

# New York State Court Assistant Legal Terminology Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

**Remember:** successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## **1. Start with a Diagnostic Review**

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## **2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions**

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.**

## **3. Learn from the Explanations**

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## **4. Track Your Progress**

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## **5. Simulate the Real Exam**

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## **6. Repeat and Review**

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

## Questions

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- 1. What is the document attached to a will and forming part of the will called?**
  - A. Calendar**
  - B. Consanguinity**
  - C. Common law**
  - D. Codicil**
  
- 2. Which term means to certify that the attached copy of a document is a true copy, as evidenced by the court seal?**
  - A. Common law**
  - B. Consanguinity**
  - C. Calendar**
  - D. Certification**
  
- 3. What is the term for the prescribed maximum periods during which an action may be commenced?**
  - A. Statute of limitations**
  - B. Surety**
  - C. Tort**
  - D. Transcript**
  
- 4. Adjudicate means:**
  - A. To go through the formal process of deciding an issue in court.**
  - B. To make void or to cancel.**
  - C. A written declaration made before an authorized officer that the person executed the instrument freely.**
  - D. Is a signed written statement that is sworn to be true.**
  
- 5. Which term describes the personal property such as a car?**
  - A. Chattel**
  - B. Codicil**
  - C. Calendar**
  - D. Complaint**

- 6. Which term refers to the specific reason for which an action is started, such as damages to an automobile?**
- A. Cause of action**
  - B. Certification**
  - C. Chattel**
  - D. Codicil**
- 7. Which term is the beginning part of a family court caption?**
- A. In the matter of**
  - B. Minor**
  - C. Motion**
  - D. Oath**
- 8. Which term refers to the process of attaching wages or property to satisfy a judgment?**
- A. Dismissal**
  - B. Garnish**
  - C. Habeas corpus**
  - D. Grand Jury**
- 9. Which term describes the period during which an action must be commenced, measured from the event giving rise to the claim?**
- A. Statute of limitations**
  - B. Venue**
  - C. Tort**
  - D. Transcript**
- 10. In camera means which of the following?**
- A. Not in the courtroom but in the judge's chamber**
  - B. A civil proceeding for infant settlement**
  - C. A group of citizens selected to decide a case**
  - D. A notice that a lawsuit is pending having to do with real property**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What is the document attached to a will and forming part of the will called?**

- A. Calendar**
- B. Consanguinity**
- C. Common law**
- D. Codicil**

A codicil is a separate instrument that amends or supplements a will. It is executed with the same formalities as the will (with signatures and witnesses, where required) and, once valid, becomes part of the will, reading together with its provisions. It allows updating gifts, changing beneficiaries, adding or removing executors, or revising the residuary clause without drafting an entirely new will. The other terms don't fit because calendar is just a date tool, consanguinity refers to blood relationships, and common law is a body of law—not a document that modifies a will.

**2. Which term means to certify that the attached copy of a document is a true copy, as evidenced by the court seal?**

- A. Common law**
- B. Consanguinity**
- C. Calendar**
- D. Certification**

Certification is the act of attesting that a copy is a true and complete reproduction of the original, with the court seal providing official validation. A clerk compares the copy to the original, signs, and affixes the court seal so the copy is legally recognized as true. The other options don't involve attesting copies: common law is a body of law from judicial decisions, consanguinity refers to blood relation, and calendar is a schedule of court proceedings.

**3. What is the term for the prescribed maximum periods during which an action may be commenced?**

- A. Statute of limitations**
- B. Surety**
- C. Tort**
- D. Transcript**

The timing concept being tested is the period within which a lawsuit must be filed. The term for these prescribed maximum periods is the statute of limitations. It sets how long you have to bring a civil claim after the event giving rise to it (the accrual date), and missing it typically bars the action from being heard. The clock can start at different times depending on the type of claim and can be paused or extended in certain situations (tolling), such as when the plaintiff is a minor or mentally incapacitated, or when other legal rules apply. In New York, different claims have different limits—more time for contract actions, less for certain government claims, and so on—so knowing the specific rule for each claim is important. The other terms refer to unrelated concepts: a surety is someone who guarantees another's debt, a tort is a civil wrong, and a transcript is a written record of court proceedings.

