

**New York State
Department of Civil Service**

Committed to Innovation, Quality, and Excellence

A Guide to the Written Test
for the
Local Bay Constable Series

Opportunities at **work.**



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INTRODUCTION

The New York State Department of Civil Service has developed this test guide to familiarize you with the written test for the Local Bay Constable Series. This test guide provides a general description of the subject areas which will be tested and the different types of questions you may see on the test.

The written test for the Local Bay Constable Series has an overall time allowance of 4 hours. The following lists all of the subject areas that are included in this series. The exam announcement will tell you which of the following subject areas you will be tested on.

- 1. PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL:** These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences, followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from among four choices, the best order for the sentences.
- 2. EDUCATING AND INTERACTING WITH THE PUBLIC:** These questions test for a knowledge of techniques used to interact effectively with individual citizens and/or community groups, to educate or inform them about topics of concern, to publicize or clarify agency programs or policies, to negotiate conflicts or resolve complaints, and to represent one's agency or program in a manner in keeping with good public relations practices. Questions may also cover interacting with others in cooperative efforts of public outreach or service.
- 3. APPLYING WRITTEN INFORMATION (RULES, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, DIRECTIVES, ETC.) IN BAY CONSTABLE SITUATIONS:** These questions test for the ability to apply written rules to given situations similar to those typically experienced by Bay Constables.
- 4. UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING WRITTEN MATERIAL:** These questions test how well you comprehend written material. You will be provided with brief reading selections and will be asked questions about the selections. All the information required to answer the questions will be presented in the selections; you will not be required to have any special knowledge relating to the subject areas of the selections.
- 5. NEW YORK STATE LAWS:** These questions test for knowledge of the laws in effect on January 1, 2010 that may be encountered in the course of day-to-day work-related activities. The questions will cover such areas as the Criminal Procedure Law, Environmental Conservation Law, Navigation Law and Penal Law.
- 6. SUPERVISION:** These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices employed in planning, organizing, and controlling the activities of a work unit toward predetermined objectives. The concepts covered, usually in a situational question format, include such topics as assigning and reviewing work; evaluating performance; maintaining work standards; motivating and developing subordinates; implementing procedural change; increasing efficiency; and dealing with problems of absenteeism, morale, and discipline.

INTRODUCTION (cont.)

7. **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISION:** These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices involved in directing the activities of a large subordinate staff, including subordinate supervisors. Questions relate to the personal interactions between an upper level supervisor and his/her subordinate supervisors in the accomplishment of objectives. These questions cover such areas as assigning work to and coordinating the activities of several units, establishing and guiding staff development programs, evaluating the performance of subordinate supervisors, and maintaining relationships with other organizational sections.
8. **ADMINISTRATION:** These questions test for knowledge of the managerial functions involved in directing an organization or an organizational segment. These questions cover such areas as: developing objectives and formulating policies; making decisions based on the context of the administrator's position and authority; forecasting and planning; organizing; developing personnel; coordinating and informing; guiding and leading; testing and evaluating; and budgeting.

The remainder of this test guide explains how you will be tested in each of the subject areas listed above. A **TEST TASK** is provided for each subject area. This is an explanation of how a question will be presented and how to correctly answer it. Read each explanation carefully. This test guide provides at least one **SAMPLE QUESTION** for each subject area. The sample questions will be similar to what will be presented on the actual test. This test guide provides the **SOLUTION** and correct answer(s) to each sample question. You should study these in order to understand how the correct or best answers were determined.

SUBJECT AREA 1

PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL: These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four suggestions, the best order for the sentences. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: There are two separate test tasks in this subject area.

- For the first, **Information Presentation**, you will be given information in two or three sentences, followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version.
- For the second, **Paragraph Organization**, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order, and then be asked to choose, from among four choices, the best order for the sentences.

INFORMATION PRESENTATION SAMPLE QUESTION:

Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions. His failure to take proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Which one of the following best presents the information above?

- A. Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions that caused a personal injury accident.
- B. Proper precautions, which Martin Wilson failed to take, caused a personal injury accident.
- C. Martin Wilson's failure to take proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.
- D. Martin Wilson, who failed to take proper precautions, was in a personal injury accident.

The best answer to this sample question is C.

