



JANUARY 2021 COMMUNIQUE

PFPO Position Statement on Fitness Testing and Guidance Measures

The Police Fitness Personnel of Ontario (PFPO) acknowledges that the need to promote health, fitness, and lifestyle management to police personnel in the province of Ontario, especially during these unprecedented times is both necessary and challenging. The PFPO recognizes the potential risks that this presents to fitness appraisers and participants alike and continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely. The safety of all police personnel involved in the testing remains our absolute top priority.

COVID-19 Guidance

As with many professional practices, all fitness appraisers are expected to practice safely and work within their scope of practice. During the current COVID-19 pandemic this means following the guidelines and standards set by your police agency, particularly with respect to infection prevention and use of PPE. In addition, Fitness Appraisers should monitor the spread of COVID-19 to be able to make informed decisions by following the [Ontario Government](#), [Public Health Ontario](#), and [local public health units](#).

Pin Testing Extension for three months

Members of the PFPO Fitness Appraiser Instruction Committee met and decided that due to the extenuating circumstances that disrupted the usual opportunities to complete the annual fitness pin test, that a three-month extension to March 31st, 2021 be put in place. Fitness Appraisers may allow police service members to attempt their 2020 fitness pin test during this time. However, under no circumstances can one test be counted for both 2020 and 2021. A separate test for 2021 must be completed on a separate date in order to be valid.

Fitness Testing Guidance

Because policing is an essential service within the Province of Ontario, police agencies are continuing with recruiting practices, the Ontario Police College continues to train and qualify recruits, specialized units continue their selection processes and individual members need to stay motivated to be fit for duty, all of which require that fitness testing be performed. Therefore, the PFPO believes prudent measures for testing are required. PFPO Fitness Appraisers at police agencies who are being called upon to perform physical testing, need to follow their police service protection measures, and the PFPO guidance in the interest of personal safety and protection for the person(s) conducting the testing and for those being tested.

Pre-Testing Guidance

- *Police service COVID-19 screening needs to be done prior to PIN testing. This will be specific to each police service and may have been done when entered the facility. Usual screening includes health status questionnaire and temperature taken.*
- *Ensure all persons being tested are aware of the physical distancing (2 metre rule) requirement and have signed and returned PIN testing authorization forms.*
- *Review all pre-screening forms and document this review. Follow up on any information causing concern and do not test those not in full compliance or without full clearance.*
- *Coordinate testing in the smallest groups possible. Individual testing is preferred or in small groups (up to 5 persons) to assist with distancing.*
- *Ensure test scheduling allows extra time for extended pre and post-test cleaning of equipment.*

Testing Guidance

- *Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all times. This includes gloves, mask, and face shield/glasses. This is for your own protection and the protection of the participant.*
- *Keep testing time limited to a minimum (ideally less than 10 minutes as stated by Health Canada), when in close proximity to those being tested.*
- *Allow time between testing each participant thus minimizing the risk of airborne particles.*
- *Clean equipment that is used prior to and at the end of testing each participant. This includes the stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, mat, and the core endurance apparatus.*
- *The PFPO recommends that during the core endurance test, a mat be placed between the participant and the person holding them. As well, the person holding should face away from the participant.*
- *The PFPO suggests that the shuttle run be the choice over the 2.4 km run if possible, simply because it is easier to ensure physical distance is maintained. The preference is to be outside when conducting the shuttle run as the air movement in a gym may be stagnant and there is less chance for droplets to evaporate quickly. When completing the shuttle run make sure participants are at least 2 metres apart.*
- *All PFPO Fitness Appraisers must only use the tests they have been taught to assess. Any modification of the OPFA Pin Test is not permitted by the PFPO. If modified, the participant will have to forfeit their pin test result for the year and the Fitness Appraiser may be sanctioned up to and including having their certification removed.*

If you have any further questions or need clarification, please contact Jo Ann Rutledge, OPFA Lead Course Conductor (5701@yrp.ca).