

Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy (NVCJA) Exam 1 Practice (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. Title 42 Section 1983 addresses what primary concept?**
 - A. Depriving people of constitutional rights**
 - B. Attorneys fees provision**
 - C. Traffic enforcement**
 - D. Intellectual property rights**

- 2. Which factors determine the use of discretion?**
 - A. Agency policy**
 - B. Severity of offense**
 - C. All of the above**
 - D. Surrounding circumstances**

- 3. Which statement correctly describes Class 6 Felony punishment?**
 - A. 10 to 20 years**
 - B. 1 to 5 years or up to 12 months in jail, and a fine of not more than \$2,500**
 - C. 2 to 10 years**
 - D. 1 to 5 years or up to 12 months in jail, and a fine of not more than \$2,500**

- 4. In the step-by-step suspicious subject stop, when is a person check run on radio?**
 - A. Before approaching**
 - B. During initial observation**
 - C. After requesting their ID**
 - D. After approaching**

- 5. Class 4 Felony carries which punishment?**
 - A. 2 to 10 years and up to \$100,000 fine**
 - B. 1 to 5 years**
 - C. 5 to 20 years**
 - D. Life imprisonment**

- 6. What does Title 18 Section 242 address?**
- A. Criminal case for deprivation of constitutional rights**
 - B. Civil penalties for theft**
 - C. Intellectual property disputes**
 - D. Environmental law violations**
- 7. Which situation corresponds to a Signal 3?**
- A. A request for backup during investigation.**
 - B. Will or anticipates taking subject into custody.**
 - C. Issuing a citation at traffic stop.**
 - D. Radio transmission in common language.**
- 8. Who provides independent review of complaints brought by police, deputies, and citizens?**
- A. Judge**
 - B. Magistrate**
 - C. Bailiff**
 - D. Commonwealth's Attorney**
- 9. Which statement correctly assigns governing authority for force rules at federal, state, and department levels?**
- A. Federal = Case Law; State = State Law; Department = Policy**
 - B. Federal = Policy; State = Policy; Department = Policy**
 - C. Federal = Statutes; State = Regulations; Department = Guidelines**
 - D. Federal = Common Law; State = Codes; Department = Procedures**
- 10. The 10th Amendment outlines authority under which states organize LE agencies.**
- A. Outlines authority under which states organize LE agencies.**
 - B. Outlines federal taxation powers.**
 - C. Defines the powers of the Vice President.**
 - D. Establishes the right to bear arms.**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Title 42 Section 1983 addresses what primary concept?

A. Depriving people of constitutional rights

B. Attorneys fees provision

C. Traffic enforcement

D. Intellectual property rights

Section 1983 provides a civil rights remedy for actions by state and local government officials who, while acting under color of law, deprive someone of rights protected by the U.S. Constitution or federal law. The essential idea is accountability: when government actors violate someone's constitutional protections—such as due process, equal protection, or freedom from unreasonable searches—a person can sue for relief, typically damages or injunctive relief. It covers police, prison officials, and other officials acting in their official capacity. It's not about private conduct, and it isn't meant to address traffic enforcement or intellectual property.

2. Which factors determine the use of discretion?

A. Agency policy

B. Severity of offense

C. All of the above

D. Surrounding circumstances

Discretion in enforcement comes from weighing multiple factors rather than relying on a single rule. The framework you follow includes agency policy, the seriousness of the offense, and the surrounding circumstances, and together these determine the chosen course of action. Agency policy provides the official boundaries and guidelines officers must follow. It sets when certain actions are appropriate, what criteria must be met for arrests versus warnings or referrals, and how to apply standards consistently across cases. This baseline helps keep decisions aligned with department goals and legal requirements. The severity of the offense matters because the response should be proportionate. A violent or highly illegal act typically warrants stronger enforcement, possibly arrest or charges, while a minor infraction might be handled with a warning, citation, or diversion. Surrounding circumstances cover the immediate context of the encounter: safety risks to the public or officers, evidence strength, cooperation of the person, prior history, presence of witnesses, location and time, and any mitigating or aggravating factors. These details can push a decision toward more or less intervention, even when policy and offense severity are similar. Since each factor can push in different directions, the combination of agency policy, offense severity, and surrounding circumstances best explains how discretion is determined.

3. Which statement correctly describes Class 6 Felony punishment?

- A. 10 to 20 years**
- B. 1 to 5 years or up to 12 months in jail, and a fine of not more than \$2,500**
- C. 2 to 10 years**
- D. 1 to 5 years or up to 12 months in jail, and a fine of not more than \$2,500**

Class 6 felonies have the lightest punishment among felonies. The allowed ranges are either 1 to 5 years in prison, or up to 12 months in jail plus a fine not to exceed \$2,500. This dual option gives a choice between a longer custodial sentence or a shorter jail term with a cap on fines. The other ranges, like 10 to 20 years or 2 to 10 years, are for higher-class felonies and don't apply to the lowest class. So the statement that describes 1 to 5 years or up to 12 months in jail with a fine up to \$2,500 is the correct one.