SOLUTION:

Choice A conveys the incorrect impression that proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Choice B conveys the incorrect impression that proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Choice C best presents the original information: Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions and this failure caused a personal injury accident.

Choice D states that Martin Wilson was in a personal injury accident. The original information states that Martin Wilson caused a personal injury accident, but it does not state that Martin Wilson was in a personal injury accident.

SUBJECT AREA 1 (cont.)

PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL cont.

PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION SAMPLE QUESTION:

The following question is based upon a group of sentences. The sentences are shown out of sequence, but when correctly arranged, they form a connected, well-organized paragraph. Read the sentences, and then answer the question about the best arrangement of these sentences.

1. Eventually, they piece all of this information together and make a choice.
2. Before actually deciding upon a human services job, people usually think about several possibilities.
3. They imagine themselves in different situations, and in so doing, they probably think about their interests, goals, and abilities.
4. Choosing among occupations in the field of human services is an important decision to make.

Which one of the following is the best arrangement of these sentences?

- A. 2-4-1-3
- B. 2-3-4-1
- C. 4-2-1-3
- D. 4-2-3-1

The best answer to this sample question is D.

SOLUTION:

Choices A and C present the information in the paragraph out of logical sequence. In both **A** and **C**, sentence 1 comes before sentence 3. The key element in the organization of this paragraph is that sentence 3 contains the information to which sentence 1 refers; therefore, in logical sequence, sentence 3 should come before sentence 1.

Choice B also presents the information in the paragraph out of logical sequence. Choice **B** places the main idea of the paragraph (Sentence 4) in between two detail sentences (Sentences 1 and 3). The logical sequence of the information presented in the paragraph is therefore interrupted.

Choice D presents the information in the paragraph in the best logical sequence. Sentence 4 introduces the main idea of the paragraph: "choosing an occupation in the field of human services." Sentences 2-3-1 then follow up on this idea by describing, in order, the steps involved in making such a choice. Choice **D** is the best answer to this sample question.

SUBJECT AREA 2

EDUCATING AND INTERACTING WITH THE PUBLIC: These questions test for a knowledge of techniques used to interact effectively with individual citizens and/or community groups, to educate or inform them about topics of concern, to publicize or clarify agency programs or policies, to negotiate conflicts or resolve complaints, and to represent one's agency or program in a manner in keeping with good public relations practices. Questions may also cover interacting with others in cooperative efforts of public outreach or service. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be presented with a variety of situations in which you must apply knowledge of how best to interact with other people.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

A person approaches you expressing anger about a recent action by your department. Which one of the following should be your **first** response to this person?

- A. Interrupt to say you cannot discuss the situation until he calms down.
- B. Say you are sorry that he has been negatively affected by your department's action.
- C. Listen and express understanding that he has been upset by your department's action.
- D. Give him an explanation of the reasons for your department's action.

The correct answer to this sample question is choice C.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is not correct. It would be inappropriate to interrupt. In addition, saying that you cannot discuss the situation until the person calms down will likely aggravate him further.

Choice B is not correct. Apologizing for your department's action implies that the action was improper.

Choice C is the correct answer to this question. By listening and expressing understanding that your department's action has upset him, you demonstrate that you have heard and understand his feelings and point of view.

Choice D is not correct. While an explanation of the reasons for the action may be appropriate at a later time, at this moment the person is angry and would not be receptive to such an explanation.

SUBJECT AREA 3

APPLYING WRITTEN INFORMATION (RULES, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, DIRECTIVES, ETC.) IN BAY CONSTABLE SITUATIONS: These questions test for the ability to apply written rules to given situations similar to those typically experienced by Bay Constables. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be given a set of rules, regulations, or other written information to read. You will then be asked a question which requires you to apply the rule to a given situation.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

RULE: Patrol watercraft should be checked at the start of each shift. Do not assume that the watercraft is in satisfactory condition. Check all of the lighting equipment, all emergency equipment, safety equipment and fuel levels. Check the body of the watercraft for damaged or missing parts and report any problems, damage, or discrepancies to your supervisor. At the end of your shift, leave the watercraft in optimum condition for emergency use by the next officer.

SITUATION: Officer Burton is about to begin her patrol shift when she discovers that her watercraft has a large dent on the right exterior side of the motor boat. She knows that the watercraft did not have this dent yesterday, when she used it.

