

PREPARATION MANUAL FOR THE IN-BASKET EXERCISE

San Francisco Sherriff's Department 8312 Sheriff's Captain Examination

This manual is divided into seven sections:

Section 1 gives you a general overview of the exercise and what it is comprised of.

Section 2 provides a list of the tasks, knowledge areas and abilities that may be measured in the exercise.

Section 3 explains what you will be asked to do in the exercise.

Section 4 explains what to expect the day of the exam.

Section 5 explains how performance on the exercise will be evaluated.

Section 6 explains how a candidate should prepare for the exercise.

Section 7 explains how and where to direct any questions that you may have about the Preparation Manual.

Section 1: What is the IBE and What is it Comprised of?

The In-Basket Exercise (IBE) is a job simulation, designed to measure your ability to apply the knowledge that a Sheriff's Captain needs in order to complete his or her daily activities. In the IBE, you will perform tasks that are typically handled by a Sheriff's Captain. The IBE will be comprised of seven job-related scenarios to which you must respond, based on background information provided to you in the form of completed documents (e.g., round sheet, overtime payroll report, prisoner grievance form, etc.).

Section 2: What Tasks does the IBE Sample and What Knowledge Areas and Abilities Does the IBE Measure?

The IBE will sample from tasks in the following task clusters: conducts investigations; inspects and monitors facilities; reviews, schedules and assigns duties; assists command staff; coordinates with other command personnel; maintains discipline of inmates; resolves personnel and inmate complaints and grievances; conducts departmental planning; evaluates operations; interprets, implements and develops departmental policy; directs emergency operations; writes and reviews reports and correspondence.

The IBE is designed to measure job knowledge areas and abilities that were identified during the job analysis as critical and essential the first day on the job as a Sheriff's Captain. The job knowledge areas and abilities tested will come from the following lists:

Knowledge of City & County of San Francisco and Sheriff's Department administrative rules and regulations.

Knowledge of City & County of San Francisco MOUs and work rules.

Knowledge of appropriate laws, codes, and penal sections (e.g., penal code sections 4000-4030, Title XV, Title XXIV, Accreditation Standards for Adult Detention Facilities, Fire and Life Safety in Local Juvenile and Adult Detention Facilities, etc.).

Knowledge of City & County of San Francisco and Sheriff's Department administrative policies and procedures.

Knowledge of appropriate Departmental preliminary investigative policies and procedures.

Knowledge of subordinate and inmate disciplinary practices, policies and procedures.

Knowledge of procedures and requirements for completing memos, forms and reports.

Knowledge of supervisory methods and practices.

Knowledge of performance standards and conduct and what constitutes a violations of rules and regulations, policies and procedures.

Knowledge of staffing guidelines (e.g. minimum staffing requirements, overtime approval, scheduling procedures, etc.).

Knowledge of current law enforcement tactics, strategies and methodology.

Knowledge of the Department organizational structure and the responsibilities of Division, unit and facility personnel.

Knowledge of Deputy, inmate and general public safety principles and procedures.

Knowledge of effective written communication (e.g., style, content, sentence structure, grammar, syntax. etc.)

Ability to analyze a situation, isolate and identify the problem and recommend alternative courses of action.

Ability to focus in on problem areas and identify key facts in an effective and efficient manner.

Ability to use a systematic and logical approach in solving problems.

Ability to demonstrate creativity in solving problems.

Ability to use good judgment and common sense in making decisions.

Ability to implement decisions and to assume responsibility for those decisions.

Ability to know when to take action and what type of action is appropriate.

Ability to recognize violations of Departmental rules, regulations, policies and procedures.

Ability to initiate an investigation of incidents involving subordinates, staff, inmates, and/or the general public to document the incident.

Ability to recognize that something unusual has taken place and/or that something is unusual on site that would suggest immediate problems that need to be addressed.

Ability to detect deficiencies and problems in equipment and/or facilities under inspection.

Ability to record information learned in an inspection and/or investigation.

