

JUVENILE PROBATION OFFICER I STUDY GUIDE

JPO I Test Description

Based on the job analysis results for Juvenile Probation Officer I (JPO I), a multiple-choice Written Exam with four sections was developed to measure the more important knowledge and abilities required at job entry of a JPO I. The four sections of the written exam include:

- 1) Basic knowledge of basic juvenile law, delinquency, and court procedures** measures knowledges such as knowledge of casework management principles, basic knowledge of the symptoms and causes of juvenile delinquency and dependency, basic knowledge of state, federal and local laws pertaining to the delinquency, dependency and juvenile status of children, knowledge of basic social work principles, knowledge of the symptoms of aggravated behaviors in juveniles, and knowledge of child supervision principles (status offender).

- 2) Interviewing and interaction skill** measure items such as skill in interviewing and counseling, ability to interact with individuals of various socio-economic backgrounds, ability to remain calm and exercise good judgment in dealing with individuals in crisis and potentially violent situations, and ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients other documents.

- 3) Reading and comprehension** measures your ability to read and comprehend technical written materials, ability to read, research, interpret, and reference laws, regulations, and various other documents.

- 4) Writing skill** measures knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar, ability to communicate in writing to include using proper grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary.

The Written Multiple Choice Exam will consist of approximately 115 questions. You will have three (3) hours to complete the exam. Each question has only one (1) correct answer. The multiple choice examination will cover several of the KSAs which were considered important and necessary at job entry by job experts. The questions appearing on the multiple choice exam were developed by the Personnel Department based on information provided by job experts in the juvenile probation field.

Item Analysis

After the written test is administered, an item analysis will be conducted to eliminate questions that, based on statistics, are too confusing, too hard, too easy, no correct answer, etc. The final scoring key for the multiple choice examination will include only those questions that are not eliminated. This procedure increases the validity of the test.

General Instructions for the 2015 JPO I Written Exam

1. This exam requires an Exam Booklet and an answer sheet. The Exam Booklet contains your items and response choices. The answer sheet is what you will use to mark your choices. To receive credit for your responses, you **MUST** mark your responses to the items on the answer sheet.
2. After you have read your instructions, carefully consider the items and their possible responses. Then, choose the **MOST APPROPRIATE** response.
4. After you have chosen the **MOST APPROPRIATE** response to an item, mark your choice on your answer sheet. Your score will be based on the responses which you indicate on the answer sheet.
5. You may write in the Exam Booklet. However, remember to mark your responses on the answer sheet. You will not receive credit for any responses made in your Exam Booklet.
6. Review your answers when you are finished if time is available.

Sample Multiple-Choice Test Item

Sample Items:
Example 1
1. A _____ is a tentative and testable explanation regarding the relationship between two variables. A. Critical Thought B. Hypothesis C. Theory D. Case Study
Answer: B
Example 2
2. A parent of a youth who has been charged with a crime comes to your office cursing and threatening you. What should you do first? A. Attempt to calm the parent down and explain the procedures B. Tell the parent to go to the Police Department C. Return their force with an equal force to back them down D. Tell the parent there is nothing they can do about it
Answer: A

Reference List

While some of the test items are found in the following two references, many of the items are based on general information learned during college courses in the behavioral and/or social sciences fields including items on basic grammar and reading comprehension ability.

JPO I Reference List for Written Exam:

- 1. Criminal and Juvenile Codes of Alabama**
- 2. Juvenile Court Rules of Procedure**

Scoring the Exam

Your score and ranking on the JPO I employment register is based on the number of items you answer correctly on the Written Exam. As noted earlier, an item analysis will be conducted for all items on the exam which may result in “bad” items being removed from the final list of items to be scored. “Bad” items refer to those with no correct answer, items where there are more than one correct answer, and/or items with difficulty levels too high or too low. After the test is scored, you will be provided with your standing from the Written Exam results.

Preparing for the Exam

WHAT SHOULD I STUDY?

Candidates always want to know how to study for a selection procedure. A knowledge is a body of information, usually factual or procedural in nature, which is applied directly to perform the job. Knowledges are based on things that have a source in which information can be extracted. Knowledges are usually the basis of written exams. There are many written sources which test developers can read and from which test items may be developed.

Upon reviewing the assessment dimensions and underlying KSAs, you will find that several knowledges are being tapped by the JPO I Exam. A candidate should review the sources of the knowledges if s/he is not fully familiar with the knowledge.

Three important things you can do to help prepare for the JPO I Exam are to (1) review the four JPO I Exam sections and underlying KSAs to become familiar with the basis for the criteria on which you will be scored, (2) read this candidate information guide to become familiar with the JPO I Exam process so that you will be more relaxed and less confused on the day of the JPO I Exam, and (3) thoroughly review the tips for taking the JPO I Exam exercises.

TIPS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE JPO I 'S EXAM

One of the best sources of information when telling individuals what they can do to increase their chances of performing well on the exams is to look at past actions of other candidates and mistakes that are commonly made. The following tips are based on what candidates may or may not have done in past selection procedures.

1. The exam is not designed to be tricky. The candidate who second guesses everything and who tries to "read something into" each exam is the person who later tells a staff member, "I knew the answer, but I thought that you were trying to get us choose answer X" or "Well, I thought that you wanted to answer the question with..." Don't read anything into exam questions. Don't try second guess the test developer and SMEs. We have gone to great lengths to make sure that we haven't included items that are tricky. That doesn't mean that items on this exam won't be challenging. But, the test developer and SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) have been careful to make everything as clear as possible.
2. Answer the questions based on your general knowledge of the targeted field.
3. Monitor your time carefully.
4. Carefully review the exam instructions before you begin. Make notes on these instructions as you deem appropriate.
5. Begin now as a JPO I. Start to think about the important aspects of the JPO I job including both the knowledge areas required and also the practical emergency response

aspects. Try to anticipate the types of questions and work sample skills that will be asked as this will help you to focus on key information. The exam developers have taken efforts not to ask questions regarding unimportant aspects of the JPO I's job.

6. Read the question and then try to answer it before looking at the possible responses. If you believe that you immediately know the correct answer, look for it in the possible responses.
7. For reading comprehension, read the questions before reading the passages. That way you can look for the correct answers while you study the passage.
8. Read each answer before making a response.
9. Review your responses before turning in your exam.
10. The JPO I's exam is intended to be challenging. We are trying to separate those JPO I applicants who possess the necessary basic knowledge, skills and abilities required for the job from those who may not at this time. The exam must be challenging to accomplish this process.