Based solely on the above Rule and Situation, Officer Burton should most properly

- A. request that she be assigned a different watercraft
- B. begin her shift and be alert to any operating problems
- C. find out what other officers have used the watercraft since her last shift
- D. inform her supervisor about the large dent

The correct answer to this sample question is choice D.

SOLUTION: *The Situation states that Officer Burton has discovered a large dent on the right exterior side of her patrol watercraft that did not exist when she last used it. The question asks what she should do about it. To answer the question, evaluate all of the choices.*

Choice A *is not correct. It states that the officer should request a different watercraft. There is nothing in the rule that states that the officer should do this. Choice A is incorrect.*

Choice B *is not correct. It states that the officer should begin her shift and be alert to any operating problems. The rule states that the officer should report any problems with the watercraft to her supervisor. Choice B is incorrect.*

Choice C *is not correct. It states that the officer should find out what other officers have used the watercraft since her last shift. There is nothing in the rule that states that the officer should do this. Choice C is incorrect.*

Choice D *is the correct answer to this question. It states that the officer should inform her supervisor about the damage. This conforms to the given rule that states that the officer should report any problems, damage, or discrepancies to her supervisor. Choice D is the correct answer.*

SUBJECT AREA 4

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING WRITTEN MATERIAL: These questions test how well you comprehend written material. You will be provided with brief reading selections and will be asked questions about the selections. All the information required to answer the questions will be presented in the selections; you will not be required to have any special knowledge relating to the subject areas of the selections. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: For each question, you will be provided with a brief written selection, followed by a question and a set of alternative statements relating to the selection. You must choose the statement that best answers the question. Your answer should be based on the information found in the selection only, NOT on knowledge you may have about the subject from other sources.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

“The increasing demands upon our highways from a growing population and the development of forms of transportation not anticipated when the highways were first built have brought about congestion, confusion, and conflict, until the yearly toll of traffic accidents is now at an appalling level. If the death and disaster that traffic accidents bring throughout the year were concentrated into one calamity, we would shudder at the tremendous catastrophe. The loss is no less catastrophic because it is spread out over time and space.”

Which one of the following statements concerning the yearly toll of traffic accidents is best supported by the passage above?

- A. It is increasing the demands for safer means of transportation.
- B. It has resulted in increased congestion, confusion, and conflict on our highways.
- C. It does not shock us as much as it should because the accidents do not all occur together.
- D. It has resulted mainly from the new forms of transportation.

The correct answer to this sample question is C.

SOLUTION: To answer this question correctly, you must evaluate each choice against the written selection and determine the one that is best supported by the written selection.

Choice A: *Nowhere in the passage does it say that there has been any demand for safer means of transportation. Someone who picks this choice may believe that there could be or should be a demand for safer transportation, but there is nothing in the passage to base it on. This choice is incorrect.*

Choice B: *The passage states that it is the congestion, confusion, and conflict which results in the high toll of traffic accidents and not the other way around. A person who picks this choice could either be confused as to which is the cause and which is the effect or not have read the choice carefully. This choice is incorrect.*

Choice C: *This choice is supported by the last two sentences in the passage. The writer says, “If ..., we would shudder.” (A shudder is a response to shock.) The implication is that we don’t shudder because traffic accidents do not all occur at the same time and place. The writer then points out that we should think of the yearly toll as being catastrophic (shocking) even though the accidents are spread out over time and space. This choice is supported by the information in the passage.*

Choice D: *There are two reasons given in the passage for the high accident rate. One is the development of new forms of transportation; the other is the increased highway use from a growing population. Neither one is described as the main reason. It is clearly incorrect to say that the new forms of transportation are the main reason. This choice is incorrect.*

SUBJECT AREA 5

NEW YORK STATE LAWS: These questions test for knowledge of the laws in effect on January 1, 2010 that may be encountered in the course of day-to-day work-related activities. The questions will cover such areas as the Criminal Procedure Law, Environmental Conservation Law, Navigation Law and Penal Law. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be asked to answer questions which will require you to demonstrate knowledge of job-related portions of the Criminal Procedure Law, Environmental Conservation Law, Navigation Law and Penal Law.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Bay Constables in certain jurisdictions are *Persons designated as peace officers* by the New York State

