

Florida 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. Law enforcement call prioritization is based solely on the individual incident.**
 - A. True**
 - B. False**
- 2. Which of the following represents the three phases of a hostage situation?**
 - A. Planning, preparation, approach**
 - B. Observation, containment, termination**
 - C. Initial, negotiation, termination**
 - D. Fantasy, planning, approach**
- 3. What is CHEMTREC?**
 - A. A global emergency response team**
 - B. A 24/7/365 emergency call center**
 - C. A chemical response training program**
 - D. A hazardous materials assessment group**
- 4. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operates under which department?**
 - A. Department of Agriculture**
 - B. Department of Environmental Protection**
 - C. Department of Homeland Security**
 - D. Department of Hurricane Response**
- 5. Employee absences may lead to which impact on a communications center?**
 - A. Decreases cost**
 - B. Lessens workload**
 - C. Boosts morale**
 - D. Adversely affects staffing**

- 6. What is the primary communication tool used by PSTs to connect with emergency responders?**
- A. Cell phones**
 - B. Text messaging systems**
 - C. Two-way radio systems**
 - D. Social media platforms**
- 7. What is a common responsibility of the PST during an emergency situation?**
- A. To create laws**
 - B. To issue fines**
 - C. To assess and relay accurate information**
 - D. To judge the involved parties**
- 8. According to the ADA, communications centers are required to conduct TDD training how often?**
- A. Bi-annually**
 - B. Annually**
 - C. Monthly**
 - D. Quarterly**
- 9. What does the term "preponderance of the evidence" relate to?**
- A. A standard used to determine guilt**
 - B. A type of legal document**
 - C. A category of crime**
 - D. A measure of physical evidence**
- 10. The ability to adapt communication style based on the audience is known as?**
- A. Interpersonal skills**
 - B. Emotional intelligence**
 - C. Professional demeanor**
 - D. Flexibility**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

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Explanations

1. Law enforcement call prioritization is based solely on the individual incident.

A. True

B. False

Law enforcement call prioritization involves assessing not only the specifics of an individual incident but also several other factors. While the nature of the incident, such as its severity or the potential threat to life, plays a crucial role, other elements are also considered. These may include the location of the incident, the availability of units, ongoing situations in the area, and historical data about patterns of crime. In practice, prioritization helps agencies effectively allocate resources to ensure that the most critical situations receive attention first. Factors like whether a weapon is involved, the number of people affected, and the risk of escalation can influence how calls are triaged. Therefore, prioritization is a dynamic process that takes into account a variety of influences beyond just the individual event, making the statement that it is based solely on the individual incident inaccurate.

2. Which of the following represents the three phases of a hostage situation?

A. Planning, preparation, approach

B. Observation, containment, termination

C. Initial, negotiation, termination

D. Fantasy, planning, approach

The three phases of a hostage situation generally encompass the initial interactions, the individual or group attempting to negotiate demands or resolve the situation, and finally the actions taken to bring the situation to a conclusion. In this regard, the initial phase involves the onset of the hostage situation, where the circumstances are established, and hostages are taken. During the negotiation phase, law enforcement agencies try to communicate with the hostage-taker to resolve the situation peacefully. Finally, in the termination phase, the aim is to safely resolve the situation, culminating either in the release of hostages or the apprehension of the perpetrator. This structured approach is essential for law enforcement and emergency responders as they navigate complex and potentially dangerous situations, keeping the safety of hostages at the forefront of their strategies. Understanding these phases helps in developing effective training and response protocols tailored to such critical incidents.

3. What is CHEMTREC?

- A. A global emergency response team
- B. A 24/7/365 emergency call center**
- C. A chemical response training program
- D. A hazardous materials assessment group

CHEMTREC, which stands for the Chemical Transportation Emergency Center, operates as a 24/7/365 emergency call center dedicated to providing immediate support to responders in the event of a hazardous materials incident. It serves as a vital resource for first responders, offering access to information about the chemical involved, emergency procedures, and guidance on how to handle specific situations. CHEMTREC's role is crucial, as it connects emergency personnel with real-time information and expert advice, which is essential for ensuring public safety during chemical emergencies. While other options may reference important aspects of emergency management and training related to hazardous materials, they do not encapsulate the primary function and operational structure of CHEMTREC as effectively as the correct option, which highlights its continuous availability and focus on emergency response.

4. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operates under which department?

- A. Department of Agriculture
- B. Department of Environmental Protection
- C. Department of Homeland Security**
- D. Department of Hurricane Response

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operates under the Department of Homeland Security. This alignment underscores the agency's role in coordinating the federal government's response to natural disasters and emergencies, which includes preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts. Establishing FEMA within the Department of Homeland Security helps to streamline and enhance the nation's emergency management capabilities and ensure a cohesive response during significant disasters. This connection also allows for improved coordination with other federal, state, and local agencies involved in emergency response and management.