Ability to take corrective actions based on findings of investigations and inspections.

Ability to establish an appropriate and efficient course of action for self and/or others to accomplish a goal.

Ability to anticipate problems and to be proactive rather than reactive.

Ability to demonstrate awareness of organizational goals and objectives.

Ability to plan for emergency situations and respond quickly and effectively.

Ability to speak and write in a clear, concise, meaningful and effective manner.

Ability to use appropriate grammar, syntax and sentence structure in written reports and memos.

Ability to effectively organize and prepare written material on a variety of issues.

Ability to summarize a set of facts or ideas about an event or situation and accurately communicate them orally and/or in writing.

Ability to enforce laws, rules and regulations with firmness, tact and impartiality.

Ability to maintain a professional attitude with subordinates, peers, superiors, and the public.

Ability to set an example for others.

Ability to complete tasks thoroughly and in a timely manner.

Ability to demonstrate a commitment to the job and the mission and goals of the Department

Section 3: What Will I be Asked to do in the IBE?

For each IBE scenario, you will receive background information needed to formulate your answers. You will also be provided with a Documents Envelope, containing all of the documents that you will reference in providing your answers. Once you have determined the issues/problems to address for each scenario in the IBE, you will answer the test questions listed below:

Test Questions

- What, if any, actions would you take to address or resolve the issue?
- To whom would you communicate regarding the problems/issues you need to address or resolve?
- How would you communicate with them? (e.g., informal conversation, formal meeting, muster, e-mail, memo, etc.)
- What information would you communicate?

You will record your answers to the scenario in an Examination Booklet. You will have one Examination Booklet for each of the seven scenarios. You will read each scenario on the first page of the Examination Booklet and determine which document(s) from the Document Envelope relate to any issues/problems that you identify, which will provide you with a basis for responding to the scenario. You must write your responses in the Examination Booklet clearly and legibly so that raters can read and understand your responses.

You will have note paper on which to make notes, if you so choose. Your notepaper will not be read or evaluated. However, you must turn it in at the end of the exam, and you may not take any testing materials from the examination room.

As you work on the IBE, remember the following:

- Although each IBE scenario is independent of the others, you may refer to any of the documents in the Documents Envelope in formulating your answers.
- Although you will have note paper on which to make notes, all of your answers must be written in the Examination Booklets to be rated.
- Instructions will be included in the examination packet. Be sure to read carefully and follow all of the instructions.
- You may refer to, and write on, the reference materials at any time during the IBE.

Important tips for doing well in the IBE:

- Remember to pace yourself, so that you can complete each of the seven scenarios of the IBE within the allotted time.
- Because your completed Examination Booklets will be read and evaluated, it is important that your handwriting be legible.

Section 4: What Should I Expect at the Test Site?

To participate in the examination, you will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to taking the IBE. There will be no exceptions to this agreement.

To deter cheating and loss of test security, you may not bring in any electronic devices into the test room. You must turn in all electronic devices at registration, and it is recommended that you leave these devices at home or in a secure location.

We will provide all of the exam materials and writing utensils (pencils, pens, highlighters) to you. Do not bring any writing utensils, paper, calculators, highlighters, stopwatches or any other devices or study materials to the test site.

You may wear a standard watch, but you may not use any watch which has an audible alarm or tone that could distract others. The proctor will inform you when you have 1 hour remaining and 10 minutes remaining, so that you can pace yourself.

If you choose to use the restroom, you will be using your test time, and only one person at a time will be allowed to use the restroom. You may not discuss the examination with other candidates at any time while you are at the test site.

No food or drink will be allowed in to the test room.

Section 5: How is Performance on the IBE Evaluated?

Scoring will involve two groups: one to develop the scoring key, and one to do the ratings. The Scoring Key Development Committee will be comprised of officers at the rank of Captain or above from within the SFSD who will develop the scoring key to be used to rate candidates. The Rating Committee will be comprised of subject matter experts from outside the SFSD who will be trained on the scoring key by a test expert. Your responses to this exercise will be evaluated independently by two raters. After making their independent ratings, the two raters will confer to produce a final rating of your responses.