#### 4. Adjudicate means:

- A. To go through the formal process of deciding an issue in court.**
- B. To make void or to cancel.**
- C. A written declaration made before an authorized officer that the person executed the instrument freely.**
- D. Is a signed written statement that is sworn to be true.**

Adjudicate means the act of formally deciding a dispute in a court or tribunal after considering the evidence and arguments presented. This describes the process of reaching a judgment or ruling through a formal decision-making procedure. That's why the correct option is about going through the formal process of deciding an issue in court. It isn't about voiding or cancelling something, which would be a separate concept. It also isn't about a written declaration or a sworn statement—those refer to documents like an acknowledgment or an affidavit, not to the act of making a judicial decision. For example, a judge adjudicates a case by issuing a decision after hearing the evidence.

#### 5. Which term describes the personal property such as a car?

- A. Chattel**
- B. Codicil**
- C. Calendar**
- D. Complaint**

Personal property that can be moved is described as chattel. In property law, real property covers land and things permanently attached to it, while personal property includes movable possessions like a car. The term chattel is the traditional label for such movable personal property, and you might see phrases like chattel mortgage or chattel paper in secured transactions. The other terms describe unrelated concepts: a codicil is an amendment to a will, a calendar is a scheduling tool, and a complaint is a legal pleading filed to start a civil action. So, the car is described as chattel.

#### 6. Which term refers to the specific reason for which an action is started, such as damages to an automobile?

- A. Cause of action**
- B. Certification**
- C. Chattel**
- D. Codicil**

The concept being tested is cause of action—the specific reason a lawsuit is started. A cause of action is the legal theory and facts that justify suing and seeking relief. In a case about damages to a car, the cause of action would identify the particular fault or breach, such as negligence, that gives the plaintiff the right to damages. The car itself is merely property (a chattel), while the lawsuit rests on the legal theory and facts behind the claim. It's also possible to have multiple causes of action from the same incident if different theories apply. Certifications, chattel, and codicil refer to other concepts: certification is a credential or approval, chattel means movable personal property, and codicil is an amendment to a will.

**7. Which term is the beginning part of a family court caption?**

- A. In the matter of**
- B. Minor**
- C. Motion**
- D. Oath**

The beginning of a family court caption uses the phrase “In the matter of” to signal that the proceeding is a formal matter concerning a specific person or issue. This opening sets the scope of the case and introduces the subject, such as a child or family matter, that the court is addressing. In the matter of is the standard, recognized way to start the caption, providing a formal lead-in before naming the subject (for example, the child’s name followed by a descriptor like “a child”). The other terms don’t serve this opening function: “Minor” is a descriptor that may appear later, “Motion” is a document type, and “Oath” is unrelated to how captions start.

**8. Which term refers to the process of attaching wages or property to satisfy a judgment?**

- A. Dismissal**
- B. Garnish**
- C. Habeas corpus**
- D. Grand Jury**

Garnishment is the process used to attach wages or other property to satisfy a money judgment. After a creditor wins a judgment, they can ask the court to issue a writ directed at a third party who holds the debtor’s assets—typically the debtor’s employer or a bank. The garnishee must report what funds or wages they owe to the debtor, and the court can order those funds to be paid over to the creditor, up to any applicable limits and exemptions. This is different from simply seizing the debtor’s own property (execution) or pre-judgment measures (attachment). It also isn’t related to criminal procedures like habeas corpus or to the function of a Grand Jury.

**9. Which term describes the period during which an action must be commenced, measured from the event giving rise to the claim?**

- A. Statute of limitations**
- B. Venue**
- C. Tort**
- D. Transcript**

The period described is the statute of limitations. It sets the deadline for when a lawsuit must be started, counting from the event that gave rise to the claim (the injury, breach, or triggering conduct). If you don’t file before that deadline, the claim is typically barred, even if the evidence is strong, unless tolling or other exceptions apply. In New York, the exact length depends on the type of claim, so different injuries or breaches have different timeframes, but the core idea remains the same: you must sue within the legally prescribed period. The other terms refer to different ideas—venue is where you file, a tort is a civil wrong, and a transcript is a written court record.

**10. In camera means which of the following?**

- A. Not in the courtroom but in the judge's chamber**
- B. A civil proceeding for infant settlement**
- C. A group of citizens selected to decide a case**
- D. A notice that a lawsuit is pending having to do with real property**

In camera means a hearing or portion of a proceeding is conducted privately, out of the public eye, usually in the judge's chambers rather than the courtroom. This private setting is used to protect sensitive information or privacy, such as confidential records or sensitive matters. That's why the option describing a matter not in the courtroom but in the judge's chamber matches the meaning. The other choices refer to different legal concepts: a civil proceeding for infant settlement, a jury, or a notice of pendency of action, none of which involve private, in-chamber proceedings.

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## Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://nyscourtcourtassistantlegalterms.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**

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