5. Employee absences may lead to which impact on a communications center?

- A. Decreases cost
- B. Lessens workload
- C. Boosts morale
- D. Adversely affects staffing**

Employee absences in a communications center primarily lead to adverse effects on staffing. When employees are absent, it creates a gap in the workforce, which can result in an increased workload for the remaining staff members. This can lead to stress and burnout, potentially further exacerbating staffing issues as those remaining may need to take on additional shifts or overtime to cover for the absences. Additionally, insufficient staffing can impede the center's ability to respond effectively to emergencies and provide necessary services to the public, as each employee plays a crucial role in maintaining efficiency and responsiveness. Therefore, the impact of employee absences is significant and can disrupt the overall functioning of the communications center.

6. What is the primary communication tool used by PSTs to connect with emergency responders?

- A. Cell phones**
- B. Text messaging systems**
- C. Two-way radio systems**
- D. Social media platforms**

The primary communication tool used by Public Safety Telecommunicators (PSTs) to connect with emergency responders is two-way radio systems. These systems are specifically designed for real-time communication between dispatchers and first responders, such as police, fire, and emergency medical services. Two-way radio systems offer various advantages critical for emergency operations, such as clear audio quality, immediate engagement, and reliable connectivity, even under demanding conditions. They operate on dedicated frequencies, ensuring that communications are not interrupted by regular civilian traffic, which is crucial during emergencies where every second counts. Moreover, the ability to communicate instantly helps coordinators manage resources effectively and relay vital information quickly and efficiently. While cell phones, text messaging systems, and social media platforms could be used in some scenarios, they do not provide the same level of reliability and immediate communication that two-way radio systems offer in high-stress environments. This is particularly important in various emergency situations, where having direct voice communication can be critical for situational awareness and operational coordination.

7. What is a common responsibility of the PST during an emergency situation?

- A. To create laws**
- B. To issue fines**
- C. To assess and relay accurate information**
- D. To judge the involved parties**

In an emergency situation, a key responsibility of the Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST) is to assess and relay accurate information. This involves understanding the nature of the emergency, gathering pertinent details quickly, and communicating essential information to emergency responders and relevant agencies. The effectiveness of the PST in this role can greatly influence the outcome of the emergency response, as timely and accurate information allows first responders to prepare adequately for the situation they are heading into. The PST's ability to remain calm, ask the right questions, and clearly relay information is critical in ensuring that first responders receive the best information possible. This responsibility underscores the importance of effective communication skills and situational awareness in public safety roles. Both of these elements are vital for maintaining the safety of all involved, including the public, the responders, and the individuals in distress. The other options do not align with the primary functions of a PST. Creating laws and issuing fines are responsibilities of legislative or law enforcement functions, while judging involved parties pertains to the judicial system, which falls outside the purview of a telecommunicator's duties. Instead, PSTs focus on gathering information and facilitating a quick and efficient response from relevant agencies.

8. According to the ADA, communications centers are required to conduct TDD training how often?

A. Bi-annually

B. Annually

C. Monthly

D. Quarterly

The correct answer is based on the requirements outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) related to providing effective communication for individuals with hearing impairments. The ADA stipulates that public agencies, including communications centers, must ensure that their staff is properly trained on the use of Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) or similar assistive devices. The requirement for bi-annual TDD training reflects the need for telecommunicators to stay current with technology, best practices, and legal obligations to effectively assist individuals who use these devices. Regular training helps improve the quality of service provided to individuals with hearing disabilities and ensures that all personnel are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to handle TDD calls competently. This frequency allows for updates on new standards or practices that may emerge, ensuring compliance and enhancing communication effectiveness. In essence, bi-annual training is a proactive approach to maintaining high service standards in public safety communications, fostering an environment of inclusivity and accessibility.

9. What does the term "preponderance of the evidence" relate to?

A. A standard used to determine guilt

B. A type of legal document

C. A category of crime

D. A measure of physical evidence

The term "preponderance of the evidence" refers to a standard of proof that is typically used in civil cases, indicating that one side's evidence is more convincing than the other's. In essence, it means that the evidence presented must show that it is more likely than not that the claim being made is true. This standard is lower than "beyond a reasonable doubt," which is used in criminal cases to determine guilt. Therefore, when assessing allegations or disputes, the side with the preponderance of the evidence—meaning they can produce sufficient proof to tip the scale in their favor—will prevail in the case. This concept is essential for Public Safety Telecommunicators to understand as they often relay critical information that may be used in legal contexts where such standards apply.

10. The ability to adapt communication style based on the audience is known as?

- A. Interpersonal skills**
- B. Emotional intelligence**
- C. Professional demeanor**
- D. Flexibility**

The ability to adapt communication style based on the audience is most accurately described as interpersonal skills. This set of skills involves effectively communicating, listening, and interacting with others in a way that considers their perspectives, backgrounds, and needs. As a public safety telecommunicator, being proficient in interpersonal skills is crucial, as you frequently interact with individuals in various emotional states or situations. Tailoring your communication ensures that the information is conveyed effectively and that the audience feels understood and supported. In contrast, emotional intelligence refers to the capability to recognize and manage your own emotions as well as the emotions of others. While it plays an important role in communication, it is not solely focused on adapting one's style based on the audience. Professional demeanor encompasses the attitude, appearance, and conduct expected in a professional environment, which can influence how messages are received but does not define the adaptability of communication styles. Flexibility, while related, is a broader term that implies an openness to change in various contexts but does not specifically address communication style adaptation tailored to different audiences.