

Examination Preparation Guide

for the Entry Level Police Officer Examination

Purpose of this guide

This guide was developed to assist you in doing your best on the Entry Level Police Officer exam. It will provide some advice and tips for preparing yourself to take the test and discuss strategy for taking the test effectively. While this guide may be applied to other written tests, it was specifically produced to provide guidance for this particular exam.

Preparing for the test

Tests are given to assure selection of the most qualified persons while providing all candidates a chance to compete fairly. Knowing the rationale for this test and having a realistic idea of the job can improve your chance to demonstrate your job potential.

This test is designed to assess:

- ▶ how well you observe things and how well you remember what you observed
- ▶ your basic writing skills
- ▶ your basic reading skills
- ▶ the similarity between your work preferences and experiences and those of persons who have been successful in a policing organization

So in the days and weeks before the exam, these suggestions can be offered:

1. Make sure you understand each step in the process to show your very best at each stage. Get a feel for what the job of a new officer or deputy is really like and what it will be like to be a police professional.
2. Make sure that you accurately complete any forms or requirements prior to the exam.
3. Try to take some time every day to improve your reading and writing skills. These skills are important for effective performance as a new officer or deputy and will be assessed by the test. Of course, these skills are also important in many other lines of work including those that would represent police promotions.
4. Try to get some practice taking other tests. This can reduce testing anxiety and improve your test taking strategies.
5. Organize your schedule so you can perform your best on the day of the test.

Getting ready the day of the test

1. Stick to your normal routine as much as possible. Some of the following suggestions may not be in your normal routine, but they usually allow most persons to perform at their best.
2. Get adequate sleep. Most adults do best with 7-8 hours. Try to adopt this pattern at least several days before the exam.
3. Get up early enough to have plenty of time to have a light, balanced breakfast.
4. Minimize the use of outside influences (food, caffeine, nicotine, entertainment, etc.) that might over or under stimulate you. The main thing is to not do anything too radical - and not too different than what is normal for you.
5. Arrive at the test early enough to cope with traffic, weather, parking, etc.

Taking the test effectively

1. Listen to instructions and directions from the test administrators. Make sure that you understand the instructions. Ask questions at the designated time before the test begins if you are unsure of any aspect of what you should do during the test.
2. Use your time carefully, especially on the first part of the test which is brief and closely timed. After that period, you should have enough time to cover the entire test if you move through it steadily and do not spend too much time on any one question.
3. Read the questions and alternatives carefully. Do not jump to an answer before you have completely read all of the alternatives.
4. Answer all of the questions. Use your informed judgment to make a choice between alternatives. This may feel like an "educated guess" but to the extent that it is informed, you are demonstrating a degree of knowledge and not just blindly guessing.
5. Don't worry about trick questions. None of the questions in this test is designed to be a trick question. The test is really intended to allow you to show your best on what it is assessing. Avoid reading too much into a question.
6. Take care of your answer sheet. Follow the test administrator's instructions on filling in your name and other information. Make sure that you fill in the bubbles, not making too light or small a mark - or one that goes out of the bubble. Make sure that the number of the space on the answer sheet you are marking actually corresponds to the question you are answering. Do not make stray marks or smudges on the answer sheet. If you change a response, make sure that you completely erase your first choice.