City and County of San Francisco, Department of Human Resources
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CLERICAL EXAM HANDBOOK

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PURPOSE

This handbook is designed to provide candidates with general information regarding the clerical examination process. The handbook consists of useful information to help candidates prepare for the examination.

OVERVIEW OF CLERICAL EXAMINATION PLAN

The content of the new examination plan is based on the job tasks, and knowledge, skills and abilities determined to be critical to overall successful job performance.

The clerical examination plan consists of 10 knowledge, skill and ability areas. Each of the 10 KSAs are defined in this candidate handbook. It is important that candidates prepare for the examination by studying the clerical examination plan.

EXAMINATION ITEMS

The clerical examination contains approximately 80 multiple-choice items. You will have approximately 2 hours to complete the examination. Also, there are some classifications that may require an additional subtest to be administered. If additional subtests are administered, additional examination time may be allotted.

There is only one correct answer for each item. The "incorrect" answers are typically common errors and misconceptions, true but not relevant statements, or incorrect statements.

SAMPLE TEST ITEMS

Below are sample test items that allow you to understand the type of questions that will be asked, as well as, the formatting of the questions in the examination. These sample questions will not be included on the examination. They have been included in the handbook for you to use as a reference. Please note there are not sample questions for all content areas of the test. However, each item included in the examination will be multiple-choice, include a question and four responses. There is only one correct answer per question. The correct response for each of the sample questions below is bolded and italicized.

Sample Items: Reading Ability

As part of a clerk's responsibility, he/she is required to maintain a log of files that are checked out by other agencies. As files are checked out of the office, they are listed on a log sheet by the clerk.

Carroll Williams comes into the office at 8:45 a.m. to check out a file consisting of police aide information. She works for the Sheriff's Department. Jill Jackson comes in at 8:50 a.m. to check out a file consisting of court documents. She works for the Public Defender's office. After these two drop-ins, the clerk did not have anyone come in until two hours later; then, Chad Lucky from the Police Department came in to check out a file consisting of warrant information.

A half hour past 4:00 p.m., the clerk had one person come in to check out a file. Phil Hart checked out a file consisting of probation information. He works for the Probation Department.

The log for the day was recorded by the clerk as follows:

Line	Time	Name of Person	File	Department
AA	(1) 8:45 a.m.	(2) Carroll Williams	(3) Police Aide	(4) Police Dept.
BB	(5) 8:50 a.m.	(6) _____	(7) Court Documents	(8) _____
CC	(9) _____	(10)	(11) Probation Info	(12) _____
DD	(13) _____	(14) Phil Hart	(15) _____	(16) Probation Dept.

Which of the following entries in line AA are incorrect?

A. (1)
B. (2)
C. (3)
D. (4)

What name and department should have been indicated in line BB?

A. Jill Jackson and Police Department
B. Jill Jackson and Public Defender's Office
C. Chad Lucky and Police Department
D. Chad Lucky and Public Defender's Office

What file did Jill Jackson check out?

A. Court Documents
B. Warrant information
C. Probation information
D. Police aide information

Sample Items: Ability to perform accurate mathematical calculations

The salaries and benefits of a department amount to 42.5% of the department's overall budget. If the department's budget is 28 million, what portion of the budget is allocated for expenses other than salary and benefits?

A. $1,190,000
B. $ 11,900,000
C. $1,600,000
D. $16,100,000

During one work week, a clerk works the following hours; Monday - 8 hours, Tuesday - 8 hours, Wednesday - 9 hours, Thursday - 9 hours, and Friday - 9 1/2 hours. If a normal work week is 40 hours, how many hours of overtime has the clerk worked this week?

A. 2 hours
B. 2 1/2 hours
C. 3 hours
D. 3 1/2 hours

Sample Items: Ability to use a computer

A clerk is asked to input data consisting of information such as addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, and birth dates into a computer program. This program will be used to extract data, run reports and cross reference information. Which of the following types of programs would be most appropriate for this type of information?

A. Internet program
B. Database program
C. Spreadsheet program
D. Word processing program

A clerk wants to italicize a section of a Word document using the shortcut key. Which command would allow for this function?

A. Highlight text, press Ctrl + P
B. Highlight text, press Ctrl + E
C. Highlight text, press Ctrl + S
D. Highlight text, press Ctrl + I

Sample Items: Ability to file, retrieve, code, and index

Which of the following numbers would the social security number 444-64-4664 be filed between if using a numerical filing system?