Section 6: How Should a Candidate Prepare for the IBE?

To prepare for the IBE, you should familiarize yourself with the following:

1. **Reference Materials.** Copies of relevant references from the "suggested reading list" on the job announcement will be provided to you on the day of the test. You should be familiar with the references on the suggested reading list so that you can quickly locate information that you may need in order to address the items in the IBE. Do not bring references or any other material to the test site, as everything you need to take the examination will be provided to you.
2. **Sample Test Materials.** The sample instructions, sample general information, sample test questions page, and sample Examination Booklet with sample completed forms provided below are similar to what you will receive on the day of the test. The sample answers in the Examination Booklet are being provided to clarify how to respond to the questions for that scenario. These sample answers are only an example. Your answers in the examination would be in your own words, but should be comprehensive and complete.

Sample Instructions

Examination Materials

You should have the following test materials:

- An examination packet containing:
 - Documents Envelope
 - Instructions
 - General Information
 - Test Questions Page
 - Examination Booklets
 - Notepaper
- A set of references
- 2 pens, 2 pencils, 1 highlighter

It is your responsibility to verify that you have all the materials. If at any time you believe that you are missing exam materials, or if you require additional notepaper and/or writing instruments, raise your hand and a proctor will assist you.

Exercise Format

Your task is to answer each of the scenarios presented. Carefully read the scenario on the first page of the Examination Booklet and formulate your response utilizing the documents provided. Be sure to answer all of the questions on the Test Questions Page for each scenario in the Examination Booklet. Your answers must be legible and easily understood in order to be fairly evaluated by the raters.

You have been provided with note paper, which you may use to take notes and/or draft your responses to the questions if you choose to do so. However, your final responses must be written in the Examination Booklet on the pages specified . Note paper will not be reviewed or evaluated and is for your use only, but must be turned in with your exam materials.

You may refer to the reference materials provided at any time during the exam. You may make notes and/or highlight in the reference materials, if you so choose.

Examination Rules

You will have X hours to complete the IBE. (*Important Note: The actual time allotted for the exam will be determined at a later date*). Once the exam period begins, candidates will be only allowed to use the restroom one at a time. Remember that if you choose to use the restroom, you will be using your test time.

When you are finished with the examination, place all of the documents back into the same envelopes as they were located in when they were distributed to you at the beginning of the exam. Do not seal or close the clasp on the envelopes. To maintain test security, you must turn in all examination materials.

If you finish before time is called, you may review your responses or you may raise your hand and a proctor will check and collect all of your test materials, then release you. Do not leave the test room until you are released by a proctor.

Sample General Information

The facility in which the scenarios occur is named "Complex X". You should assume the following basic information about "Complex X" as you answer the questions. You should not assume any other facts about the facility that are not listed below.

You are Captain Chris Candidate. You should refer to this name, and not your own when providing your answers. Assume that you are at the beginning of your shift unless otherwise indicated. For the purpose of the exam, today's date is Monday, October 25.

"Complex X" is a 4-story building. Each of the floors are listed below:

- First floor - Intake and Release facility
- Second floor - Administrative Offices
- Third floor – CJ-A, a housing facility
- Fourth floor – CJ-B, a housing facility

Each housing facility contains:

- 4 general population housing units
- 2 administrative segregation housing units
- 1 recreation yard
- 2 holding cells
- 4 safety cells
- Infirmary

Facility facts:

- You are Captain Chris Candidate, assigned to CJ-A
- There are two other Captains in the complex:
 - Captain Smith at CJ-B
 - Captain Jones at Intake and Release
- The facility has an all male population
- There is a Laundry area in each facility
- There is a Kitchen and Food Service in each facility
- A Freight Elevator services the entire complex

Each facility has the following shifts and minimum staffing levels:

