

2026 SERGEANT PROMOTIONAL PROCESS EXAMINATION PLAN

The 2026 Sergeant Promotional Examination will consist of the following four phases and weights:

Phase I

Experience and Education	15%
--------------------------	-----

Phase II

Written Examination	25%
---------------------	-----

Phase III

Qualifications Appraisal Process	50%
----------------------------------	-----

Phase IV

Specialty Training Evaluation Matrix	10%
--------------------------------------	-----

The outline for the 2026 Sergeant Promotional Process is as follows:

Phase I - Application, Experience, and Education

When submitting their NeoGov (electronic) application for the Sergeant Promotional Process, applicants will be required to attest to their eligibility. Applicants will also enter information relating to their experience and education. Applicants are responsible for ensuring the information entered is accurate and the attachments are properly uploaded.

- An application will be required by those intending to participate in the promotional process.
- All applicants must meet the minimum qualifications by the application deadline.
- Applications must be completed online by **October 9, 2026, at 11:59 AM.**
- Applicants will complete the application using the Department's online application system, NeoGov. The application may be found on the DPS internal job opportunities page at: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/azdps/promotionaljobs>.
- Applicants will scroll to the bottom of the page to click on the link for 'Sergeant' to apply and then click on the 'Apply' link in the top right-hand corner.
- The job history and education portions of the NeoGov application do not need to be completed. **Candidates are required to upload education transcripts for this process, even if the NeoGov system has prior records on file.**
- Experience is calculated utilizing months of service as a DPS trooper through **October 9, 2026.** Human Resources personnel will determine experience scoring based on Human Resources records using verifiable total full months of service. A maximum score is achieved at 240 months.
- Education is calculated on a scale, beginning with 60 college credit hours and topping out with a master's degree, for a maximum of 100 points possible.

- Applicants shall select the appropriate number of completed college or university coursework credit hours, or the highest degree completed and attained. Any degree listed must be awarded from an institution recognized and accredited by a higher education accrediting organization identified and approved by the United States Department of Education at the time the degree was obtained. For audit and verification purposes, a copy of the applicant's diploma or unofficial transcript listing the degree awarded and/or classes completed must be uploaded at the time of application, even if the NeoGov system has prior records on file.
- Applicants will be required to upload supporting documentation, i.e., a diploma or, if claiming hours only, an unofficial transcript
- The Experience and Education information provided by the candidate will be validated by Human Resources and the process chairperson.
- The Experience and Education portion will be weighted as 15% of the candidate's overall score.
 - Of this 15%, experience will count as 50%, and education will count as 50%.

***The **Specialty Training Evaluation Matrix (STEM)** must be uploaded with the application. If the STEM Matrix is not uploaded with the application, the applicant **WILL NOT** receive points in Phase IV. The points earned by STEM will be added to candidates' scores after Phase III and before the final list is promulgated. Refer to Phase IV below for additional information.

Phase II - Written Examination

- Human Resources will administer the written examination in Phoenix the week of **November 2, 2026**.
- Late arrivals, without a compelling reason, will not be allowed to take the test and will be disqualified from the entire process.
- The written examination will be administered in two parts consecutively on the same day.
 - Part one will be a 50-question, timed **Closed Book** Knowledge Exam designed to examine the candidate's memory, decisiveness, and ability to recall critical information under pressure — similar to decision-making in the field.
 - Part two will be a 50-question, timed **Open Resource** Knowledge Exam designed to examine the candidate's problem-solving, resourcefulness, and ability to find and apply the right policy/procedure — similar to what a sergeant does on the job.
- Any candidate who does not receive a combined passing score of 70% or better on the written exam will be disqualified from the process.
- The written examination score will be weighted at 25% of the candidate's overall score.
- **After Phase I and Phase II are completed, the top 25 candidates, plus ties, will proceed to the Qualifications Appraisal Process.**
- Written examination scores will be provided to each candidate as soon as possible. An alphabetical list of candidates moving to Phase III will be posted on the Portal.
- Following Phase I and Phase II, there will be a minimum of 20 days to allow for review and challenges pursuant to LEMSC rule R13-5-305G.