4. In the step-by-step suspicious subject stop, when is a person check run on radio?

- A. Before approaching**
- B. During initial observation**
- C. After requesting their ID**
- D. After approaching**

The key idea is confirming who you're dealing with before pulling up records. In a step-by-step suspicious subject stop, you first request the person's identification to establish their exact identity. Once you have that ID, you run a radio check to see if that specific person has any warrants, wants, or prior history. This sequencing matters because the information you retrieve is tied to the person's identity in the system, so verifying who you're dealing with first prevents misidentification and ensures the right records are checked. If you tried to run a check before obtaining ID, you'd risk pulling up the wrong person or missing important details. After you've identified them, the radio check provides the necessary corroboration to guide your next steps.

5. Class 4 Felony carries which punishment?

- A. 2 to 10 years and up to \$100,000 fine**
- B. 1 to 5 years**
- C. 5 to 20 years**
- D. Life imprisonment**

Felony classifications assign fixed punishment ranges. For a Class 4 felony, the standard sentence is 2 to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$100,000. This reflects the relative seriousness of offenses in this class within the felony scale. The other ranges correspond to different classes (higher classes can carry longer terms or life; some lower rounds are not Class 4), so they don't fit Class 4. Therefore, the 2 to 10 years with up to a \$100,000 fine is the correct punishment.

6. What does Title 18 Section 242 address?

- A. Criminal case for deprivation of constitutional rights**
- B. Civil penalties for theft**
- C. Intellectual property disputes**
- D. Environmental law violations**

Deprivation of rights under color of law is a criminal offense where a person acting with official authority willfully deprives someone of federally protected rights. The statute targets acts by government officials or others acting in their official capacity, holding them accountable when power is abused and constitutional protections—like due process, equal protection, or freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures—are violated. It requires intent to deprive rights; accidental or purely private misconduct generally isn't enough unless there's an official link. This is a federal criminal remedy, not a civil penalty, and it's commonly invoked in police misconduct or other abuses by public officials.

7. Which situation corresponds to a Signal 3?

- A. A request for backup during investigation.**
- B. Will or anticipates taking subject into custody.**
- C. Issuing a citation at traffic stop.**
- D. Radio transmission in common language.**

Signal 3 indicates that the officer will or intends to take a subject into custody. This communicates to dispatch and others that custody is imminent or already in progress, signaling the next step in the encounter and ensuring appropriate resources are available. The other scenarios describe different actions. A request for backup during an investigation is about needing assistance, not about the custody status. Issuing a citation at a traffic stop is a routine enforcement action, not specifically about placing someone under custody. Radio transmission in common language refers to how the message is communicated, not to the custody status of a subject.

8. Who provides independent review of complaints brought by police, deputies, and citizens?

- A. Judge**
- B. Magistrate**
- C. Bailiff**
- D. Commonwealth's Attorney**

The independent review of complaints against police, deputies, and citizens is handled by a magistrate. A magistrate is a neutral judicial official who operates outside the enforcing agency, tasked with evaluating complaints and deciding on appropriate next steps, such as issuing warrants or referring matters for further action. This separation from the agency being criticized helps ensure fairness and due process. Judges also serve in the judiciary and provide impartial oversight, but magistrates are the role most often involved in the initial, independent review of complaints and related preliminary matters. Bailiffs are court security personnel, not reviewers, and Commonwealth's Attorneys prosecute cases—not provide independent review.

9. Which statement correctly assigns governing authority for force rules at federal, state, and department levels?

A. Federal = Case Law; State = State Law; Department = Policy

B. Federal = Policy; State = Policy; Department = Policy

C. Federal = Statutes; State = Regulations; Department = Guidelines

D. Federal = Common Law; State = Codes; Department = Procedures

The key idea is that where force rules come from depends on the level: at the federal level, decisions come from case law interpreting constitutional rights; at the state level, rules come from state statutes (and related state case law); at the department level, rules are issued as internal policies that guide everyday policing. Federal use-of-force standards are established through court decisions interpreting the Fourth Amendment, creating binding doctrines rather than statutes. State use-of-force rules come from state statutes and state court decisions, which set the legal framework within the state. Department policies translate those legal requirements into concrete, actionable rules for officers on the street. So, the statement that fits best is: federal rules derive from case law, state rules from state law, and department rules from policy. The other options mix in policy as the primary source at all levels, or assign statutes or regulations as the federal source, or treat internal guidelines as the governing authority rather than formal policy.

10. The 10th Amendment outlines authority under which states organize LE agencies.

A. Outlines authority under which states organize LE agencies.

B. Outlines federal taxation powers.

C. Defines the powers of the Vice President.

D. Establishes the right to bear arms.

The 10th Amendment deals with federalism: any powers not given to the federal government are reserved for the states or the people. That reservation directly covers policing and public safety, which are state functions. So this amendment explains why states determine how their law enforcement agencies are organized and run. The other options point to powers or rights that come from other parts of the Constitution: federal taxation is a federal power, defined elsewhere; the Vice President's powers are outlined in Article II; and the right to bear arms is in the Second Amendment.

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.

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

<https://nvcja1.examzify.com>

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

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