

# Public Health and Environmental Health Practice Exam (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. How many operating agencies does the Department of Health and Human Services have?**
  - A. 9**
  - B. 11**
  - C. 12**
  - D. 15**
  
- 2. Which causation criterion refers to greater exposure leading to higher disease rates?**
  - A. Dose-response**
  - B. Strength of association**
  - C. Consistency**
  - D. Specificity**
  
- 3. Which of the 10 essential services includes diagnosing and investigating health problems and health hazards?**
  - A. Diagnose and investigate**
  - B. Monitor health**
  - C. Inform, educate, empower**
  - D. Enforce laws**
  
- 4. Which term describes the path by which an agent leaves the host?**
  - A. Portal of exit**
  - B. Reservoir**
  - C. Portal of entry**
  - D. Transmission**
  
- 5. Quasi-governmental health organizations are characterized by which of the following?**
  - A. They operate under direct government supervision**
  - B. They operate independently of government supervision**
  - C. They have no funding**
  - D. They are primarily for-profit corporations**

- 6. How many member states does the World Health Organization have?**
- A. 150**
  - B. 194**
  - C. 210**
  - D. 180**
- 7. Which agency provides access to health care services for underinsured and medically vulnerable populations?**
- A. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)**
  - B. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**
  - C. Indian Health Service (IHS)**
  - D. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**
- 8. Which measure describes the number of new cases in a population divided by the population at risk during a period?**
- A. Incidence rate**
  - B. Prevalence rate**
  - C. Mortality rate**
  - D. Life expectancy**
- 9. Which Medicare component covers hospital insurance?**
- A. Part A**
  - B. Part B**
  - C. Part C**
  - D. Part D**
- 10. Which statement best describes the reporting guidelines?**
- A. Public Health Department provides reporting guidelines**
  - B. Clinicians decide guidelines individually**
  - C. Guidelines are private to each clinic**
  - D. Guidelines do not exist**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. How many operating agencies does the Department of Health and Human Services have?**

- A. 9
- B. 11**
- C. 12
- D. 15

HHS is made up of eleven operating agencies, each focused on a distinct public health or human services mission. The eleven are: Administration for Children and Families; Administration for Community Living; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; Food and Drug Administration; Health Resources and Services Administration; Indian Health Service; National Institutes of Health; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This structure of multiple specialized agencies is why the correct count is eleven.

**2. Which causation criterion refers to greater exposure leading to higher disease rates?**

- A. Dose-response**
- B. Strength of association
- C. Consistency
- D. Specificity

The idea being tested is the dose-response relationship, also called the biological gradient. This criterion says that as exposure increases, the risk or frequency of the disease tends to rise. Seeing a clear exposure gradient—such as people who smoke more cigarettes per day having higher lung-cancer risk—provides strong evidence that the exposure is causally related to the outcome. It helps show a smooth or stepped increase in disease with greater levels of exposure, which supports the idea that the exposure is not just associated with the disease by coincidence. Other criteria describe different aspects. Strength of association looks at how large the association is, but it doesn't inherently address how risk changes with different exposure levels. Consistency asks whether findings repeat across different studies. Specificity is about a cause leading to a particular effect, which is not always the case in complex diseases. Dose-response is the explicit pattern that ties higher exposure to higher disease rates, making it the best choice here.

**3. Which of the 10 essential services includes diagnosing and investigating health problems and health hazards?**

- A. Diagnose and investigate**
- B. Monitor health**
- C. Inform, educate, empower**
- D. Enforce laws**

Diagnose and investigate is the public health activity that focuses on identifying health problems and health hazards by collecting and analyzing data, confirming cases, and tracing sources of disease or exposure. This involves outbreak investigations, laboratory confirmation, case finding, and epidemiologic analysis to understand the cause, scope, and distribution so that targeted actions can be taken. This is distinct from monitoring health, which is about ongoing data collection to describe health status and trends rather than diagnosing specific problems; informing, educate, empower, which centers on communicating risks and promoting actions; and enforcing laws, which involves applying legal tools to protect public health. Therefore, diagnosing and investigating best matches the description in the question.

**4. Which term describes the path by which an agent leaves the host?**

- A. Portal of exit**
- B. Reservoir**
- C. Portal of entry**
- D. Transmission**

When considering how an infection spreads, the exit route from the infected person is the portal of exit. This term describes the path by which the agent leaves the host, such as respiratory droplets leaving during coughing or sneezing, blood or pus exiting through a wound, or pathogens shed in stool or urine. This exit step is what enables the organism to reach a new host, after which it may encounter the portal of entry in the next host and be transmitted through the chosen transmission pathway. In contrast, the reservoir is where the agent normally lives and multiplies, the portal of entry is how it enters a new person, and transmission refers to how the agent moves from one host or reservoir to another.