A. 444-46-4040 and 444-64-6644
B. 444-46-4404 and 444-64-4640
C. 444-64-4646 and 444-64-4663
D. 444-64-4666 and 444-64-6446

If the names of Dan Perren, Aldo Pierie, Donald Pierotti, and Frank Pierpoint were arranged for alphabetical filing, what position would Frank Pierpoint be in?

A. First
B. Second
C. Third
D. Fourth

Sample Item: Knowledge of office operations

A clerk is given an assignment that must be completed accurately and in a timely manner. How should the clerk initially proceed in this situation?

A. Complete the assignment and immediately submit the work
B. Complete the assignment and verify the work prior to submitting it
C. Complete the assignment and require a co-worker to check the work
D. Complete the assignment and require the supervisor to check the work

CLERICAL EXAMINATION PLAN

The following pages contain detailed information regarding the clerical examination content and examination weight. A definition of each KSA is provided. It is important for candidates to use this section as a study guide, because each item in the examination is linked to this content.

KSA #	KSA CATEGORY	KSA WEIGHT
1	**INTERPERSONAL ABILITY -** refers to the ability to establish and maintain effective and cooperative working relationships, and to effectively work with others	**9%**
2	**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION ABILITY -** refers to the ability to communicate written information in a clear, concise and understandable manner	**6%**
3	**KNOWLEDGE OF FILING SYSTEMS & ABILITY TO MAINTAIN RECORDS –** refers to the ability to file, retrieve, code, and index and the ability prepare, organize and maintain records (e.g., clerical, office, patient)	**12%**
4	**ABILITY TO USE A COMPUTER -** refers to the ability to utilize various computer software programs (e.g., word processing, excel, power-point) for the development of reports, spreadsheets, presentations	**10%**
5	**ABILITY TO USE OFFICE EQUIPMENT –** including ability to perform scheduling	**6%**
6	**ABILITY TO COMPREHEND AND INTERPRET INFORMATION –** refers to the ability to interpret laws, rules, regulations and procedures and decision making ability	**14%**
7	**READING ABILITY -** refers to the ability to read and review information such as forms, documents, and/or reports for completeness, accuracy, grammar, punctuation, and spelling	**10%**
8	**ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY -** refers to the ability to organize time and materials accordingly in order to work more efficiently	**6%**
9	**ABILITY TO EVALUATE INFORMATION –** refers to the ability to conduct research, collect data, and perform analysis and the ability to perform accurate mathematical calculations	**19%**
10	**KNOWLEDGE OF PRINCIPLES, PRACTICES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF OFFICE OPERATIONS –** including ability to train clerical and/or other staff	**8%**

OVERVIEW OF EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The following information is provided for those interested in understanding the examination development process used for the clerical examination.

The development of the clerical examination program began with a job analysis study, most recently completed by Recruitment and Assessment Services, Department of Human Resources in 2009. A job analysis is a method for identifying the tasks performed on a job and the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed to perform that job.

The results from the job analysis study form the basis of the clerical examination, demonstrating that the examination is job-related. The 2009 job analysis evaluated 75 clerical and secretarial classifications used in the City. Current incumbents in the 75 classes received a questionnaire consisting of job tasks and knowledge, skills, and abilities. In the questionnaire the incumbents were asked to rate the job tasks on how often they are performed and how critical they are to overall successful performance on the job. They were also asked to rate the knowledge, skills, and abilities on whether they are expected at entry into the job and to what degree and how critical is the knowledge, skill, and ability to overall performance of the job. The questionnaire was emailed out through Survey Monkey to approximately 2,500 permanent civil service clerical and secretarial incumbents. A group of subject matter experts (SMEs) (e.g., supervisors of clerical and secretarial classifications) reviewed the results of the questionnaire. These SMEs then established the content of the new examination plan based on the job tasks, and knowledge, skills, and abilities determined to be critical to overall successful job performance, therefore, forming a valid clerical examination plan.

The clerical examination is developed and maintained by Recruitment and Assessment Services (RAS), Department of Human Resources. RAS staff is trained to develop and analyze classification examinations. RAS staff conducts item writing and review meetings with subject matter experts (e.g., current incumbents and/or supervisors of clerical and secretarial classifications) and performs item analysis to validate the content of the examination. All of the items in the examination have been written and reviewed by subject matter experts and are based on the job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities contained in the examination plan.