- A. Criminal Procedure Law
- B. Environmental Conservation Law
- C. Navigation Law
- D. Penal Law

The correct answer to this sample question is choice A.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is the correct answer to this question. *The New York State Criminal Procedure Law Section 2.10 designates Bay Constables of certain jurisdictions as having peace officer status.*

Choices B is not correct. *The Environmental Conservation Law does not designate Bay Constables of certain jurisdictions as having peace officer status.*

Choice C is not correct. *The Navigation Law does not designate Bay Constables of certain jurisdictions as having peace officer status.*

Choice D is not correct. *The Penal Law does not designate Bay Constables of certain jurisdictions as having peace officer status.*

SUBJECT AREA 6

SUPERVISION: These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices employed in planning, organizing, and controlling the activities of a work unit toward predetermined objectives. The concepts covered, usually in a situational question format, include such topics as assigning and reviewing work; evaluating performance; maintaining work standards; motivating and developing subordinates; implementing procedural change; increasing efficiency; and dealing with problems of absenteeism, morale, and discipline. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be presented with situations in which you must apply knowledge of the principles and practices of supervision in order to answer the questions correctly.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Assume that the unit you supervise is given a new work assignment and that you are unsure about the proper procedure to use in performing this assignment. Which one of the following actions should you take FIRST in this situation?

- A. Obtain input from your staff.
- B. Consult other unit supervisors who have had similar assignments.
- C. Use an appropriate procedure from a similar assignment that you are familiar with.
- D. Discuss the matter with your supervisor.

The correct answer to this sample question is D.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is not correct. *Since this assignment is new for your unit, your staff would not be expected to be more knowledgeable than you about the proper procedure.*

Choice B is not correct. *Although discussing this matter with other supervisors may increase your knowledge of the new assignment, similar assignments performed in other units may differ in some important way from your new assignment. Other units may also function differently from your unit, so the procedures used to perform similar assignments may differ accordingly.*

Choice C is not correct. *Since this assignment is new for your unit, you would have no way of knowing whether the procedure from a similar assignment is appropriate to use. You would need someone with the appropriate knowledge, usually your supervisor, to determine if the procedure from a similar assignment could be used before you actually employed this procedure in the performance of your new assignment.*

Choice D is the correct answer to this question. *Your supervisor is more likely to be informed about what procedure may be appropriate for work that he or she assigns to you than would other unit supervisors or your staff. Even if your supervisor does not know what procedure is appropriate, a decision regarding which procedure to use should be made with his or her participation, since he or she has the ultimate responsibility for your unit's work.*

SUBJECT AREA 7

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISION: These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices involved in directing the activities of a large subordinate staff, including subordinate supervisors. Questions relate to the personal interactions between an upper level supervisor and his/her subordinate supervisors in the accomplishment of objectives. These questions cover such areas as assigning work to and coordinating the activities of several units, establishing and guiding staff development programs, evaluating the performance of subordinate supervisors, and maintaining relationships with other organizational sections. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be presented with situations in which you must apply knowledge of the principles and practices of administrative supervision to answer the questions correctly. You will be placed in the role of a supervisor of a section, which is made up of several units. Each unit has a supervisor and several employees. All unit supervisors report directly to you.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

You have delegated a work project to two unit supervisors and have asked them to collaborate on it. Later, you observe two employees strongly arguing about which one of them is responsible for a certain activity within the work project. The arguing employees work for different units. Which one of the following actions is most appropriate for you to take in this situation?

- A. Intercede in the employees' argument and settle it.
- B. Meet with the unit supervisors of the two employees and inform them of the situation you observed.
- C. Inform one unit supervisor of the situation and ask this supervisor to take care of it.
- D. Set up a meeting that includes both unit supervisors and both employees to resolve the situation.

The correct answer to this sample question is B.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is not correct. In your position, you supervise properly by giving direction through your unit supervisors. By taking this choice, you are not allowing your unit supervisors to handle a problem involving their staff members. Also, it is not reasonable that you would be able to settle the employees' dispute. Earlier, you delegated the work project to the two unit supervisors, who would be responsible for assigning activities related to the project. The two unit supervisors must deal with the problem.