Phase III - Qualifications Appraisal Process (QAP)

- The QAP will consist of a Qualifications Appraisal Board (QAB) and an operational exercise.
- Late arrivals without a compelling reason will not be allowed to participate in the QAP and will be disqualified from the entire process.
- Candidates will be asked to sign an instruction page indicating they have received the instructions and required materials.
- The QAB and operational exercise will be video recorded.
- The QAP will be weighted at 50% of the candidate's overall score. Of this 50%:
 - The mock practical exercise will be weighted 50%.
 - The qualifications appraisal board will be weighted 50%.
- For a candidate to move on to Phase IV, a passing score of at least 70% must be achieved on each of the two individual elements of the QAP and an overall passing score of at least 70% on the combined Qualifications Appraisal Process.
- **All candidates with a passing score in Phase III will proceed to Phase IV.**
- The QAP will tentatively be held the week of **December 7, 2026.**

Phase IV Specialty Training Evaluation Matrix

- The STEM format will be provided to applicants at the time of application. Applicants will complete the STEM, sign the Certificate of Verification, and attach the required documentation. The packet will be uploaded to the applicant's NeoGov application.
- Information provided by the applicant on their STEM will be validated by the STEM Committee.
- Applicants will complete the STEM form and attach it to their application.
- If the STEM was not uploaded with the application, the applicant **WILL NOT** receive points in Phase IV.
- Although the STEM scores are added in Phase IV of the process, the STEM must be submitted with the initial application, so only training or certifications completed by the due date (October 9, 2026) will be counted.
- The STEM will be weighted as 10% of the candidate's overall score.

Final Scoring

- The combined scores of the candidate's experience and education, the written examination, the QAP, and the STEM will be used to promulgate the final promotional eligibility list.

The top fifteen (15) scoring candidates, plus ties, achieving passing scores on the QAP, and after including the Phase IV STEM scoring, will be placed on an eligibility list in accordance with LEMSC Rules. The list will be effective on the date of promulgation and shall expire within the time specified in the LEMSC Rules. There will be no assurance of the number of promotions.

Major Frank Griego and Major Mike McLaren will be co-chairs of the 2026 Sergeant Promotional Process.

Working groups have been designated as follows:

Written Examination

Captain Jeromy McDonald
Sergeant Brad Elliot
Sergeant Kim Love-Ness
Sergeant Justin Fyfe
Sergeant Elliot Ness
Sergeant Eric Andrews
Sergeant David Duran

Specialty Training Evaluation Matrix (STEM)

Major Mike McLaren
Major Frank Griego
Captain Jeromy McDonald
Captain Kirk Phillips
Captain Tyler O'Sick

Qualifications Appraisal Process

Practical Exercise Development & Evaluation

Captain Tyler O'Sick
Sergeant John Rodriguez
Sergeant Cory Dillman
Sergeant Jason Lenhardt
Other Agency Sergeant TBD

Qualifications Appraisal Board (QAB) Composition

QAB Development & Evaluation

Captain Kirk Phillips
Sergeant Brandon Jardine
Sergeant Rick Ortiz
Sergeant Kenneth Ellis
Mesa Police Sergeant Jess Nicholson

SUGGESTED STUDY MATERIALS INCLUDE:

General Orders
All DPS Manuals
Law Bulletins (2005 – Present)
All DMRs
Title 13
Title 28
Title 38 (Chapter 8, Article 1)
Title 41 (Chapter 12)
Sergeant Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
Math
Law Enforcement Merit System Council (LEMSC) Rules
United States Constitution Bill of Rights
HPD Orders
CID Orders

Questions concerning the promotional process should be directed to Major Frank Griego at 623-760-6823 or EGriegojr@azdps.gov or Major Mike McLaren at 928-258-0040 or MMcLaren@azdps.gov.