**5. Quasi-governmental health organizations are characterized by which of the following?**

- A. They operate under direct government supervision**
- B. They operate independently of government supervision**
- C. They have no funding**
- D. They are primarily for-profit corporations**

Quasi-governmental health organizations sit between government agencies and private, nonprofit groups. They receive government funding and may carry out public health duties, but they operate with a degree of autonomy from direct government supervision. This mix allows them to act with flexibility and initiative in implementing programs while still being tied to national or public health priorities through funding and governance oversight. That balance is why the best description is that they operate independently of government supervision. They're not wholly free from government influence, but their day-to-day management isn't controlled directly by the government. They do have funding, so the claim that there's no funding is incorrect, and they're typically nonprofit rather than for-profit.

**6. How many member states does the World Health Organization have?**

- A. 150**
- B. 194**
- C. 210**
- D. 180**

The question tests your knowledge of how many sovereign states participate as full members in the World Health Organization. The organization's official roster lists 194 member states, reflecting widespread global participation in its governance and programs. That count distinguishes WHO from other bodies that might have different membership figures. The other numbers don't match the current official roster, which is why 194 is the best answer. If you ever need to verify, you can check the WHO website's list of member states for the most up-to-date figure.

7. Which agency provides access to health care services for underinsured and medically vulnerable populations?
- A. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
  - B. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**
  - C. Indian Health Service (IHS)
  - D. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Access to health care for underinsured and medically vulnerable populations is the primary focus of HRSA. The Health Resources and Services Administration works to reduce barriers to care by funding and supporting safety-net health services, such as community and migrant health centers, and by strengthening the health workforce through training and loan repayment programs. These efforts are designed to connect underserved groups with primary care, preventive services, and essential treatments, regardless of their ability to pay. HRSA also administers targeted programs to meet the needs of rural and urban underserved communities, including special programs for HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, and oral health, all aimed at expanding access and reducing disparities. In contrast, the agency that runs Medicare and Medicaid is about payment and coverage for specific populations rather than expanding access across underserved groups. The Indian Health Service serves American Indian and Alaska Native populations specifically. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration focuses on behavioral health treatment and services rather than broad access to general health care.

8. Which measure describes the number of new cases in a population divided by the population at risk during a period?
- A. Incidence rate**
  - B. Prevalence rate
  - C. Mortality rate
  - D. Life expectancy

Incidence rate describes how often new cases of a disease appear in a population during a specified period, using those who are at risk as the denominator. The idea is to measure the speed at which people who do not yet have the disease develop it over time, often expressed per person-time (for example, per 1,000 person-years). This focuses on new occurrences and the population that could potentially develop the condition. Prevalence, by contrast, measures the total number of existing cases (both new and long-standing) at a given time relative to the population, and it is influenced by how long people live with the disease. Mortality rate looks at deaths in a period per population, not new cases of a disease. Life expectancy is an average number of years a person is expected to live and does not describe disease incidence.

**9. Which Medicare component covers hospital insurance?**

- A. Part A**
- B. Part B**
- C. Part C**
- D. Part D**

Medicare organizes coverage by what costs it helps pay for. Hospital insurance specifically covers inpatient hospital stays and related care, such as care in a skilled nursing facility after a hospital stay, hospice, and some home health services. This focus on inpatient and acute hospital costs is why it's provided under Part A. The other parts cover different areas: Part B covers outpatient medical services and doctor visits, Part C is the Medicare Advantage option that combines parts A and B (and often extra benefits), and Part D covers prescription drugs. So the hospital insurance you're looking for is covered by Part A.

**10. Which statement best describes the reporting guidelines?**

- A. Public Health Department provides reporting guidelines**
- B. Clinicians decide guidelines individually**
- C. Guidelines are private to each clinic**
- D. Guidelines do not exist**

Reporting guidelines are standardized rules that specify what information must be reported, who must report it, and how quickly, to support surveillance and prompt public health action. In public health practice, these guidelines are issued by the Public Health Department or equivalent health authority to ensure consistency across providers and jurisdictions. That's why the statement that the Public Health Department provides reporting guidelines is the best description. Clinicians do not set guidelines individually; they follow the agency's requirements. Guidelines aren't private to each clinic, and they do exist publicly to guide reporting, often including notifiable conditions, required data elements, and submission timelines.

## 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://publichealthenvihealth.examzify.com>**

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

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