Choice B is the correct answer to this question. The two unit supervisors are collaborating on the work project and therefore giving the assignments. You should meet with them and tell them about the employees' argument. The unit supervisors should be informed about the point of contention and the fact that the two employees had a heated argument. The unit supervisors must then work out a way to handle the situation.

Choice C is not correct. Speaking to only one supervisor about the situation means that the second supervisor may be uninformed, or only partly informed, about the situation. You cannot be assured that the first supervisor will include the second supervisor in finding a way to settle the issue. If the first unit supervisor chooses to handle the situation on his own and speak to both employees, this supervisor would be giving direction to one employee from another unit. This is not good supervisory practice. Also, in taking Choice C, you are favoring one supervisor and slighting the other.

Choice D is not correct. The unit supervisors need to come up with a way of handling the situation that you observed. To do this, they must be informed without the employees present. Also, by including the employees in the meeting, you may get a replay of their earlier argument, which is not helpful.

SUBJECT AREA 8

ADMINISTRATION: These questions test for knowledge of the managerial functions involved in directing an organization or an organizational segment. These questions cover such areas as: developing objectives and formulating policies; making decisions based on the context of the administrator's position and authority; forecasting and planning; organizing; developing personnel; coordinating and informing; guiding and leading; testing and evaluating; and budgeting. There will be 15 questions in this subject area on the written test.

TEST TASK: You will be presented with situations in which you must apply knowledge of administrative principles and practices in order to answer the question correctly.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Which one of the following is the **most** important reason to record a new policy in writing once it has been adopted?

- A. to ensure the acceptance of the new policy by staff
- B. to minimize confusion in the interpretation of the new policy
- C. to stop the practice of giving special consideration to individual cases
- D. to ensure that the policy is integrated into the organization's mission

The correct answer to this sample question is B.

SOLUTION:

*This question asks for the **most** important reason to record a new policy in writing.*

Choice A is not correct. Staff must be brought into the process of policy development before the policy is adopted to decrease possible staff resistance to the new policy.

Choice B is the correct answer to this question. The written record of the policy will serve as the definitive reference for issues or situations that the policy covers.

Choice C is not correct. Organizational policies serve as a guide to provide consistency in decision making for those cases that are covered by the policy, but no policy will cover every possible circumstance or situation. There may be exceptional cases with special circumstances that are not fully covered by the policy. These exceptional cases must be considered individually on a case by case basis.

Choice D is not correct. Having a policy in writing will not ensure that the policy is integrated into the organization's mission. Integration of the policy into the organization's mission should have occurred when the policy was being drafted.

TEST SECURITY

The test you will be taking is the property of the New York State Department of Civil Service. Candidates may not remove test material from the test site and may not reproduce, reconstruct, or discuss the test content with others. Unauthorized possession or disclosure of the test material is prohibited by law and punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine. Additionally, candidates may be disqualified from appointment to the positions for which the examination is being held and from being a candidate for any civil service examination for five years. After you take the test, other individuals may want to talk with you about the test. You should not discuss the questions and answers, even in general terms. You should be careful that you do not inadvertently violate test security and put yourself at risk.

CONCLUSION

Your attitude and approach to the test will influence how well you perform. A positive attitude will help you do your best.

Before the test ...

- Study and review this guide to familiarize yourself with some of the material which the test will cover.
- Study and review the subject areas to be covered on the test.

On the day of the test ...

- Arrive at the test site on time.
- Bring your Admission Notice, two No. 2 pencils, a photo ID containing your signature, a quiet lunch or snack, and any other materials as instructed on the admission notice or the announcement.
- Do **NOT** bring this test guide to the test site.

At the test site ...

- Do **NOT** bring cell phones, beepers, headphones, or any electronic or other communication devices to the test site.
- The use of such devices anywhere on the grounds of the test site (this includes the test room, hallways, restrooms, building, grounds, and parking lots) could result in your disqualification.

During the test ...

- Read and follow all directions on your Admission Notice, test booklets, answer sheets, and Candidate Directions.
- Follow the Monitor's instructions.
- Keep track of the time.

After the test ...

- Do **NOT** remove any test materials from the test room.
- Do **NOT** paraphrase, reconstruct, or reproduce the test material in any way.
- Do **NOT** discuss the test material with others.

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