



PROBATION AND PAROLE OFFICER I

STUDY GUIDE/SAMPLE TEST

Probation and Parole Officer I

Meeting the job requirements for Probation and Parole Officer (see job announcement) and passing the examination are the first requirements for job consideration in Probation and Parole. This test is multiple choice and consists of 100 questions.

The test is comprised of the following sections:

	Sections	Questions
I.	Written Communications	1 - 30
II.	Reading Comprehension	31 - 50
III.	Probation and Parole Concepts	51 – 100

Tips for Taking a Multiple Choice Test

Here are some general hints that will help you take a test.

1. Look at the entire test.

As soon as the monitor tells you to begin, flip through the test to see what you have to do. This will let you know what to expect. You will have two and one half-hours for your test. Budget this time to give yourself time to finish the whole test. Then RELAX - take a deep breath before you start.

2. Read each question carefully.

Read the questions and all of the choices carefully. Make sure you are reading what has been written and not what you hope or want to see. Then, pick out the one, best choice that answers the question. Make sure you read each question as a separate question and answer it as a separate question. The answer to any one question is not intended to help you choose the correct response to other questions.

3. Look for the key words.

Read every word in the question. Sometimes there are key words that will help you pick the correct answer. Pay close attention to these words. If you overlook one of these key words, you could miss a question that you really know.

Some of these KEY WORDS are listed below:

BEST
COMMON
EXCEPT
GENERALLY

GREATEST
LESS
MORE
MOST

NEVER
NOT
SOMETIMES
USUALLY

4. Answer the easy questions first, but answer every question.

In this multiple choice test, all of the questions have the same value. You get as much credit for an easy question as for a hard one. Don't waste time on the hard questions. Answer all of the easy ones first, then in the time left over, go back and figure out the hard ones.

5. Don't be afraid to guess if you are not sure of the answers.

You will not get credit for a question unless it is answered. If you guess correctly, you will get credit and there is no penalty for guessing. If you are not sure which answer is correct, eliminate first the choices you know are wrong and chose your answer from the remaining ones.

6. Review your test.

When you have finished, review your paper and make sure you have answered all of the questions. Check the questions you were unsure of but make sure you have a good reason for changing the answer.

On the following pages, you will see samples of the types of questions that you will be expected to answer.

Written Communications

The 30 questions in this section measure your ability to use correct grammar, word usage and punctuation.

The first group of questions measures your ability to use correct grammar. For these questions, you are to choose the pair of words that will correctly complete the sentence.

Sample 1. I _____ a count of all _____.

- a. conducted – offender
- b. conducting – offenders
- c. conducted – offenders
- d. conducting – offender

Since the only grammatically correct sentence is "I conducted a count of all offenders," the correct response is "c". If you used the phrase "I conducting," the subject does not agree with the verb. The word "all" must be followed by a plural noun since offenders are considered items that can be separated into individual units.

Next, you are presented with questions that measure your ability to use correct punctuation. You are to choose the correct punctuation marks for the underlined phrase. The underlined phrase, as written, will always be option "a" and may or may not be the correct response.

Sample 2: Offenders are to meet with their Probation Officer on a regular schedule, to comply with contact requirements based on risks/needs assessments.

- a. schedule to
- b. schedule; to
- c. schedule: to
- d. schedule, to

Response "a" is correct. Additional punctuation does not add clarity as a pause is not needed to assist the reader in grasping the meaning of the sentence.

The last section measures your ability to recognize correct language usage. You are to choose the one sentence in each question that is the best example of clarity of expression, simplicity of style and correct English.

Sample 3: Select the most effective sentence.

- a. In extraordinary situations, where the Commission in its discretion, determines that the risk of serious physical harm could cause continuing loss of earning potential to the family of the employees involved, insurance protection may be provided.
- b. In very unusual situations, if the Commission chooses to do so and there is a risk of serious physical harm and prolonged risk of earning potential to the family of the employee, the Commission can determine to provide insurance protection.
- c. At the time the Commission chooses to determine that there is a risk of serious physical harm and continuing loss of earning potential involved to the family of the earning employee, the Commission can provide to allow insurance protection.
- d. In unusual situations, the Commission may determine that employees face serious physical risk that could cause a loss of wages. In such cases, the Commission can provide insurance protection.

Answer "d" is the correct answer. It contains all of the relevant information and is the easiest to read and understand.

Reading Comprehension

The questions in this section assess your skill in reading with understanding.

Sample 4: Probation and Parole Officers are responsible for interviewing offenders to obtain and verify personal, social and criminal histories as well as evaluating information and offenders' attitude toward offense to determine community risk. Then, they determine appropriate methods of addressing the offender needs based on the offender's stability and available community resources. They also monitor offenders' activities to ensure compliance with the conditions of probation and parole through field visits, office appointments and telephone contact. And, in some cases, the officers will investigate possible violations, request warrants for arrest and may assist law enforcement officials.

According to the above paragraph,

- a. an officer will spend the majority of the work day in the office.

- b. officers work independently of other law enforcement agencies.
- c. officers have little direct contact with offenders.
- d. officers' job duties fall in both the social/behavioral and law enforcement fields of study.

Answer "d" is correct. Probation and Parole Officers fall in the social/behavioral field when they evaluate and refer offenders for services. They also act as law enforcement agents when they investigate violations, arrest offenders and assist other law enforcement agencies.

Probation and Parole Concepts

The last section of the test assesses your knowledge of areas required by the field of Probation and Parole such as psychology, interpersonal skills, interviewing, case management and criminal justice.

Sample 5: Any strong emotional state will affect a person's

- a. current perceptions.
- b. genetic make-up.
- c. reflexes.
- d. past learning.

Answer "a" is correct. Emotional states cause physiological changes that affect the way events are perceived and remembered.

Sample 6: An individual wants information regarding your work. You should

- a. give out as few facts as possible.
- b. always refer the person to someone higher up.
- c. be frank in giving as much factual information as permissible.
- d. explain that you are not supposed to give information to outsiders.

Answer "c" is the correct answer. While some of your work may need to be confidential, explaining your work to individuals helps improve the department's public relations.

Sample 7: The main purpose of an interview is

- a. to get sufficient data to give a medical diagnoses of client's problem.

- b. as a way to explore the client's problem and help determine a treatment plan.
- c. as an inexpensive tool to gather information about a client.
- d. for statistical purposes.

Answer "b" is the correct answer. Gaining sufficient information about a client to determine the appropriate method of assistance is the main reason for interviews.

Sample 8: The aim of casework is to

- a. give financial assistance to help the client achieve success.
- b. find the cause of a person's difficulties and refer him to the proper source.
- c. help the person understand his problem and help him make a satisfactory adjustment through the use of a professional helping relationship.
- d. improve the person's environment.

Answer "c" is the correct answer. The purpose of casework is to help a person gain insight to his behavior and, with the support of a counselor, find better, more appropriate methods of dealing with his environment.

Sample 9: The most useful pre-sentence report is one that contains

- a. a diagnostic interpretation of the offence.
- b. the essential facts and recommended treatment.
- c. the essential facts about the offender.
- d. a supplemental psychological report.

Answer "b" is correct. This would give the courts the most information to use as a basis for an appropriate sentence.

