customer concerns; explain/reconcile information and provide alternatives if possible; facilitate resolution by making referral and/or following-up as necessary.***

Level 2: Promotes positive customer service. Serves as a model of providing exemplary customer service.

Level 3: Develop customer-oriented procedures; identifies changes in procedures to enhance customer service and ensures they are implemented.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Carefully listens to (or reads) customer statement of the issue.
- Provides direct, informative, accurate responses to customer.
- Suggests options if available.
- Maintains a positive attitude in the face of customer complaint or frustration.
- Remains focused on the issue presented by the customer and directs the customer back to the issue if necessary.
- Asks the customer if their concerns have been fully addressed.
- Ensures organizational policies and practices are customer-focused.
- Ensures all employees recognize their responsibility for customer service and are properly trained for it.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Displays knowledge as well as courtesy and patience when interacting with customers. Ensures customers' issue is correctly identified and remains focused on it until it is resolved.

Superior

Seeks further information or advice to resolve difficult issues. Solicits feedback on the effectiveness of service. Makes suggestions for improving service and facilitates changes needed to implement.

**45. ORAL COMMUNICATION** – Communicates orally in a clear, concise, and effective manner.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

Level 1: Exchange specific, job-related information orally with others in the immediate work environment or via telephone and/or radio.

Level 2: Obtain/provide/present general and/or job-specific information orally to a variety of others in various situations.

**Level 3: Obtain/provide/present a diverse array of information orally at varying levels of complexity to a wide range of others across many different situations and circumstances.**

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Audience clearly understands the intended message.
- Rarely must repeat information in response to questions.
- Refrains from use of unnecessary words, phrases, or jargon.
- Provides a level of detail appropriate to the situation (avoids too much or too little detail).
- Speaks at a level appropriate to the audience in terms of terminology, sentence structure, and simplicity/complexity of ideas expressed.
- Uses words with precision (vocabulary) to convey exact information.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Speaks clearly and audibly, providing the appropriate information and level of detail. Typically conveys the message on the first attempt. Answers questions accurately and directly.

Superior

Speech is direct and to the point. Speaks convincingly and with authority when appropriate. Maintains sensitivity to the audience while providing thorough information with the appropriate level of detail through the use of precise language.

#### 47. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION – Communicates effectively in writing.

##### Level of Competency Required by Job:

**Level 1: Write notes/e-mails. Completes forms with some open-ended responses (sentences).**

Level 2: Write letters, articles/reports, and/or detailed descriptions of activities/occurrences.

Level 3: Write lengthy reports, instruction manuals, in-depth analyses/reviews of complex issues and/or articles for publication. Reviews the written work of others.

##### Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Writing includes the necessary information to convey the intended message.
- Sufficiently few errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar to not interfere with the intended message or distract the reader.
- Little editing or re-writing needed to produce a final product.
- Composes materials efficiently.
- Information is presented in a well organized manner.
- Tone and degree of formality are appropriate to the purpose and audience.

##### Performance Levels:

###### Satisfactory

Writes material that clearly communicates the necessary information; needs little editing.

###### Superior

Precisely uses words and organizes information in a way that enhances presentation of the message. Virtually no editing needed.