

Court Reporter Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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Questions

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- 1. What does stare decisis refer to in legal terms?**
 - A. A new law established by the legislature**
 - B. A legal norm established in previous cases**
 - C. A method of jury selection**
 - D. A rule for conducting trials**

- 2. Within how many days can an expired certificate be reinstated?**
 - A. 90 days**
 - B. 120 days**
 - C. 150 days**
 - D. 180 days**

- 3. What does "bona fide" mean?**
 - A. In bad faith**
 - B. With malice**
 - C. In good faith**
 - D. With intent to deceive**

- 4. Which term describes a request made in "good faith"?**
 - A. Bona fide**
 - B. Ad hoc**
 - C. In camera**
 - D. In situ**

- 5. What is a writ of habeas corpus?**
 - A. A written legal argument**
 - B. A type of legal injunction**
 - C. A court order that requires police to bring a prisoner to court**
 - D. A method of plea bargaining**

- 6. What does a court reporter do with exhibits at the end of proceedings?**
 - A. Store them in a personal archive**
 - B. File them with the court clerk**
 - C. Return them to the attorney**
 - D. Destroy them after the case**

- 7. What action does a court reporter (CR) take when testimony is interrupted by a conversation?**
- A. Record the interruption as a footnote**
 - B. Ignore the interruption**
 - C. Transcribe the conversation as colloquy**
 - D. Summarize the gist of the interruption**
- 8. Why is it important for a court reporter to notify opposing counsel of expedited transcripts?**
- A. To keep them informed**
 - B. It is a legal requirement**
 - C. To request their feedback**
 - D. To allow for proper case preparation**
- 9. When a party to a lawsuit requests a copy of a transcript, what should a court reporter do?**
- A. Request additional documentation from the party**
 - B. Send a copy and an invoice**
 - C. File the request with the court clerk**
 - D. Obtain permission from the judge**
- 10. What marking system is utilized for defendants' exhibits?**
- A. Arabic numbers**
 - B. Capital letters**
 - C. Roman numerals**
 - D. Lowercase letters**

Answers

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- 1. B**
- 2. B**
- 3. C**
- 4. A**
- 5. C**
- 6. B**
- 7. C**
- 8. D**
- 9. B**
- 10. B**

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Explanations

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1. What does stare decisis refer to in legal terms?

- A. A new law established by the legislature**
- B. A legal norm established in previous cases**
- C. A method of jury selection**
- D. A rule for conducting trials**

Stare decisis is a fundamental legal principle that translates from Latin to "to stand by things decided." This doctrine emphasizes the importance of precedent in the legal system, meaning that courts should follow the rulings made in previous cases when the facts of a current case are similar. This principle helps to ensure consistency and predictability in the law, allowing individuals and legal practitioners to have a clear understanding of how the law will be applied in specific circumstances. By adhering to stare decisis, courts contribute to the stability of the legal system, as similar cases are treated similarly, reducing the likelihood of arbitrary or varied verdicts. This practice can also streamline legal processes and enhance the efficiency of the court system by building upon established legal interpretations rather than always starting from scratch with each new case. The other options do not accurately reflect the meaning of stare decisis. A new law established by the legislature pertains to statutory law rather than judicial precedent. A method of jury selection refers to procedural aspects of trials, while a rule for conducting trials generally involves trial procedures and guidelines rather than the concept of adhering to previous case law.

2. Within how many days can an expired certificate be reinstated?

- A. 90 days**
- B. 120 days**
- C. 150 days**
- D. 180 days**

The correct time frame for reinstating an expired certificate is 120 days. This limit is significant because it ensures that professionals remain up-to-date with the current standards and practices in their field, thereby maintaining the integrity and reliability of the certification process. After the 120-day period, the process for reinstating an expired certificate typically becomes more complicated, potentially requiring additional testing or fulfilling new requirements. Being aware of the 120-day reinstatement window is crucial for professionals in maintaining their credentials and ensuring they do not let their certifications lapse beyond this period.

3. What does "bona fide" mean?

- A. In bad faith
- B. With malice
- C. In good faith**
- D. With intent to deceive

The term "bona fide" translates from Latin to mean "in good faith." It is commonly used in legal terminology to signify that something is authentic or genuine. In the context of legal agreements, a bona fide transaction typically indicates that parties involved are acting honestly and without intention to deceive or commit fraud. Understanding this term is essential for court reporters, as they may encounter "bona fide" in various legal documents and proceedings, where it denotes the legitimacy of actions, intentions, or relationships. This concept reinforces the importance of sincerity in legal matters, distinguishing between genuine practices and those tainted by dishonesty or malice.

4. Which term describes a request made in "good faith"?

- A. Bona fide**
- B. Ad hoc
- C. In camera
- D. In situ

The term that accurately describes a request made in "good faith" is "bona fide." This Latin phrase translates to "in good faith" and is commonly used in legal contexts to signify sincerity or genuineness in intentions. When a request is characterized as bona fide, it indicates that the party making the request is doing so with honesty and without the intention of deceit or misrepresentation. The other terms, while used in legal and formal contexts, do not convey the same meaning. "Ad hoc" refers to something created or done for a particular purpose, often temporarily or specifically tailored to a unique situation. "In camera" means in private or in a judge's chambers, usually referring to matters not made public. "In situ" translates to "in the original place" and is often used in scientific or environmental contexts to refer to something existing in its natural state. Thus, "bona fide" remains the term that directly correlates with the notion of good faith.