Day shift – 0700 hours to 1500 hours

- 2 Supervisors
- 20 Deputies

Swing shift – 1500 hours to 2300 hours

- 1 Supervisor
- 15 Deputies

Midnight shift – 2300 hours to 0700 hours

- 1 Supervisor
- 10 Deputies

Personal time off allocations for each of the shifts:

Day shift

- 2 Supervisors
- 3 Deputies

Swing shift

- 1 Supervisor
- 2 Deputies

Midnight shift

- 1 Supervisor
- 2 Deputies

Sample Test Questions Page

- What, if any, actions would you take to address or resolve the issue?
- To whom would you communicate regarding the problems/issues you need to address or resolve?
- How would you communicate with them? (e.g., informal conversation, formal meeting, muster, e-mail, memo, etc.)
- What information would you communicate?

Sample Examination Booklet

Read the following scenario, formulate your response, and write your answer in the space below.

You are a Captain at CJ-A. You have arrived to work at 0600 hours. You are reviewing the paperwork in your in-box and checking your voice mail and e-mail messages. You have found out the following:

- Deputy Tom has not shown up for the Day shift at CJ-A, and has left a voice mail stating that he has car trouble. However, the Training Unit Supervisor, Sergeant Lee, has e-mailed you stating that Deputy Tom has not shown up for training.
- The Midnight Watch Commander and the Day Watch Commander approach you and tell you that the day watch will not be starting at minimum staffing levels due to the number of Deputies who called in sick for the day watch. They say that there are not enough Deputies eligible to be involuntarily drafted for the day shift.

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To address the absence of Deputy Tom, I would speak to the Lieutenant and find out if he has tried to contact Deputy Tom to clarify what his situation is.

I would review the Approved Time Off Calendar to make sure that Deputy Tom is actually scheduled for training. After reviewing the Approved Time Off Calendar, I see that it does not match with Deputy Tom's schedule on the Watch Sheet and that Deputy Tom is not scheduled for training.

To follow-up, I would respond to Sergeant Lee's email, requesting confirmation of Deputy Tom's attendance of the training session if he shows up. I would speak with Deputy Tom to understand what the scheduling problem was so that the misunderstanding does not occur in the future.

To address the problem with staffing of the day shift, I would tell the Midnight Watch Commander to immediately obtain staff to cover the shift. I would ask him the following:

- Have you checked for the availability of staff from other units/sections/facilities?
 - Are they above minimum staffing?
 - Can the other locations detail extra staff to CJ-A?
 - Have you tried to get volunteers from the off-going watches?
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I would also ask if the Midnight Watch Commander looked at the voluntary overtime list. If there are people available, I would ask if he had requested that the Sergeant and/or Lieutenant try to contact them. If the answer was no, I would direct him do so right away. I would also instruct the Day Watch Commander to assist the Midnight Watch Commander in finding a solution for this staffing problem.

If after the Watch Commander tried to get replacement staff and no staff was available to come to CJ-A, I would need to make some decisions about which post I would recommend to close and/or activities to cancel, if necessary.

If I determined that a post needed to be closed and/or activities needed to be canceled, I would immediately contact the Division Chief by phone and inform him that if CJ-A was starting below minimum staffing levels, I would offer my recommendation for closing posts and/or canceling activities and, in the worst case scenario, locking down portions and/or the entire facility until the staffing problem can be resolved.

Sample Completed Forms and Sample Blank Forms

See DHR Webpage

Section 7: Answers to Questions Regarding the Preparation Manual

Any questions that you have regarding this Preparation Manual must be submitted via email by 5:00 PM on 10/12/2010 to michael.cerles@sfgov.org. To maintain fairness for all candidates, questions from individual candidates will not be answered. However, you are welcome to submit your questions in writing to the above email by the deadline.

A publication containing the answers to questions submitted will be made available to all candidates prior to the administration of the exercise via email. Be sure to maintain accurate contact information by going online to www.jobaps.com/sf and selecting "Update My Contact Info" tab so that you will receive important notices regarding the examination.