TENTATIVE EXAMINATION TIMELINE

- E-Staff/LEMSC review and approval of Test Plan: Week of September 14, 2026
- Promotional process announcement: Week of September 21, 2026
- Phase I – NEOGOV Application and STEM due: October 9, 2026
- Phase II – Written Examination: Week of November 2, 2026
- Written Examination scoring, candidate notification: As soon as practical
- Phase III – Qualifications Appraisal Process: Week of December 7, 2026
- Phase IV – STEM points added: As soon as practical
- List Promulgation: Week of December 14, 2026

2026 SERGEANT PROMOTIONAL PROCESS SCORING

Experience is calculated utilizing months of service as a DPS trooper.

- Applicants will receive credit for verifiable total full months (rounded down to the next whole number, i.e., $9.2 = 9$; $9.4 = 9$; $9.5 = 9$; $9.6 = 9$; etc.) as a trooper. If there was a break in service, the cumulative time of all such occurrences shall be deducted from the total months calculated. A break in service is defined as a period of absence from agency service resulting from an employee's resignation, retirement, suspension, layoff, or leave of absence without pay. No time working for, or employed with, another law enforcement agency or military may be used.
- This portion is worth a maximum of 100 points and is capped at 20 years. The scoring in this portion is calculated as the number of verifiable months in grade divided by 240 (the maximum number of months scored), then multiplied by 100 to obtain the percentage score.

Education

Classes or coursework, either leading to or not to an accredited degree, will be scored on a scale as follows:

- No credit for 0-59 credit hours.
 - 60 or more credit hours equate to 25 points/AA Degree
 - 120 or greater credit hours equate to 50 points/not earning a bachelor's degree
 - A bachelor's degree is worth 75 points
 - A master's degree or higher equates to 100 points
- NOTE: Only the single highest-scoring degree will be counted for points.

STEM

- Applicants will receive credit for verifiable training courses and instructor certification.
- In Section I, Specialty Training, there will be a maximum of four (4) items, and candidates will receive twenty-five (25) points for each area they are certified in. The maximum number of points earned in this section is 100. This section is worth 30% of the STEM total.
- In Section II, Specialty Instructor Training, there will be a maximum of ten (10) items, and candidates will receive one (1) point for each full year they were certified in each area. The maximum number of points earned in this section is 100. This section is worth 30% of the STEM total.
- In Section III, Supervision, Management, and Leadership Development, there will be a maximum of five (5) courses listed. Points will be calculated based on hours of instruction for the respective course. Candidates will receive one (1) point for every ten (10) hours of classroom instruction for each course. The maximum number of points earned in this section is 100. This section is worth 40% of the STEM total.

LEMSC Rule 13-5-302.F states:

Human Resources shall apply standardized scoring to a multi-phased examination when the number of competitors is five or more.

LEMSC definition: "Standardized scoring," means a statistical method used to ensure that the various components of a multi-phased examination receive their proper weights.

The Department will utilize the Z-Score to fulfill the LEMSC requirements for Standardized scoring.

The formula for calculating the final Z-Score is:

Standard deviation for the sample
(STDEV.S)

$$\text{Sample Standard Deviation: } s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$$

Each phase of the examination will be scaled to its approved value.

Phase I (Experience and Education) will be multiplied by its assigned weight. (Applicant score *.15)

Phase II (Written Examination) will be multiplied by its assigned weight. (Applicant passing score *.25) After Phase I and II, the top 25 candidates will proceed to the QAP.

Phase III (QAP) will be multiplied by its assigned weight. (Applicant passing score * .50)

Phase IV (STEM) will be multiplied by its assigned weight. (Applicant passing score * .10)

The Z-score calculation will be applied only to the applicants who successfully completed all four phases of the examination.