5. What is a writ of habeas corpus?

- A. A written legal argument**
- B. A type of legal injunction**
- C. A court order that requires police to bring a prisoner to court**
- D. A method of plea bargaining**

A writ of habeas corpus is a legal mechanism that serves as a safeguard against unlawful detention. Specifically, it is a court order that requires law enforcement to bring an individual who is imprisoned before the court to determine whether their detention is lawful. The essence of habeas corpus lies in its function to protect individual freedom by ensuring that no one can be held without just cause or due process. In the context of the other options, a written legal argument refers to briefs or memoranda used in legal proceedings but does not directly relate to the purpose of habeas corpus. A type of legal injunction generally pertains to orders that compel or restrain specific actions, which is a different legal concept. Lastly, a method of plea bargaining refers to negotiations between the defense and prosecution regarding the disposition of a criminal case, which does not relate to the process of challenging unlawful imprisonment. Thus, the accurate characterization of a writ of habeas corpus is its role as a court order compelling the review of a prisoner's detention.

6. What does a court reporter do with exhibits at the end of proceedings?

- A. Store them in a personal archive**
- B. File them with the court clerk**
- C. Return them to the attorney**
- D. Destroy them after the case**

A court reporter has the responsibility of ensuring that all exhibits presented during a legal proceeding are properly documented and handled in accordance with legal procedures. At the end of the proceedings, the correct action is to file the exhibits with the court clerk. This practice maintains the integrity of the court records, as exhibits may be critical for future reference in the case, potential appeals, or other legal matters. Filing with the court clerk ensures that these important pieces of evidence are preserved in a secure and organized manner, following legal protocols. Moreover, the other options do not conform to the standard practices for handling exhibits in a courtroom setting. Storing exhibits in a personal archive would compromise their legality and accessibility. Returning them to the attorney may not be appropriate if the exhibits are meant to be part of the official court record. Destroying them after the case would not be permissible, as exhibits may need to be reviewed later in connection with the proceedings, particularly if the case is subject to appeal. Thus, filing them with the court clerk is the necessary and correct procedure.

7. What action does a court reporter (CR) take when testimony is interrupted by a conversation?

- A. Record the interruption as a footnote**
- B. Ignore the interruption**
- C. Transcribe the conversation as colloquy**
- D. Summarize the gist of the interruption**

When testimony is interrupted by a conversation, the appropriate action for a court reporter is to transcribe that conversation as colloquy. Colloquy refers to a dialogue or conversation between parties involved in the case, and it is essential for maintaining an accurate and complete record of the proceedings. This ensures that all verbal interactions, including interruptions, are captured and can be referred to later if needed, preserving the integrity of the court record. Recording interruptions in this manner allows for a clear understanding of the context in which the testimony was given and how the interruption may impact the trial or hearing. The goal of a court reporter is to provide a faithful and precise transcript of everything that occurs in the courtroom, and transcribing conversations as colloquy accomplishes that objective effectively.

8. Why is it important for a court reporter to notify opposing counsel of expedited transcripts?

- A. To keep them informed**
- B. It is a legal requirement**
- C. To request their feedback**
- D. To allow for proper case preparation**

Notifying opposing counsel of expedited transcripts is crucial as it allows both parties to prepare adequately for the case. When a transcript is expedited, it essentially means that it will be produced more quickly than usual, which can significantly impact ongoing legal strategies, motions, and overall case management. Opposing counsel must be aware of these expedited transcripts to integrate the new information into their preparation processes, whether that involves crafting arguments based on recent testimonies or preparing for upcoming hearings. This ensures that all parties are on the same page regarding the timeline of information and can operate on a level playing field, thereby promoting fairness and efficiency in the judicial process. Staying informed about expedited transcripts directly affects case readiness and can influence case outcomes, highlighting the importance of effective communication between opposing counsel.

9. When a party to a lawsuit requests a copy of a transcript, what should a court reporter do?

- A. Request additional documentation from the party**
- B. Send a copy and an invoice**
- C. File the request with the court clerk**
- D. Obtain permission from the judge**

When a party to a lawsuit requests a copy of a transcript, the appropriate action for a court reporter is to send a copy of the transcript along with an invoice. This practice aligns with standard procedures followed by court reporters, who are responsible for providing accurate records of court proceedings. The issuance of an invoice alongside the transcript not only acknowledges the work completed but also serves as a formal request for payment. This is important as court reporters often operate as independent contractors or private entities that charge for their services. By providing both the transcript and the invoice, the court reporter ensures that the request is fulfilled promptly while also maintaining a clear record of the transaction. Other choices involve actions that may not be necessary or could delay the process. For example, requesting additional documentation from the party or filing the request with the court clerk may create unnecessary hurdles. Additionally, obtaining permission from the judge could complicate matters since court reporters typically have the authority to fulfill transcript requests based on established procedures without needing judicial approval.

10. What marking system is utilized for defendants' exhibits?

- A. Arabic numbers**
- B. Capital letters**
- C. Roman numerals**
- D. Lowercase letters**

The marking system for defendants' exhibits commonly employs capital letters. This practice is consistent with court procedures where exhibits are differentiated based on the party presenting them. By utilizing capital letters, it allows for a clear and organized method of identification, especially in complex cases where multiple exhibits are involved. This method ensures that there is no confusion between the exhibits submitted by the plaintiff and those by the defendant, enhancing the trial's clarity and efficiency. In most legal frameworks, marking conventions are critical to maintaining order and ensuring that all parties can easily reference and identify documents during legal proceedings. Capital letters for defendants' exhibits helps distinguish these items in a straightforward manner, aligning with established court reporting standards.